

Prospects & Future of Integrated Marketing Communication Techniques in Global Marketing Services

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Abstract

The opening vignettes how the roles of advertising and other of promotion are changing in the modern world of marketing. In the past, marketers such as the U.S. Army relied primarily on advertising through traditional mass media to promote their products. They integrated their advertising efforts with a variety of other communication techniques such as web sites on the Internet, direct marketing, and sales promotion. They are also recognizing that these communication tools are most effective when they are coordinated with other elements of the marketing program.

The various marketing communication tools used by the U.S. Army as part of its recruitment efforts exemplify how marketers are using an integrated marketing communications approach to reach their customers.

Promotional expenditures in international markets have grown as well. Both foreign and domestic companies spend billions more on sales promotion, personal selling, direct marketing, event sponsorships, and public relation, all-important parts of a firm's marketing communication program.

Introduction:

"Integrated marketing communication - IMC, is the process of developing and implementing various forms of persuasive communication programs with customer and prospects over time". -He, also, states, "the goal of IMC is to influence. IMC considers all source of brand or company contacts which or prospect has with the product or service as potential delivery channels for the future messages. IMC makes use of all forms of communication which are relevant to the customer and prospects, and to which they might be receptive"

The American Association of Advertising Agencies defines integrated "recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluate the strategic role of a variety of communication disciplines and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency and maximum communication impact".

Marketing depends heavily on an effective communication flow between the company and the consumers. Manufacturing a product and making it available in the market is only a part of company job. It is equally important, or perhaps more important, to make it known to the consumer that the product is available in the market. In a competitive market, where several firms are striving to win over the consumer, it is not enough if the availability of a product only is made known to consumer. It is also essential to propagate the distinctive features of the product. The process does not end here, either. The firm should also get the feedback on how the consumer accepts its products and interpret its messages.

This multidimensional function can be carried out only through an effective, continuous and two way flow of information between the firm and the consumers.

The firm attempts to communicate with the consumer through quality product, colorful packages, written messages, pictures and symbols, attractive show rooms and efficient salesmen. When these various stimuli are received and interpreted by the consumer, marketing communication takes place. The communication also involves feedback from the consumer to the company on how the total product offering of the company is received by the market.

Components of integrated marketing communication

- 1) Sales Promotion
- 2) Advertising
- 3) Direct Marketing
- 4) Public Relation
- 5) Sales Force

Sales Promotion:

In the case of services, the sales promotion techniques, which are used, are varied and varies in number. In services, sales promotion techniques are used to offset their perishable characteristic for e.g. family discount offered by hotel in off season in which two children under twelve are allowed free of charge and to overcome the problem faced by customer in evaluating and judging the quality before making the purchase.

Advertising:

Advertising is the art of influencing human action, awakening of the desire to possess product. It is a mass persuasion and it is any form of publicity given to product or service at the expense of the person who wants such publicity for bringing his product and service to the notice of the general public. The real objective of advertising is effective communication between producer and consumer.

Direct Marketing:

Without using marketing middlemen selling goods to consumers is called direct marketing. Direct marketing includes telemarketing, E-mail, catalogues, interaction etc. Now many direct marketers use direct marketing to build a long-term relationship with the customer, i.e. Relationship marketing marketer sends birthday card, small gifts, information materials, etc.

Public Relations:

Public relation (PR) involves a variety of programs designed to promote a company's image or its individual products. Most companies have public relation department that monitors the attitudes of the public towards the organization and distributes the information and communication to build goodwill.

Sales Force:

Companies spend huge amounts on business and sales force promotion tools. These tools are used to gather business leads, impress and reward customers, and motivate the sales force to achieve greater heights through increased efforts.

Role of IMC branding

One of the major reasons for the growing importance of integrated marketing communication over the past decade is that it plays a major role in process of developing and sustaining brand identity and equity.

Brand identity is a combination of many factors, including the name, logo, symbols, design, packaging, and performance of a product or service as well as the image or type of association that come to mind when customer think about a brand. It is the sum of all points of encounter or contact that consumer has with the brand, and it extends beyond the experience or outcome of using it. These contacts can also result from various forms of integrated marketing communication activities used by a company, includes mass-media advertising, sales promotion offers, sponsorship activities at sporting or entertainment events Internet and direct-mail, brochures, or videos.

Marketing recognize that in the modern world of marketing there are many different opportunities and methods for contacting current and prospective customer to provide them with information about a company and brands. A successful IMC program requires

that marketers find the right combination of communication tools and techniques, define their role and the extent to which they can or should be used, and coordinate their use.

Process of Integrated marketing communication (IM C):

Integrate Marketing Communication basically involves market segmentation. Hence the Integrate Marketing Communication process means actually the process of market segmentation.

Market segmentation:

A 'Marketing segment' is a meaningful buyer group having similar wants. Segmentation is a customer oriented marketing strategy. Market segmentations gives formal recognition to the facts that wants and desires of consumer are diverse and so there is possibility of formulating of a specific market offering to a specific category or segment of the market. So that supply will have the best correlation with demand.

Varied complex buyer behavior is the root cause of market segmentation.

The Evolution of IMC

During the 1980s many companies came to see the need for more of strategic integration of their promotional tools these firms began moving toward the process of integrated marketing communications which involves coordinating the various promotional elements and other marketing activities that communicate with a firms customers. As marketers embraced the concept of integrated marketing communications they began asking their ad agencies to coordinate the use of variety of promotional tools rather than relying primarily on media advertising agencies and use other types of promotional specialists to develop and implement various components of their promotional plans.

Many agencies responded to the call for synergy among the promotional tools by acquiring PR (public relation), sales promotion, and direct-marketing companies and touting themselves as IMC agencies that offer one-stop shopping for all their clients' promotional needs. Some agencies became involved in these non-advertising areas to gain control over their clients' promotional programs and budgets and struggled to offer any real value beyond creating advertising. However, the advertising industry soon recognized that IMC was more than just a fad. Terms such as new advertising, orchestration, and seamless communication were used to describe the concept of integration. A task force from the American Association of Advertising Agencies developed one of the first definitions of integrated marketing communications.

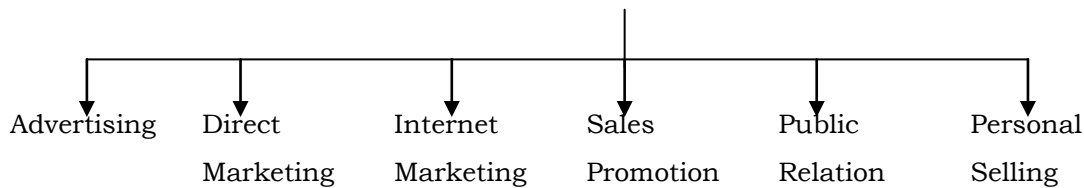
Reasons for growing importance of IMC

The move toward integrated marketing communication is one of the most significant marketing developments that occurred during the 1990s, and the shift towards this approach is continuing as we begin the new century. Both large and small companies are adopting the IMC approach to marketing communication planning and strategy and his become popular among firms marketing consumer product and services as well as business – to- business marketers. There are a number of reasons are that they understand the value of strategically integrating the various communication functions rather than having them operate autonomously.

The move to integrated marketing communications also reflects an adaptation by marketers to a changing environment, particularly with respect to consumer, technology, and media.

Tools for IMC

IMC



Advertising:

Advertising is defined as any paid form of non personal communication about an organization, product, service, or idea by any identified sponsor. Advertising is the best known and most widely discussed form of promotional tool, particularly for companies whose products and services are targeted at mass consumer markets.

Direct Marketing

In which organization communicate directly with target customer to generate a response and a transaction. Direct marketing tools and companies that distribute their products through traditional distribution channels or have their own sales force are also using techniques.

Internet Marketing

While the Internet is changing the ways companies design and Implements their entire business and marketing strategies, it is also affecting their marketing communication programs. Thousands of companies, ranging from large multinational corporations to small local firms, have develop websites to promote their products and services, by providing current and potential customers with information, as well as to entertain and interact with consumers.

Sales Promotion

Sales promotion is generally broken into two major categories: consumer-oriented and trade-oriented activities. Consumer-oriented sales promotion is targeted to the ultimate user of a product or service and includes couponing, sampling, premiums, rebates, contests, sweepstakes, and various points of purchase materials. Trade-oriented sales promotion is targeted toward marketing intermediaries such as wholesalers, distributors, and retailer.

Public Relation

It is important to recognize the distinction between publicity and public relation. When an organization systematically plans and distributes information in an attempt to control and manage its image and the nature of the publicity it receives, it is really engaging in a function known as public relation.

Personal Selling

The final element of an organizations promotional mix is personal selling, a firm of person-to-person communication in which a seller attempts to assist and persuade prospective buyer to purchase the company's product or service or to act on an idea. Unlike advertising, personal selling involves direct contact between buyer and seller, either face-to-face or through some form of telecommunications such as telephone sales.

Developing the Integrated Marketing Communication Program

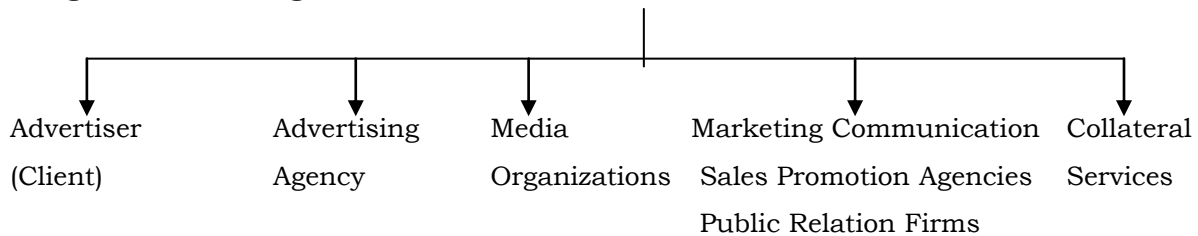
Developing the IMC program is generally the most involved and detailed step of the promotional planning process, each promotional –mix element has certain advantages and limitations. At this stage of the planning process, decisions have to be made regarding the role and important of each element and their coordination with one another.

For example, the advertising program will have its own set of objectives, usually involving the communication of some message or appeal to a target audience. A budget will

be determined, providing the advertising manager and the agency with some idea of how much money is available for developing the ad campaign and purchasing media to disseminate the ad message.

The Integrated Marketing Communication Process

Integrated Marketing Communication Process



The integrated marketing communication process can be divided into five major groups:

The advertisers, or client, are the key participants in the process. The advertiser also assumes major responsibility for developing the marketing program and making the final decisions regarding the advertising and promotional program to be employed.

However, many organizations use an advertising agency, an outside firm that specializes in the creation, production and placement of communication message and they may provide other services to facilitate the marketing and promotions process.

Media Organizations are another major participant in the advertising and promotions process. While the media perform many other function that help advertisers understand their markets and their customers, a medium's primary objective is to sell itself as a way for companies to reach their target markets with their messages effectively.

The next groups of participants are organizations that provide specialized marketing communications services. They conclude direct marketing agencies, sales promotion agencies, interactive agencies & public relation funds these organizations provide services in their areas of expertise.

The final participants shown in the promotions process are those that provide collateral services, the provide range of support functions used by advertiser agencies, media organizations & specialized marketing communications firms.

Advantages of Global Marketing

A global marketing strategy and advertising program offer certain advantages to a company, including the following:

- ❖ Economies of scale in production and distribution.
- ❖ Lower marketing and advertising costs as a result of reductions in planning and control.
- ❖ Lower advertising production costs.
- ❖ A consistent international brand and company image.

Advocates of global marketing and advertising contents that standardized products are possible in all countries if marketers emphasize quality, reliability, and low prices. They say people everywhere want to by the same products and live the same way. Product standardization and global marketing also enable companies to roll out products faster into world market.

A number of companies have been very successful using a global advertising approach, including Coca-Cola, Xerox, American Express, and British Airways. The advertising theme for the global campaign was "The Best a Man Can Get".

Prospects of Global integrated Marketing Communication:

Marketers are continually searching for global consumer markets segments to which

products and services can be advertised in a similar fashion all over the world. Many companies are recognizing that the most global segment of all is the youth of the world as they amazing similarities in tastes, interests, languages, and attitudes.

The same trend that exists among advertising agencies in the united state also occurs in the international arena. Instead of being called IMC, however, it is known as GIMC, or a globally integrated marketing communication program. The goal is still the same - to coordinate marketing efforts. The challenges are greater due to large national and cultural differences in target markets.

In the past, marketers could employ to different strategic for global companies. One was to standardize the product and message across countries. The goal this approach was generating economies of scale in production while creating global product using then same promotional theme.

The second approach to global marketing was called adaptation. Product and marketing messages were designed for and adapted to individual countries. Thus the manner in which a product was marketed in France was different they in Italy, India, or Australia.

Conclusion

Integrate marketing communication takes advantages of the effective management of the communicational channel. Within the marketing mix of product, price, distribution systems, and promotion firms that speak with and clear voice is able to coordinate and integrate all marketing tools. The goal is to have a strong positive impact on consumers, businesses, and other end users.

From the development of a marketing plan, the IMC program expand to include ethics and social issue; a promotional analysis program; brand and firm image management; understanding of customer and business to business buyer behaviors; other traditional marketing activities such as trade promotion, consumer promotion, and personal selling, as well as tactical promotion; and the completion of the evaluation process, which begin the planning process again.

An additional challenge is the decline in effectiveness of mass media advertising. IMC helps companies find new ways to contact consumers with a unified message. When a firm is involved in an international setting, a GIMC, or globally integrated marketing communication system, can be at great value.

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