

## A Study on The Effects of Marketing Communication Using Integrated Marketing Communication

G. Sai Raghunath<sup>1</sup>, M.Mrunalini<sup>2</sup>

Assistant professor<sup>1</sup>, Assistant Professor<sup>2</sup>

MBA Department, Sri Mittapalli College of Engineering, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh-522233.

**A B S T R A C T** - Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is one of the needed concepts in a competitive edge. IMC is defined as an across-functional process for creating and nourishing profitable relationships with customers and other stakeholders by strategically controlling or impacting all messages sent to these groups. It ensures that all forms of communications and messages are carefully linked together. This study investigates the effectiveness of marketing communication in an Iranian automaker named Khodro using IMC system. The study tries to audit the rate of marketing relationship integrity and its outcome on organization performance. The study designs a questionnaire and distributes it among 384 randomly selected people who use this firm's services and Cronbach alpha has been calculated as 0.974. Hypotheses of this survey are examined by Pearson correlation test as well as pairwise t-student tests. The results show the effects of integrated marketing

Communication on organization performance. In addition, there is a significant positive correlation relationship between integrated marketing communication with mission marketing, Cross functional Strategic Planning and Interactivity. Finally, there is a significant positive correlation relationship between dimensions of IMC.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Recently marketers have turned away from mass marketing and they have concentrated more on integrated marketing. Meanwhile, advances in communications technology and the rapid growth of direct marketing may influence on the nature of marketing communications. Marketers who attempt to build relationships with different sectors and various markets have considered variety of methods and tools to increase sales by promoting and encouraging the development of policies. As a result, consumers have been exposed to different marketing communications.

Marketing is a set of activities to create value exchange between business and customers (Shimp, 1993). It involves the exchange of information between producer and client (Pearson, 1996), it identifies essential customers' needs (Hersey & Blanchard, 1988). Customers cannot differentiate between the sources of the messages as marketers. In terms of consumer advertising, messages from various data channels are merged and the boundaries often disappear. Conflicting messages from various data sources are the causes of the different images that people have from the company and the different products will be distorted. In most cases, firms cannot merge or integrate different communication channels, thereby establishing heterogeneous communication with customers.

Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) systems can integrate all messages and pictures of the product in customer' mind (Kotler, 2003). It includes all routes that consignees read, see or even make sense of single message (Stephens et al., 1996). In today's competitive era not only the means of the access to clients but also the ways that clients can refer to organization should be integrated (Ried, Mike (2005). IMC means

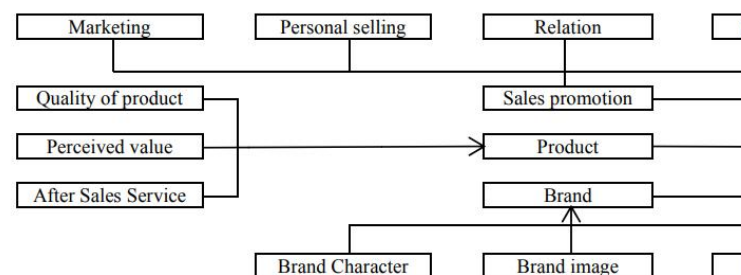
a cross-functional process for creating and nourishing profitable relationships with customers and other stakeholders by strategically controlling or impacting all messages sent to these groups and encouraging data-driven, purposeful dialogue with them (Duncan , 2002). It also means emphasize that the integration of marketing communication should not be understood as a simple uniformity of the message transmitted across different channels (Kitchen et al., 2004). Companies must measure the means of communication from the perspective of performance-cost with customer's awareness and motivation to purchase. They must able to choose appropriate mix of communication tools and to avoid doing repetitive, unequal and inadequate work. Consumers' perception of a company includes different messages that they receive including media advertising, pricing, packaging design, direct marketing, public relations, sales promotion, store displays and even the place of purchase for a product or service (Schultz & Martin, 1979). Companies need "a 360-degree view" of the customer to fully understand all different ways that communication may influence customer behavior in their daily lives (Belch et al.,

2008). The automotive industry is one of the largest industries in the world, where more than a hundred million people are employed in the industry. According to Drucker (1995), the automotive industry is mother of industries. Finding the relationship between the implementation of IMC and effectiveness in organizations of Iran Khodro is due to a large breadth of activities, having multiple products for different budgets, the huge number of customers, availability, importance of the industry and the relationship between other industries is the primary focus of this research. If the organization does not have a clear plan for communicating with their customers may face with confusion.

ICM is used to fix the problem, and to integrate the image of organization for customer. In this technique, the transferred image to an audience from marketing activities can be reviewed and efforts to integrate the activities surrounding the main objective are investigated. In this research, we will try using these techniques in an actual market analysis and offer possible suggestions. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of integrated marketing communications by using IMC.

## 2. THE PROPOSED STUDY

This study intends to evaluate the effectiveness of marketing communication by using ICM in Iran Khodro Co. The population of this study includes all customers, who purchase and use products of this company in city of Tehran/Iran. The sample size is calculated as follows, 
$$n = \frac{N \cdot Z^2 \cdot p \cdot (1-p)}{\alpha^2 \cdot \epsilon^2} \quad (1)$$
 where N is the sample size,  $p=1-q$  represents the probability,  $z_{\alpha/2}$  is CDF of normal distribution and finally  $\epsilon$  is the error term. For our study we assume  $p = 0.5$ ,  $z_{\alpha/2} = 1.96$  and  $\epsilon=0.05$ , the number of sample size is calculated as  $N=384$ . The study uses a questionnaire consists of 35 questions. There are not several models, which represent the relationship between elements of IMC, as the main question of this research is the Evaluation of effectiveness of Marketing Communication by using IMC in

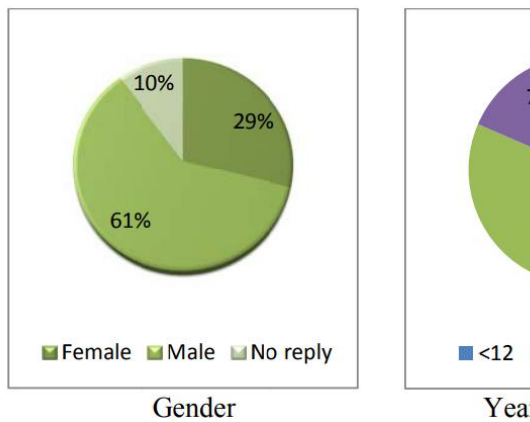


## 3. MATERIAL

In this day and age, the engine behind direct marketing is usually a sophisticated database. The collection of data is growing at an exponential rate as it is continuously stored, in massive amounts, by search engines, including; Google, Bing and Yahoo. In addition, more information is being gathered by social media giants, like; Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, SnapChat, Instagram, et cetera. The advances in technology are increasingly allowing marketers to know more about their audiences. For instance, marketing are benefiting from the growth of geo-location data services like satellites, near-field communication and global positioning systems that track users' movements that measure traffic and other real-time phenomena. New anonymous cookie-less data capture methods are connecting consumer data with matching geolocation-based data. In the past; businesses did not have these means to capture, store and analyse such data. Now, companies can economically gather and store all data from each and every customer transaction. These methods are increasingly empowering marketers to hyper-target consumers with real-time mobile ad campaigns; before, during and after in-store activity, as they drive conversions.

Geolocation capabilities not only enable advertisers to capitalise on a lead, at the right time, but they can also offer valuable insights into shopping habits and consumer behaviours. As a result, customers are continuously being targeted with relevant content.

Evidently, the internet has made it even easier for marketing managers to measure the results of their direct marketing campaigns. This is often achieved by using a specific website landing page which is directly related to the promotional material. A call to action will ask the customer to visit the landing page, and the effectiveness of the campaign can be measured by taking the number of promotional messages distributed and dividing it into the number of responses. Another way to measure the results is to compare the projected sales or the generation of leads with the actual sales or leads after a direct advertising campaign.



For example, Google may have access to consumer profiles more than any other company, because it knows when consumers view ads in Google Search, Gmail, YouTube, Google Maps, and Android apps. It also knows where consumers go, both online and in the physical world, based on cookies and location data from their phones. The company will shortly be in a position to track credit and debit card transactions and link them to online consumer behaviour. Google's moves will bring significant marketing opportunities to advertisers. It may appear that businesses could leverage themselves if Google provides them with relevant data on the customers' needs and wants. Google could also indicate when prospects need products or services, and what price they are willing to pay. These answers allow marketers to better target individual consumers. However, these

advances will also raise privacy concerns. There may be wary consumers who may want to separate the greater personalisation of content from advertising. For this reason, they may install ad blockers, tracking blockers, and they could decide to switch off their phone's location services

The strategies, methods, and metrics of direct and interactive marketing are becoming more central to the businesses' marketing strategies as digital technologies are also allowing interactive marketing communications to take place through television and mobile devices. Recently, many individuals are using their mobile devices to construct new experiences by attaching personal meanings to their tourist experiences. Whereas the use of social networks allows them to engage, communicate and co-create in the online world. The tourism organisations' websites are using social media networks as well as interactive communications to enable tourists to personalise their sites with their experiences. They empower tourists and facilitate the co-creation of content for the benefit of other prospective tourists. Therefore, social media might contribute to the branding of tourist destinations. Very often, potential tourists rely on the

experiences of others for their decision-making, due to the experiential nature of the tourism products. Therefore, social media could have an impact on the travellers' holiday plans.

Different types of tourists may have different attitudes toward using online tools, including; social media in their travel management. For instance, travellers may use price comparison sites, or may avail themselves of online travel search engines to learn about available hotels. Given their important role in facilitating the travellers' access to online tourism domains, social media has become an important interactive tool for prospective tourists who search for travel information. Moreover, social media users and their reviews may impact on tourism marketing. For example, independent reviews and ratings may often be considered as trustworthy sources for prospective tourists, as they provide objective information on tourism products and services.

### **Planning the Integrated Marketing Communications Campaign**

The integrated marketing communications campaigns are drawn from all of the

elements of the promotional mix which have been discussed in this chapter. The businesses' communications objectives may not change much over time. However, the promotional campaigns may run for a few weeks, sometimes even for a few years. Consequently, it is usual for the overall promotional campaigns to be based on clear strategies that will help the respective business to achieve its goals and objectives. The different marketing tools are distinct from each other in terms of their purpose. However, they may be used together in unison – something which is easier said than done. Therefore, marketing managers are faced with important decisions with respect to their IMC planning, organisation, implementation and control. They need to coordinate the various promotional activities into a concerted, organised, promotional campaign. They will have to allocate financial resources in support of every marketing tool; and coordinate their spending so that all customer touch points are getting consistent messages. The marketing communications activities will be planned according to specified timescales, which outline the dates by which the business hopes to achieve all or some of its promotional objectives.

There are many marketing communications tools, including digital media and traditional channels. Managers must also ensure that each of their promotional activities will truly represent their product or services, in a consistent manner. The worst thing that can happen is to have different media conveying conflicting marketing messages. Such discrepancies may confuse customers and undermine brands. One practical way to avoid inconsistency is to review the IMC programme on a regular basis.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

In this paper, we have presented an investigation to learn more about Evaluation of effectiveness of Marketing Communication by using Integrated Marketing Communication in an automaker in Iran named Khodro. The study has distributed a questionnaire among some randomly selected people and using Spearman correlation ratios as well as Stepwise regression analysis, the study has determined that products and services dissatisfied consumers of Iran Khodro. Transmitted messages from firm are not coordinated and integrated with each other. According to the results we can say that the messages transmitted are not integrated,

and all units of the affected product company engaged in communications, branding and sales promotion agencies did not act in accordance with the main objective and coherent picture of the organization. Organizations and companies will be successful if they do their best in the fastest possible time to the changing needs of humanity, and go beyond satisfying customers' needs. The customer compares consumer products in terms of price, quality and shape. The provided quality should be commensurate with the money spent by clients. The results of our study are consistent with findings of Pirsig in terms of product quality, perceived value of the product and after sales service. Today after sales services is one of the important factors that owners of factories and manufacturing should consider. If they pay attention to this service and do it correctly, it can increase customer satisfaction and convert them into permanent customers. The reality is that in today's turbulent world, having reliable Brand is a valuable capital.

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