Title: Kakao apologized for the Kakao Talk Service controversy : Was the apology sincere?

479 words

By Ryu Gyeongbin Reporter

On 2022 October 15, there was a large-scale service interruption in the messenger Kakao Talk. Because Kakao Talk is a messenger that lots of Korean customers use and the error happened not only in the messenger but also in its related services, which was a huge controversy in Korea. The reason why this service error happened was due to the fire in the data center that was located in Pangyo, Seongnam city. Complaints were made by users due to the difficulty of using these services and even financial damages attacked Kakao as well. After this state of emergency, Kakao gave presents to their users as a means of apology. The compensations were Kakao emojis, coupon of Kakao Makers, and lastly a 1-month use coupon for the Kakao Talk Drawer service. The first two were welcomed by users, but especially the coupon for the Kakao Talk Drawer service provoked dispute about whether Kakao took this error seriously.

Kakao Talk Drawer service serves as a storage that shows all the media files exchanged by Kakao users in one place. Having circulation amounting to 87 percentage of the total market, and users exchanging so many files with various users, it is difficult to find the files. In order to find them, users would have to scroll up through the history of the media files that each user once sent. On the other hand, with the service users can find the media file much more easily because they can be organized in a single area. So why was the public so angry about this coupon? It’s because people were angry about the automated payment system. If the user used this coupon to access this service for a month and forgot to terminate this service, they would have to pay for the next month’s service fee as well. Lots of users considered this not as an apology but as a marketing strategy to trick them into paying for this service beyond the free trial period. Kakao Talk service error gave damage to people working in diverse areas. According to the damages registered to Kakao, there were about 100,000 cases. Not only that even though it might have not led to financial damages, but the sudden error of not being able to use the messenger itself was also damage after all.

Kakao Talk’s service interruption was a huge controversy. It is true numerous people suffered from this incident. Furthermore, the fragileness of Kakao’s management, and not having a backup server itself was a huge mistake. The halfhearted presents as a means of apology were hardly something that the user might consider as an apology, but only receive the feeling of dismay that this company is trying to earn financial benefits. A company and service are nothing without its users and public image these days. One hopes that Kakao would next time think more of the users than the financial benefits for themselves.