

Marketing
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Marketing Communications, or MarComs, can change levels of awareness, opinions and attitudes. MarComs can even change behaviour such as buying behaviour whether trial purchases, full purchases or repurchases culminating in brand loyalty. Sometimes, the MarComs becomes the key competitive element - the brand itself - building conscious and unconscious relationships with customers.

MarComs can: 1. Inform and make potential customers aware of an offering or make them aware of a particular feature or USP. . Persuade them to change their attitude or to consider purchasing or sometimes not purchasing. 3. Remind people of a need they have - particularly at the right time, in the right place, in other words - in the right context. 4. Reassure them that what they bought is right for them - this soothes and reduces the anxiety caused by post purchase dissonance. 5. Differentiate one product or brand from another particularly in maturing markets where many competitors drift towards commodities.

Regardless of the specific role, all communications, if properly managed, should build the brand, by adding value to the brand whether informing, persuading, reminding, reassuring and of course differentiating. Surprisingly many don't. And, of course, some MarComs aim to immediately sell a product or service. Occasionally, some MarComs actually try to reduce sales. These rare yet highly ethical moments are sometimes advertising's most fascinating moments. Some communications tools are better at specific roles than others.

There are many different marketing communications tools including: Direct Mail, Telemarketing and Sales Force, Advertising, PR, Sponsorship, Packaging, Point of Sale and Exhibitions, Sales Promotions, Web Sites and eMarketing tools (such as virals, search engine optimisation). Last but not least, and arguably, the most potent communications tool is Word of Mouth. This includes accelerated Word of Mouth and P2P (Peer-to-Peer) campaigns. Think about it - no ad can influence you as strongly as a friend or colleague's personal recommendation.

Now consider the buying process - customers move from Unawareness to Awareness, Interest, Conviction, Purchase and Post-Purchase states of mind. Some communications tools are better than other tools at certain stages in the buying process. B2B and B2C are not the same when it comes to selecting the best communications mix. In B2B the decision making process varies and the tools selected vary also. Some communications tools such as direct mail often try to fulfil dual roles of firstly creating awareness and secondly generating an enquiry, a trial or even a purchase.

Whatever the specific role or roles, all the communications tools should be considered as complimentary and integrated rather than discrete or isolated tools. Finally, there are many different types of audiences or stakeholders - requiring different communications roles. There are also shareholders, pressure groups, local community, employees, suppliers, distributors, political lobbyists etc. Take shareholders during a take-over bid - the role of an advertising or PR campaign might be to increase a share price as opposed to sell more products.

Regardless of the stakeholder, marketing communications can perform many roles including: inform, persuade, remind, reassure, differentiate and sometimes change behaviour directly. Marketing communication is a strategic part of the marketing process and not merely a single part thereof. Communication is the message that is relayed to the customer rather than the nuts and bolts of the technology that delivers it. Communicating with your customers enables you to deliver your message to them so that they will react to it. Communications Reaches the Consumer Consumers are affected by the communication a brand has with them.

This communication as well as the experience they have adds to the brand's value in the mind of the consumer and builds on their cognitive and emotional ties to a brand. Think of it this way: communication is the message that is delivered to the client; marketing is the means of getting it there. Therefore, communication is not just a part of the marketing mix but also should be integrated into your customer service process — from the accounts payable department all the way through to your sales staff and even the CEO of your company. It is your message to the customer.

The message you wish to communicate with them, your ethos and way of thinking. Ads by Google Strategic Management 1 wk course for leaders & managers at National University of Singapore executive-education. nus. edu eMarketing Conference San Francisco, April 19, 20, 2011 Advance Early Registration Rates www. eMarketingAssociation. com Knowing that communication is part of the marketing mix but also your entire company message, you need to think about what that message will be and think about

it seriously. As an organization you should all be delivering the same message and the same ethos.

There is little point being customer friendly and bending over backwards for them on the advertising if the salesperson is harsh and unmovable. There is no point giving guarantees as a salesperson that your customer service team is unable to deliver on. Clearly Communicate Your Marketing Message This message that you are communicating to the customer is the one that will stay with them and if across the board in all departments and areas that message is a positive one, then your customer loyalty and a positive cognitive brand connection will grow.

If, on the other hand, the message is disjointed and they have a great marketing experience but the customer service falls short, all the hard working in the marketing of the product will be undone and a negative cognitive brand connection will be formed. Think about how you would like consumers to think of your business and products. How you would like to be viewed by all who experience your customers? Then look at your competitors and try and see where they fall short or stand out compared to you. Be honest, decide on the changes that need to be made and then make them.