



Marketing Communication in 21st Century

SUSHILKUMAR M. PARMAR

Ph. D. Scholar,
Gujarat University, Ahmedabad

Abstract:

In other words, marketing communication is the foremost important element of marketing mix which is nothing but 'Promotion Mix'. Promotion mix or marketing communication consists of advertising, publicity, personal selling & public relation. Now product placement is also considered one of the constituents of marketing communication. To great extent success of marketing plan and achievement of marketing objective rely on marketing communication. In this article the author wants to convey the communication of marketing and its impact in 21st century.

Keywords: 21st Century, Communication, Marketing, Marketing communication

1. Introduction

Apparently, IT has completely transformed the way of communication & its medium which resulted into the development of internet and emergence of social networking sites such as face book, twitter, blogs and webinar Whatsapp, email, SMS, MMS. No business is imagined without communication as it holds a significant place in any business activity whether it is within the organization or outside. Communication to stakeholders is an indispensable in any organization, let's say communication between marketer (producer) and consumer, a message that a producer wishes to convey should effectively & timely be reached to the consumer. Traditionally a producer would convey his message through only available limited print media or television or radio, but now latest techniques have made possible speedy, sound & cost effective communication between stakeholders and producer. This paper basically talks about 'Marketing Communication' which means a message whether it is oral or written from marketer to consumer.

2. What Is Marketing Communication?

In simple words, exchange or transferring any information about product or service from producer to consumer is known as marketing communication. Marketing communication is a process whereby a producer sends and encodes the message about product or service through creative advertisement, sales promotion or public relation to the target customers who will then decode the received message, react to it and develop some understanding. Marketing communications is a subset of the overall subject area known as marketing. Marketing has a marketing mix that is made of price, place, promotion, product (known as the four P's), that includes people, processes and physical evidence, when marketing services (known as the seven P's). The whole focus of marketing communication is on consumer. As it is said above, marketing communication is an essential part of marketing mix (promotion mix) where a message is passed from organization to market to attain predetermined marketing goals and objectives. With the passage of time, traditional marketing communication tools have been replaced by email, internet, blogs, sms, mms, webinar, online marketing, company's websites and other shopping addresses on internet. Marketing communication process or tools should be such that can reap maximum benefit to the organization.

3. Process of Marketing Communication

Marketing communication process has an important place in achievement of overall objectives of any enterprise. It is therefore designed carefully and certain strategic decisions pertaining to it has to be made so that possibility of its failure can be overcome and it becomes advantageous to the company. Below figure indicates marketing communication process.....

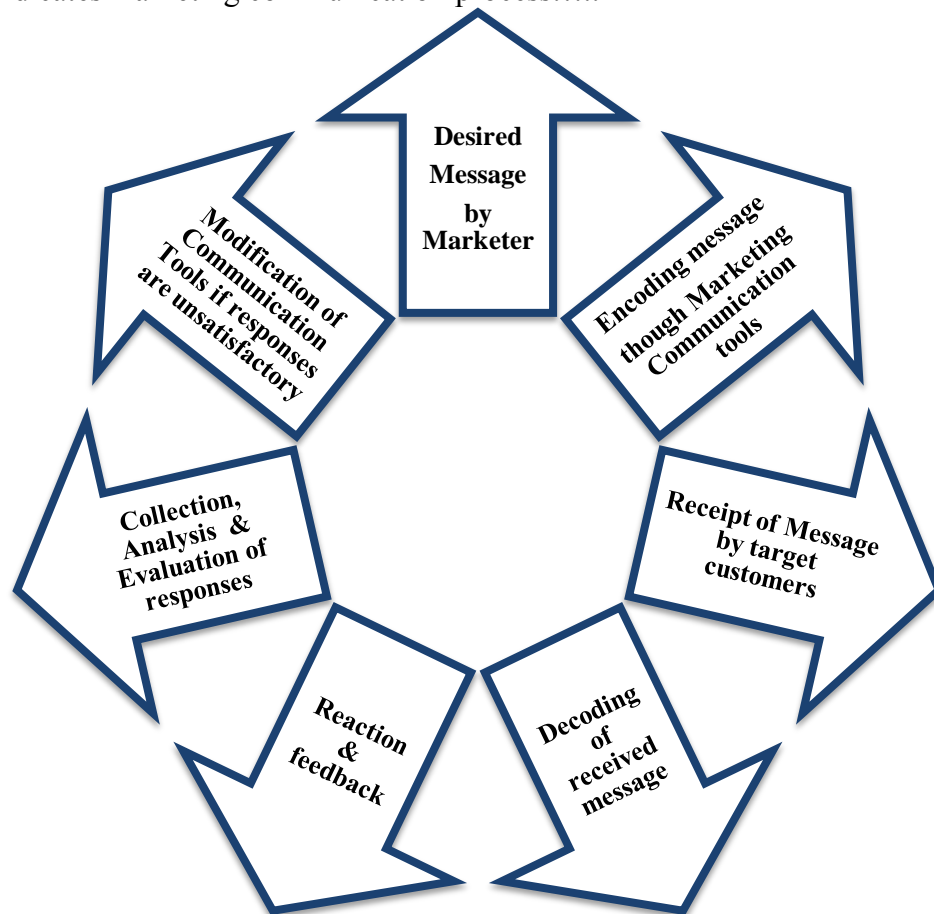


Fig. 1: Marketing Communication Process

Above diagram depicts the whole marketing communication process which starts with a message that a marketer wants to convey in target market (i.e.) to customers, here objective may be to create awareness about product or service, to make the sales happen, to build brand loyalty and so on. However the desired message cannot directly travel itself to customers therefore suitable channels such as marketing communication tools can be used for example designing of a creative advertisement for a product to seek customer attention and to get that product's image registered in customers mind. It should be noted that a marketer should take a help of such tools that can reap maximum return on investment. Having been stimulated or attracted customers may react to the message sent by a producer. So it is necessary for a producer to collect customers' feedback & responses pertaining to his message and so their responses need to be studied, analysed & evaluated. If feedback received is positive & satisfactory, it is said to be successful marketing communication process, and if not, then a marketing manager has to redesign & modify marketing communication tools & process.

4. Marketing Communication Tools

Various marketing communication tools facilitate marketing communication process. No single tool is used for achieving different marketing communication objectives. Selection of tools depends on type of customers, geographical convergence, availability of finance, urgency, objective of marketing communication and etc. Following could be used as marketing communication tools such as.... Advertising, Sales Promotion, Direct Marketing, Personal Selling, Public Relation, Product Placement



Fig. 2: Marketing Communication Tools

A marketing manager should wisely use a combination of marketing communication tools in order to make marketing communication process cost effective and successful.

4.1 Advertising

Advertising is used as common tool of communication because of its cost effectiveness, wider reach & easy to access (such as newspaper, magazine, television or radio). Advertising is a creative art of communication and written or oral presentation made by a producer about product or service with the purpose of making a group of customers aware of or increasing sale and to acquire competitive advantages over rivals.

Hepner has defined advertising as creative communicative activity conducted through such mass educational media as newspapers, magazines, radio and television to make people informed and to encourage them to buy. Whereas Frank Presbery opines that advertising is a printed, written, oral and illustrated art of selling. Its object is to encourage sales of the advertiser's products and to create in the minds of people individually or collectively an impression in favour of the advertiser's interest. Advertising should be so designed that can stimulate a customer to have a product or service offered by a producer and it should be capable of creating and maintaining demand and a definite group of customers. In most of the cases, a company hires advertising agency and pays good amount for influencing and attention seeking advertisement. Marketer should keep in mind following while designing advertisement

- Relevant content
- Creative idea but it should not be misleading or exaggerating in nature
- Suitable medium of advertising
- Type of customers and accessibility
- Geographical coverage
- Availability of finance

Advertising is possible through news paper, internet, television, radio, banner, brochures, magazines, and journal and so on.

4.2 Sales Promotion

It is a misconception that the objective of advertising and sales promotion is the same. But the ultimate purpose of sales promotion measures is to promote or increase sales, to maintain present customers and earn new customers. In simple words sales promotion is nothing but steps taken for increasing sales. “Those marketing activities other than personal selling, advertising, publicity that simulate consumer purchasing and dealer effectiveness, such as display, shows and expositions, demonstration and various non recurrent selling efforts not in the ordinary routine” (The American Marketing Association)

There are mainly four types of sales promotion activities namely sales promotion through salesman, dealers, customers and advertising. Following are major sales promotion tools or measures.

Sales Promotion Tools		
Customer Oriented	Trader Oriented	Company Oriented
Free samples	Price reduction	Conference of traders & salesman
Mobile Recharge	Return in advertisement	Competition for traders and salesmen
Discount coupons	Free goods on wholesale purchase	Special gift
Buy one get one free	Reward for the first selection	Trade Exhibition
Giving gift, voucher		
Prize on purchase		
Scheme of cash refund		
Prize of loyalty		
Demonstration		
Guarantee & warranty		
Attractive Packing		
After sale service		

4.3 Direct Marketing

With the emergence of information and technology era, remarkable change is seen in the way of direct marketing where an organization can communicate directly to the end users with help of variety of tools such as email, sms, e brochures, telecalling, product catalogues, and promotional letters and so on. A message can be directly conveyed to the end users at minimum cost. In some of the direct marketing tools, customers' immediate feedback can be received.

4.4 Personal Selling

Another major tool of marketing communication is personal selling where company's sales forces are directly involved in selling function. According to American Marketing Association, “Personal selling is an oral presentation in conversation with one or more prospective purchasers for the purpose of making sale.” Whereas Major Scott defines personal selling is a part of salesman's business to create demand by demonstrating that the need does exist, although before his visit there was no consciousness of that need.

Personal Selling is done through salesman at counter and travelling salesman. Herbert Casson has given RIDSAC formula for successful salesmanship...

R – Reception, I – Inquiry, D – Display, S – Selection, A – Addition & C – Commendation

Below are steps that a travelling salesman has to follow while doing the task of personal selling

- Finding Prospectus
- Sales Presentation
- Convincing the potential buyer & handling objection
- Closing sale

- Post sale service
- Feedback Information

4.5 Product Placement

Product placement is one of the tools of marketing communication and mostly adopted marketing strategy where a product is placed movies, events or serials to seek customer's attention. Eg: L'Oreal brands in movie Aisha, Lakhme Fashion Week, Having been impressed by such brand, highly loyal customer can be ready to pay premium price as placement of such product creates a standard.

4.6 Public Relation

In simple words, public relation is a practice managing the communication between an organization and its public. The primary objective of PR is to initiate relationship between the firm and potential customers. The PR officer shares necessary information about the organization such as products, product support services and new development. Arrangement of competitions, fairs, conference, press meeting, use of blogs and other social networking sites such as tweeter, facebook etc. are major tactics to develop public relations with regular and potential customers. Most of the times on company's website, there is a special link for Public Relation.

5. Conclusion

In the nutshell, marketing communication has a significant place in the entire marketing management operation. In order to successfully achieve marketing objectives, a marketing manager is required to carefully choose the suitable marketing communication tools. The present time witnesses the use of modern technology based marketing communication tools

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