

Imc campaign of apple

[Business](#), [Company](#)



Steve Jobs established the Apple Company in 1971. Since then it has delivered and produced the best products and have become a brand to reckon with. It is one of the most well-known electronics companies of the world and Apple consumers are brand loyal as well as they tend to associate themselves with the brand. The 1984 advertisement of Apple which was shown only once in the Super Bowl revolutionized the advertising industry and helped Apple in creating a brand image.

Soon after the departure of Steve Jobs the company lost its brand image as the advertisements now focused more on the price and features of the product rather than the brand itself. However, Steve Jobs rejoined the company in 1997 and a campaign was launched called “Think Different” which again helped the company restore its brand image in the consumers’ mind. This paper will talk about the IMC campaign of Apple. Introduction of the Organization Apple Inc. is well known for producing stylish, trendy, technologically advanced, and innovative products which are simple in nature and easy to use.

Based in California, America, Apple is a brand introduced by Steve Wozniak, Steve Jobs, and Ronald Wayne on 1st April, 1976 focusing on software and consumer electronics. Consumer electronics include mobile phones, personal computers, portable music players, peripherals, etc. Apple believes in revolutionizing the world by producing products with great quality and technological advancement, whether in electronic devices or software. The personal computers are installed with a world class operating system called the OS X which is highly recommended for publishing and graphic designing.

The portable music player category is lead by Apple iPod and the supported online music store called iTunes. The distinctive advertising campaigns and products from its competitors have provided a unique position in the consumers mind. This builds a strong loyal and devoted consumer base towards Apple Inc. as a brand as well as a company (Wikipedia, 2008). Moreover, due to its appeal, Fortune has rated Apple as the most admired company in the year 2008 (CNNMoney, 2008). Apple has direct or indirect competitors in all the product categories.

The category of personal computers has major brand competitors like HP, Sony, IBM, Acer, Toshiba, etc, and the iPod has competition from other portable music players like Creative Zen, Archos, and Microsoft Zune etc. The iPhone introduced by Apple Inc. is a recent addition to the product category and is a modernizing model in the category of cell phones. It posed to be a big threat to Major cell phone category leaders like Nokia, Blackberry, Sony Ericsson, iMate, etc. Many of the mentioned brands developed cell phones with similar concept, for example, Blackberry Storm, to compete head to head with iPhone. This paper will discuss the IMC campaign of Apple as a brand and as a company.

Buyer Behavior Apple consumers are brand loyal and prefer purchasing Apple products in every category it exists. Demographically, consumers of both genders aged 15 and above, with an income category of middle-level and above are the target customers of Apple. Initially, it was targeted for creative professionals like musicians, artists, editors, photographers, etc, but later consumers of every profession purchased it. People who have interest

intechologydo not mind paying extra for better quality and experience belong to the target market of Apple.

The number of users buying Apple products is increasing, and the number of people switching from Apple to its competitors is very less. The steady growth can be seen as the market share of Apple in the third quarter of 2006 was 6.2% and it moved up to 8.1% during the same quarter of 2007 (Marsal, 2007). Moreover, Market Share of Apple is 10% overall when combined with the iPhone users in the year 2009 (Palmer, 2009). Figure 1 shows the market share ratio of major Brands in 2009. Figure 1 SWOT Analysis Strength Apple has a strong brandloyalty, which results in returning customers.

The consumers purchasing Apple products prefer the same brand in every product category available. Moreover, the cost of gaining new customers is a lot more expensive than keeping an existing one. Also, the number of consumers switching from other brands to Apple is increasing as it can be seen that the market share of Apple is increasing steadily. The position of innovative and technologically advanced products which are simple to use and brief product range catch the attention of consumers as it does not confuse the customers between its own product lines.

Weakness Apple caters the upper-middle income level of people which alienates a huge potential market of low-end product buyers. Apple iPods are also known to have major problems like faulty screens, batteries, and even something severe like iPods burning and melting (Ng, 2009). Even though the company has replaced all the faulty iPods, but it creates a bad reputation

for the company and its products. Moreover, the online music store iTunes has a lot of pressure from the Music industry to increase the price for the download of the mp3.

Even though the music companies make more money in selling through iTunes, but they want to increase their profits by raising the price for download. Therefore, if it increases the price for music downloads, it would show commercial weakness. Lastly, the processor chips used in the Apple computers was supplied by IBM for a long time and in 2005, it switched to Intel processor chips. This decision of shifting can create confusion in the minds of the consumers as they are highly involved with the product.

Apple can introduce a new level of products which are in the low end category, but at the same time don't compromise in quality. This way it can expand its market share and penetrate in a different target audience.

Moreover, the concept of podcasts introduced by Apple, to download and view different radio shows on iPods and other portable music players, can be converted into revenue generating by introducing paid subscriptions or advertisements. Lastly, Apple can enter many other technological product categories as it has a loyal consumer base, and the consumers would purchase the new products readily.

Threats The level of competition is always in the IT industry as technology advances quickly. Therefore, the success of Apple can attract many competitors. Even though Apple invests and is dedicated in research and development to be ahead of its competition, other companies are introducing new technologies to compete with Apple. Moreover, in the race

of technological advancement, some new technology might take over the popularity of Apple. Also, the economic crisis will reduce the demand for Apple products as they are priced higher, and people might delay the purchase decision.

Advertising Tools Apple Inc. is well known for its advertising and marketing campaigns and has won several awards for them. The most influential and well known advertisement is the introduction of Apple advertisement during the Super Bowl in 1984. The commercial was designed by Chiat/Day and directed by the director of Blade Runner, Ridley Scott (Friedman, 1997). The commercial was run once in the whole lifetime, and it created a huge impact on the consumers. The commercial was to target the PC's introduced in 1970's which were considered as tools doing specific tasks.

Apple wanted to introduce the philosophy of 'empowerment' and with the commercial; it was successful to do so. In 1985, the Lemmings ad was introduced and it was not so successful, and it offended many people. Therefore, Sculley chose not to continue with Chiat/Day, and moved the marketing strategy towards more conventional advertisements. The advertisements focused more on the price and features of the product and rarely on the brand image. Since then Apple was destroyed as a brand image and had spent billions of dollars on advertising which went waste.

Later, in 1997 Steve Jobs, joined the company back and reduced the number of projects under research and development. He did this so that, the department could provide greater concentration on projects. Also, he simplified the Apple product line which overlapped (Orchard, 2007). The

rebranding started when three advertising agencies presented new ideas to Steve Jobs. Out of the three, Jobs liked the slogan and the appeal presented by Lee Clow: 'Think Different'. Jobs took full interest in the marketing campaign and reviewed each version after every step with the staff of Chiat/Day.

The environment was computer based and the entire campaign was prepared in a period of 17 days after approval. The campaign included billboards and television commercials for major markets of America like New York and Los Angeles. Even images of celebrities like Joan Baez and Yoko Ono were used. Since Jobs knew them, he could approach them as a friend. The entire ad campaign had a poem written by the copywriter of Chiat/Day, Craig Tanimoto, and read by Richard Dreyfus. Moreover, during the entire campaign, none of the Apple products will be displayed in the advertisements.

Figure 2 shows an advertisement used in the campaign. Figure 2 Apple did not advertise in the regular computer magazines, instead chose popular magazines and magazines related to fashion. This was unique as the IT companies have never thought of doing this before. Also, due to lack of time, they used the models of billboard ads which were created by Jessica Schulman in collaboration with Steve Jobs. This campaign was widely accepted by the audience and it revived the brand image of Apple. The campaign ran for a period of 5 years, and later Apple shifted to 'Switch'.

In the year 2007-2008, Apple spent a sum of \$486 million on advertising campaign called 'Get a Mac' (Blakely, 2009). The ad campaign was designed

by TBWA and it won the 'award for the Most Successful Marketing Campaign of 2007 by Effie Awards' (Cheng, 2007). 'Get a Mac' was a form of negative advertising where the company tears down the competitors in the advertisement. In general, this method can be used in politics, but Apple was one of the major successes in their campaign of negative advertising.

Usually, Apple concentrated on the hardware superiority when compared with its competitors, but for the first time, 'Get a Mac' campaign was targeting users of the competitors. This was done by the characters playing 'a cool young guy personified the Mac (actor Justin Long), while a pudgy, middle-aged nerd (comedian John Hodgman) represented the PC' (Blakely, 2009). The message passed across was simple to understand that it is easy to use a Mac when compared to PC. Also, Mac is for the young and the trendy whereas PC is history. The campaign was a major success and it was viewed and appreciated by millions across the globe on YouTube.

The positive point of the campaign was that Apple took advantage of the problems faced by the operating system launched by Microsoft during that time, and it pointed out the weaknesses and failures through these ads. The excellent marketing campaigns by Apple have created curiosity in the consumers. This can be seen as the iPhone has been one of the most anticipated devices in the history. The press coverage and rumors created for iPhone was unbelievable and the major reason was the secrecy of the looks, features, etc of iPhone.

Anticipation is the most powerful tool in any advertising campaign, and Apple has mastered it. Promotional Tools Apple is known for its arrogance

towards its pricing strategies. It has always delivered premium quality product for a premium price. But there are many ways by which Apple can do price promotions without hurting the brand image (GLG, 2008). During the long term, being stubborn with price is beneficial for the brand, but short term it is harmful as the economic crisis can change the decisions of purchasing Apple products.

Therefore, Apple can introduce seasonal discounts, free peripherals, etc. Creating promotion strategies will support the brand image as the consumers will feel that Apple is supporting them during the economic crisis and is behaving according to the changing environment. Also, there is an annual conference held by Apple Inc. where different new versions of Apple products are unveiled. This is a form of Public Relationship meeting with its consumers. Moreover, the much anticipated products are shown during the Macworld and therefore, the attendance is quite high.

Apple as a brand has many loyal customers, and it also maintains a relationship with them through CRM. Apple sends weekly newsletters to subscribers related to their products. Conclusion Apple as a brand is very superior and has a loyal consumer base. This can be seen from the revolutionizing introductory advertising campaign of Apple during 1984. Till today, it is considered as the most well known advertising in the history. After the departure of Steve Jobs, the company changed its marketing strategy which resulted as a disaster for Apple as a brand and as a company.

A change in the marketing strategy can confuse the customers and can destroy the brand. The 'Think Different' advertising campaign launched

during the rejoining of Steve Jobs helped regain the brand image and attract consumers. The campaign ran for five years and after that Apple launched the ' Get a Mac' campaign. The IMC campaigns of Apple show that it is important to have one voice and message which is clear for the consumers to interpret or else even a popular brand like Apple can face difficulties.