



MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS IN 21ST CENTURY: TRENDS & STRATEGIES

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ABSTRACT

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In the recent time marketing communication, challenges need to develop obsolete business practices and create some new ones, and even stop using conventional wisdom that has proven obsolete. The pace of change is increasing and marketing communication must reflect those changing effects if it is relevant in the twenty first century. What need to change are not the only tools of marketing communications, although the impact of information technology and rapid broadcast communication will cause change enough. Advances in communications technology, increased interaction between buyer and producer and increasing integration of marketing communication will lead to change in both the levels and the impact of communication. However, marketers must also change the ways what they plan for communications and recognize the strategic implications of the shift in the power base that underpins communications. This paper attempts and discusses the main strategic issues that arise for marketers in the twenty first century such as the World Wide Web, the net, social changes and technological change encompasses more issues than information technology, cellular phones, new print technology, hologram and new media will also have a major impact in the twenty first century marketing communication.

1. INTRODUCTION

Communication is one of the most important human activities. Exchange of thoughts, which characterizes communication, carried out by conversations by the written words and of course by pictures and in fact people often expect and welcome marketing communication. Different communication systems vary in complexity, level of communicator and receiver contact, feedback time and adjusting to feedback. The communication types can be under two broad heads-interpersonal communication and impersonal communication. The impact and influence of each differ significantly.

1.1. Interpersonal Communication

Communication happening at a personal level between two or more people is termed as interpersonal communication. This communication could be face to face between two people, on the telephone, or through mail. In Business World “Informal communication”, concerning products or services is more likely between two groups. Such “word-of-mouth” communication is likely to be highly convincing because one friend seemingly has nothing to

gain from the other friend's future responses. In many circumstances of high-involvement purchases of before buying services, consumer often rely more on informal communication.

1.2. Characteristics of Different Types of Communication Systems

Types of Communication	Characteristics			
	Complication	Interaction	Response	Alterations
Mass communication	High	Low	Long	Low
Interpersonal	Low	High	Short	High
Organizational	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Public communication	High	Low	Long	Moderate

“Formal interpersonal communication” takes place between a sales person and a potential customer. The sales person is the sender of the message and the customer is the receiver. This communication, when face-to-face, tends to be more effective because the sales person can immediately notice the customer's reaction, verbal or non-verbal, indicating whether the intended message received. Marketers are increasingly realizing that non-verbal messages are sometimes more important than verbal messages particularly in personal selling and advertising.

“Feedback,” both verbal and non-verbal, in interpersonal communication enables the message initiator to have some indication concerning acceptance of message. Marketing communication is generally quite attentive to feedback and modifies messages based on what they see or hear from the audiences.

1.3. Impersonal Communication

Communication focused at a large and dispersed audience so called as impersonal communication. There is no direct contact between the sender and the receiver. Large organizations, both profit and non-profit, are usually the source of mass communication. They develop and communicate suitable message through specific departments or spokespersons. These messages usually meant to reach the targeted audience or audiences to inform, influence, or persuade them. The objective of marketing communications is to induce purchase of a product, to create a positive attitude towards product, to impart the product a symbolic meaning, or to convince consumers that it can satisfy their needs or wants in a better way than the competitive products. The typical mass media used are newspapers, magazines, billboards, radio, television and transit media, etc. Mass communication used by both profit and non-profit organization.

Communication initiating organizations must develop some reasonably reliable method to determine whether the sent messages are reaching the intended audience, are understood in a proper manner and successful in attaining to set the objectives. Generally, such inferences are drawn based on indirect methods. How the audiences respond toward an advertised product or service inferred from the results. If the results are positive, then concludes the message has been persuasive. Marketing companies often try to measure the effectiveness of their messages by conducting audience research.

Consumers subordinate alter the degree of credibility with different information sources. It is suppose that the more credible the basis, the more persuasive the endorser is likely to be in manipulating the acceptance of advertisement message by the audience. Endorsers in advertisements viewed as a “source” of information and influence audience's acceptance of message content because of their credibility and attractiveness. Panda (2007) while companies are investing huge sums of money into the concept that sports people of today and yesteryear are good endorsers, they are also recognizing that choosing a celebrity endorser is no longer a matter of personal taste. For a number of companies using sports people as endorsers, risk management has become a major consideration. Some companies are moving away from controversial sports personalities and are putting their money on those who would attract attention to enhance the product or company image.

Brand managers should know how the decisions about each independent variable could influence the stages of response hierarchy. There are examples of advertisements that used sex appeal, humor, or celebrities as endorsers to attract the consumers' attention. These advertisements are quite successful in attracting audience attention but proved ineffective in brand name or brand message recall.

1. Receiver/Comprehension: Comprehension of advertisement message by the consumer is an important prerequisite in precipitating desired behavior. The advertiser must know the important characteristics of the target market to develop a message that would be clear and understandable. Less educated audience may have trouble in interpreting complicated message.
2. Medium/message presentation: Various media are available to communicate an ad message. Femina magazine reaches a large number of educated urban, upper class and fashion conscious women. India Today is a much-respected popular magazine, while a different segment patronizes times. Then, there are special interest magazines. There are more than 50 satellite TV channels, besides radio and other media. The marketer must know which the appropriate medium is to reach the target market to ensure that the message is accessible to the right audience. A wrong choice may mean substantial loss of money and no message impact.
3. Message/feeling, conviction: The advertiser would like to prefer the type of message that will create favorable attitudes and feelings most likely to swift the desired action message content can focus on a rational or emotional approach. Humorous messages attract consumer attention and put her/him in a pleasant mood. Music can add emotion and make the consumers more inclined towards the message
4. Source/attention: which source will be most effective in getting consumer attention? In the present advertising scenario, it is a formidable challenge for advertisers to break through this clutter. Advertiser use well-known personalities from sports, film and other fields to attract the target audience's attention. If at all a product or service present to consumers, then there must be a message that catches the consumer's attention. Without a message, there is no advertising, and without consumers attention no amount of advertising can succeed.

Marketing communication is a continuous interaction between the buyers and seller in a market place. Any gesture or act that helps to attracts buyers and satisfy their needs in marketing communications. However, to a marketer, marketing communication is the process of presenting an integrated set of stimuli to a target with an intend of evoking a desired set of responses within that target and setting up channels to receives, interpret and act upon messages and identifying new communication opportunities. Blythe (2006) in other words, we can say marketing communications is an ever-changing field. New theories, new techniques, cultural changes and technological advances all combine to create a dynamic environment within which marketers try to ensure that their messages get through to their audiences.

1.4. Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC)

Customer's perception of a company and/or its brand is a synthesis of bundles of Messages through all sources of brand or company contact. These messages could be of the succeeding nature: such as media advertisement, price, packaging design, direct marketing effort, publicity, sales promotion and website.

Objective of the IMC approach: The objective of the IMC approach is to co-ordinate the company's marketing and promotional activities to project a consistent and unified image to the marketplace. The Tools for Integrated Marketing Communications those marketers commonly use to achieve their communication objectives are advertising and direct marketing (Schultz and Kitchen, 2000).

Sales promotion and twenty first century communication interactive/internet advertising. In year the recent year Coca Cola India launched integrated Marketing Coca-Cola, India's largest beverage company continues its trend of creating the most powerful and appealing brand messaging for its consumers in the country. The catchy

punchline “Thanda” synonymous with “Coca-Cola”, the company announced the launch of an intensive integrated marketing communication program for the summer. Based on the theme “Sabka Thanda Ek”, the campaign designed to build the Coca-Cola brand from its refreshment platform to a higher order of emotional benefit by establishing it as the universal choice that brings people together. As part of the integrated communication plan, a range of initiatives including mass media advertising and leveraging the digital space like the internet are being rolled out. The new TV commercial to feature- who else but Aamir Khan, the Coca-Cola brand ambassador in all new avatar. In the ad, Aamir appears as nonsense attends travelling in a train, connecting consumers with Coca-Cola. The campaign has been conceptualized by the creative genius Prasoos Joshi, Chairman & National Creative Director of McCann Erickson .To extend the reach and appeal of the new summer campaign, the company also plans to leverage the internet by building and promoting online communities. The strategy includes leveraging www.myenjoyzone.com- the interactive destination for Coca-Cola consumers. To compliment, the entire brand messaging process, range of on the ground initiatives including road shows and contests across all key markets are rolled out.

1.5. Twenty –First Century Marketing Communication

The marketing landscape has changed more in the past five years than in the past fifth year. Consumers have changed beyond recognition, their behavior is more complex, their media habits are different and they are more confident and outspoken. Audiences have more choices more distractions than ever before. The trends of marketing can easily shape marketing communications in the twenty first century. Advances in communications technology, increased interaction between buyer and seller and increased integration of marketing communication can lead to changes in both the level and the impact of communications. Panda (2007) changes in social conditions and in the levels of wealth will also change the availability and effectiveness of communications.

The new media encompasses a wide range of electronic media based that were not in existence in the past years and in the most cases were not in existence even one decade ago needless to say the internet and world wide web and other ambient media were unknown before 1990s. It seems like other new media can appear as technology advances in the future.

1.6. Internet & World Wide Web: *The New Medium of Mass Communication*

The internet transformed from a specialized network intended to link professionals into a truly worldwide communications tool. Marketers have not been slow to see the possibilities, particularly in business-to-business marketing, and this has from time to time resulted in exaggerated claims being made for the efficiency and usefulness of the net. The internet is the World Wide Web, which allows access to documents whatever the operating format of the computers involved. The web is the main commercial arm of the internet, users can gain access to information, documents, commercial messages, virtual shopping sites, bulletin boards and other sources of information very easily using commercially available search engines. Commercial use of the web falls into two main categories: traffic control sites such as search engines, server and even the telephone and cable companies which charge for access, and destination sites, which are the pages the user is looking for .Destination sites can be divided into presence sites, online storefronts and contents sites. Of course, this is a gross simplification. The web is not only very complex but is also a dynamic , new features appear regularly as might be predictable in a medium that covers nearly the entire world and is used predominately by well educated, innovative people, in the phase of twenty first century consumers are better educated, more confident and harder to influence than ever before .

Internet based marketing in the twenty first century usually rotate around a firm website, the page on the web which can be accessed by web subscribers and which contains information and directions to other pages of internet. A website can contain information’s and directions to other pages of interest. A website can contains a sales pitch, solid information about product or a company, and email address to ask questions or buy credit cards. Websites

often carry detailed pictures of the products they promote a since they promote and, since it is possible to use e-mail to contact the firm, it is possible to conduct sales negotiations and close a sale online.

The rewards of this are obvious, particularly for small firms that need to access a global market. The net is open 24x7 hours a day and can be accessed from anywhere in the world, this means that the users are as local as next room. Small firms therefore do not need to establish a presence in the country to which they hope to export nor they need to employ international sales staff members, nor they do not need to apprehend about exchange rates. The computer can be set up to give prices in either currency the company thinks is appropriate and the prices can be revised instantly to reflect exchange rate fluctuations.

The internet and the web in particular, are much more than extensions of the existing marketing communications tools. Marketers have not always improved their thinking suitably to this and continue to use their websites as advertisements. Latest development in technology allows websites to negotiate with the customer and to learn from customer led events such as purchasing behavior.

1.7. Non-Computer Technology in the Twenty First Century Marketing Communications

The development of satellite, cable and digital television means a glorification of channels. This means more hours of programming with audiences spread across a much wide range of stations. On the one hand, this leads to greater segmentation and easier targeting of audiences, but on the other hand it will mean greater pressure on TV stations revenues as the advertising spend is spread is more thinly. Reductions in the quality and quantity of advertising are likely to result and certainly, reductions in the costs of television advertising are likely to lead to greater access to the medium for small companies. Improvement in print technology allows the production of the new type of advertisement such as double image, 3D etc.

Telesales and telemarketing are also experiencing considerable transformation in the century like, although it is known that people are more likely to buy from a salesperson that they perceive to be similar to them, this has been difficult to put into effect until recently. It is now possible to match up inbound telesales customers with similar to salespeople by using computer database. Telemarketing is undergoing further transformation in the twenty first century marketing communication because of proliferation of telephone, even more than fifteen years ago a substantial number of homes in the developed countries were without telephones, now it is rare to find an individual without phones. Partly this is the result of falling subscription prices owing to competition in the market, and partly it is owing to proliferation of mobile phones, which for some users replace the landline telephone together. Although increasing ownership of mobile phones will eventually lead to more man-to-man contact rather than the current man-to-man contact this is only happens only when they establish the healthy relationship with the consumer.

1.8. Shift of Social Changes in 21st Century Marketing Communication

Shifts in social changes lead to shifts in the style, content and acceptability of marketing communication and acceptability marketing communication and the method of delivery.

In a recent change in the social structures of developed countries is to the increase the emphasis on individualism brought about increasing wealth. Those who are familiar with one of the famous Maslow's Hierarchy needs theory that know as individuals become wealthier and more secure in their social and economic lives they need tend to seek self-actualization and become more individualistic in their behavior. Social security, increased leisure time to pursue social fulfillment and increased financial wealth mean that approximately forty percent of Europeans are now self-actualizing. Many people seeking self-actualization through social campaigning, raising the profile of ethical issues in marketing as well as elsewhere.

In the twenty first century, the typical family is more likely to divorced husband who lives with his new partner and pays maintenance to his ex-wife who look after their children. Much of this social change is one way although

change popularly seen as swinging back and forth like pendulum, there is no evidence for this such as increased individualism is coming about because of increased wealth, conformity would arise only if there were sudden reduction in wealth although this might well happen at some time in the future. Overall marketing in the twenty first century presents many new challenges like green issues, shrinking markets, runaway advances in communication technology and changing attitude to consumption predicate major changes not only in communication techniques but also in communication strategy.

1.9. Trends for Emergence of Marketing Communication

Some factors and situations have contributed towards emergence of integrated marketing communication, we can find out some important trends for the growth of marketing communication in twenty first century. Some trends contributing the advent of integrated marketing communication are as:

1.10. Decrease in Message Credibility

The marginal usefulness of advertising message is being reduced over a period as consumer is exposed to many messages at the same point of time and in the same media in any form. Therefore, there is an urgent need to understand and apply a scientific procedure for developing integrated marketing communication to avoid clutter the current messy environment.

1.11. Decrease in Cost of Database Marketing

It is possible to use computer and internet technology to group consumer data and identify meaningful patterns on consumer media usage and behavior. The cost of such database was very prohibitive in the past restricting its access to few media planners.

1.12. Reduction in Effectiveness of Mass Media and Increase in Cost of Media

There is a reduction in the effectiveness of mass media as the audience preference is changing over a period. People have started developing niche interests and hence, the media usage behavior is well fragmented. Due to over dependence on the mass media, almost all the major players select the same medium for communicating to the same audience.

1.13. Increase in Mergers and Acquisitions of Marketing communication Companies

There is large number of incidents of consolidations happening among media and advertising companies, these phenomenon agencies to consolidate their local presence. Over a realization, the various agencies are required to provide multiple services to firms and corporations.

1.14. Shift in Information Technology

The changes in information technology are likely to provide more consumers with the ability to communicate and even purchase through a variety of means .Emergence of internet and e-commerce, both as a method of transition and medium of communication, has changed the way people used to shop, interact and communicate in the past. Online communication, internet technology, printing technology with such a combination of rich mix and high tech alternatives to reach customers poses a challenge to media and communication managers to use integrated marketing communication give better communication in short and long run in the emerging markets.

1.15. Emerging Trends and Strategies in Developing Marketing Communication

These days markets are becoming more and more fragmented; customers are divided on different micro-bases compared to the traditional macro, demographical bases of mass marketing. Managers have started concentrating in

micro markets and are developing differential target marketing approach for each market. A micro marketing approach helps in handling complex market structure. Each micro markets needs distinct communication process in twenty first century marketing.

In the era of twenty first century, the primary task of every firm is to devise a competitive strategy. Corporate strategy depends on understanding the business and marketing environments in emerging markets. Only after a proper understanding of the market environment can be determined in communication planning, Therefore strategies should be clear that flows thematically across the corporate and marketing plans to promotion planning process of the firm. Today's scenario communication strategy cannot ignore the imperatives competitive advantages. It is clear that and suggested that a full appreciation of marketing communication strategy is not possible without proper firm strategy so a firm strategy built with marketing communication strategy in competitive emerging markets.

2. CONCLUSIONS

Marketing communication challenges require that evolve old business practices, create some new ones, and even discontinue using conventional wisdom that has proven to be obsolete. The future of marketing communications is like most other things, uncertain. The certainty is that the world in general is changing rapidly, the pace of change is increasing and marketing communication must reflect those changing things if it is relevant in the twenty first century. What need to change are not only the tools of marketing communications although the impact of information technology and rapid broadcast communication will cause change enough. Advances in communications technology, increased interaction between buyer and producer and increasing integration of marketing communication will lead to change in both the levels and the impact of communication. Some factors and situations have contributed towards emergence of integrated marketing communication, we can find out some important trends for the growth of marketing communication in twenty first century.

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