

Marketing communications strategy

[Sociology](#), [Communication](#)



In the case, Benetton is using an offbeat and customer-centric marketing perspective in a highly saturated industry. In terms of retail clothing, there are high barriers in this market when it comes to getting a marketing message across to the inundated consumer. Therefore, what Benetton is trying to do, as shown in the case, is present itself as an outsider within this saturated market, in order to both appeal to the customer directly, and to confront them with issues of empowerment.

This is related to the chapter's mention of "Customer Empowerment-- Customization: when a company produces individually differentiated products, services, prices, and delivery channels in accordance to the consumer wants/needs" (Chapter 12). The case also involves issues discussed such as heightened competition (retail fashion being a very competitive industry), industry convergence, and disintermediation, or removing the middleman and going straight to the consumers in terms of getting across a fresh and unconventional marketing message.

Success behind strategy The success behind Benetton's marketing strategy is the ability of the company's marketers to place the company in an outsider role, and also a role of post-modern commentary on culture. Essentially, this says to the customer that by identifying with the unique or different postmodern advertising of Benetton, and its messages of political and social concern used in advertising, they are identifying with a lifestyle, not just a brand.

This was one of the early strategies that was then taken to such extremes by other 80s competitors of Benetton like Swatch and even Nike: by positioning the mainstream retail fashion company in a counter-cultural socio-political

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position through advertising, the individuation of the consumer is assured, as they relate their own individuality or difference with the uniqueness of the advertising. This led to a lot of success for Benetton's marketing.

In short, the success behind Benetton's marketing strategy is the company's ability to place its unique and controversial advertising brand as a lifestyle as well as a fashion choice. Applying Benetton's strategy to another retailer depending on the fashion retailer and the brand awareness of the public, a similar marketing communication strategy to that of Benetton could be either a good move or a bad move.

For a company that already has some degree of guerilla, socio-political or counter-cultural marketing in effect, such as a youth-brand company like Ecko or even a monolith with a lot of money to spend on assimilating youth culture, like Nike, it may be possible to make the marketing communications of Benetton a success. On the other hand, if the brand is something like Abercrombie & Fitch, J. Crew, or Tommy Hilfinger, this is a company that relates its brand not to socio-political turmoil and controversy, but to conservatism and the idea of unchanging classic ideals of fashion.

Therefore, for this type of retail fashion brand with a lot of conservatism in its image, it would be more difficult to successfully integrate a marketing communications strategy similar to that of Benetton. The consumer would not be able to make a logical connection between a brand like Abercrombie & Fitch, and an image of high shock value controversy, which could relate to cognitive dissonance on the part of the consumer, which is something marketers tend to avoid. REFERENCE Benetton—case study. Chapters 12-14