

# How an integrated marketing approach can help generate greater brand impact

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It is no secret that consumers today don't just buy products and services, but focus on the value they can derive from their purchases. The same holds true for the brands they choose. With the new-age, digitally empowered consumers no longer averse to rejecting anything that they deem is not very useful to them, marketers are gradually realising the need to connect with their consumers on a more evolved level in order to generate greater brand impact.

Enter integrated marketing, a marketing strategy which focuses on developing a seamless end-user brand experience across multiple media channels and platforms. But why is this approach being heralded as a game-changer for the marketing landscape? The answer lies in its relevance.

Marketing, for the longest time, has been about delivering a brand's messaging to its target audience. However, in today's dynamic business environment full of marketing chatter, there has to be more to this approach to make it merit-worthy. Be it print, electronic or digital media, consumers are exposed to advertisements and marketing efforts by brands on a regular basis.

This bombardment of information and messaging has served to desensitize audiences to anything that is considered too run-of-the-mill or 'me-too'. Integrated marketing, with its focus on creating consistent brand experiences across various channels, helps brands in breaking through the clutter and reinforcing their brand positioning.

What truly serves to differentiate an integrated marketing approach from other marketing techniques is its focus on engaging, instead of telling. Instead of delivering the relevant messaging, integrated marketing leverages the various tools available at the disposal of a brand to create conversations with its target audience. The buzz generated by TV and print advertisements is often supported by parallel campaigns on radio and social media platforms. Peer-to-peer marketing endeavors are then leveraged to transition the impact produced onto offline and online communities that interact and engage with the brand, making them act as brand evangelists and promote the brand directly and indirectly.

With every marketing effort aimed at complementing everything else that has gone before it, such an integrated approach leads to the creation of a holistic brand image through compelling, homogenous narratives and co-creation. Not only does this focus on cross-channel consistency help marketers in capturing greater mindshare amongst consumers, but also facilitates better recall value in the minds of their target demographics.

Consistency in integrated marketing should not be confused with a lack of creativity, nor should it be taken to mean the repetition of the same message across different media platforms. Brand consistency, instead, is based on an in-depth analysis of the many aspects surrounding its image. Being aware of key aspects such as product experience, design, customer service and messaging is important in creating a successful integrated campaign, as is an understanding of other factors such as market trends, competitor positioning, and consumer involvement.

At the end of the day, integrated marketing is all about ensuring that the brand is never really disconnected from consumers it is targeting. Getting the target audience involved in the process of brand creation can lead to a greater impact for the overall marketing approach and can drive greater returns-on-investment for marketers, highlighting how a small change in approach can make a big difference.