

# Marketing communications essay

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



## Introduction

Some of the aspects that characterize the present-day business environment include its increasing dynamism, volatility and uncertainty. This poses challenges for businesses that are rigid and not well prepared to change with the transformations in the market (Williamson et al., 2013). On the other hand, it creates opportunities for companies that have the capability of implementing necessary changes that will make them remain relevant to their target markets. Some of the main areas that have been changing in organizations in recent years include management and communication styles, organizational structures, approaches to marketing and the utilization of technology in different departments within organizations (Shimp & Andrews, 2013; Diefenbach & Todnem, 2012). This paper intends to address several issues that relate to the changes and developments taking place in the business environment. It presents an analysis of opportunities and threats that companies like Yahoo and Google face in relation to the rapid technological advancements. It also addresses the appropriate communication approaches that companies should use to facilitate internal and external communication and the communication mix that is used at Apple to market itself to its target clients. In relation to this, the report presents an analysis of a communication campaign used by Nike, a leading sports' equipment and apparel manufacturer in the UK, to establish how effective it is in attaining its marketing objectives.

Opportunities and Threats for Google and Yahoo in regard to rapid technological changes

Google and Yahoo are some of the well renowned internet-based companies that offer search engine and e-mail services to a wide range of users. Both companies also deal in software development. Based on the services and products offered by these companies, they are directly affected by technological advancements, especially in the ICT sector (Segev & Ahituv, 2010). The opportunities and threats that these advancements expose the companies to are discussed in this section.

### Opportunities

There are several opportunities presented to these companies as a result of technological advancement. One of these is that it provides a wide range of avenues through which the companies can communicate with their clients and vice versa (Hundal & Grover, 2012). It also provides increased avenues through which the companies can market their products. Technological advancements in the ICT sector across the globe have also led to an increase in internet accessibility. For Yahoo and Google, an increase in internet accessibility provides an opportunity for them to earn more revenue through advertisements (Shih et al., 2013). This is because they are among the most visited websites internationally. Google is ranked as the most visited website, while Yahoo is ranked the fourth (Alexa, 2014). Being business oriented, technological advancement will also make it possible for them to market their products and services to a wider market base through strategic marketing communication strategies. It also provides an opportunity for them to launch e-commerce strategies, which are cost-effective for the company and convenient for clients.

Among the advancements that have taken place is the development and increased use of smartphones (Persaud & Azhar, 2012). Given that both companies deal in software development, it provides an opportunity for them to create revenue from developing applications that can be used on these devices. Google has effectively taken advantage of this advancement and has developed the Android operating system (Gandhewar & Sheikh, 2011). The fact that its operating system is compatible with many mobile devices like manufactured by different companies like Samsung and LG increases its usability. With the growing number of global populations using smartphones, the company has a lot to benefit as Android is among the top smartphone operating systems (Butler, 2011).

### Threats

With the increase in the technological advancements in the market, these companies are also exposed to a range of threats (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2011). One of these is the increase in competition from other companies that provide the same products and services. With internet companies like Twitter and Facebook having a growing number of users, they provide a threat for Yahoo and Google in terms advertising revenues (Lagrosen & Josefsson, 2011). There is also a possibility of other internet based companies coming up to provide stiffer competition. In the software business, Google's Android operating system faces a threat from Apple's iOS, if it decides to adjust it and make it compatible to other devices (Butler, 2011). Other technology companies may also come up with more innovative products and better marketing approaches than Google and Yahoo, which might reduce their

current market shares.

Another threat that is associated with technological advancements is posed to the human resources of these companies. Employees face the risk of losing jobs because a wide range of jobs that were initially handled by people can now be done even better by machines (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2011). Even though this might come as a relief for these companies as they cut salary costs, the fact that these advancements may increase unemployment undermines the social responsibility efforts that these companies may have. The increase in technological advancements also increases the levels of cyber crime. Even though the systems of Yahoo and Google may be secure from this risk, given that they have measures in place to address this issue, clients who have opened email accounts with them may not be as secure. Hackers may gain access to their emails, obtain their personal information and use it against them. Even though such cases might occur as a result of low email security measures by the user, some of them tend to blame the email hosting companies like Yahoo or Google as being the reasons for their predicaments. As a result, this ruins the reputation of these companies.

Communication at Google

### **Internal and external communication**

Communication is among the aspects of a business that are paramount to its success. Internal communication refers to the passing of messages or information within the organization. This could be within the same department or interdepartmental communication (Wright, 2012). External communication refers to the communication that goes on between the

organization and external stakeholders, who mainly comprise of customers. When carrying out internal communication, there are several factors that have to be considered. For instance, the messages ought to be confidential to avoid access from external parties. In this case, Google has a company intranet, which consists of an internal message board and email system (Goodman, 2006). This can only be accessed by company employees who have been allocated usernames and passwords. These channels of communications have been highly secured, making it impossible for an external party to access the information or messages passed.

Internal communication in organizations also has to be effective and quick. For Google, this is facilitated by the fact that it has a horizontal communication structure. According to Butler (2010), horizontal or lateral communication is the free flow of information or messages across different functional groups in the organization. Employees and managers across all departments and employee levels at Google interact freely without any hierarchical boundaries (The Financial Express, 2005). This approach to communication enhances cooperation among employees and also quickens the process of resolving conflict. On the contrary, it reduces the authority of departmental heads in the organization.

External communication is meant to promote products or services offered by the company, or to advertise its clients' products to a wide range of customers (Wright, 2012). It can also be meant to engage with customers with the aim of making them feel like they are part of the organization. Depending on the aim that is to be met by external communication, there are several measures that can be used. One of the most effective tools that

the company uses to accomplish this is through its website. Based on the fact that its website is the most visited in the world, there is a high level of surety that it will communicate to a wide audience (Segev & Ahituv, 2010). Even with the high number of visits on the company's website, many customers who may be targeted by the messages might not be among the website visitors. Thus, another alternative option that the company uses is through sending e-mail messages directed to certain clients that could be interested in the goods or services of the company. In 2012, the company spent over \$231 million in marketing its products, which include the Google+ social media platform, Gmail and the Google Chrome web browser (Efrati, 2012).

### **Market communication theories relevant to the communication strategy**

There are several marketing communication theories that can be considered as being relevant to the communication strategies utilized at Google. One of these is the heightened appreciation model (Dahlen et al., 2010). It is based on the fact that companies need to carry out consumer market research to establish the key attribute that attracts consumers to a brand. Market communication strategies are then designed to link the identified attributes of the product or service to the brand (Fill & Hughes, 2013). For instance, in the advertisement of its Google+ service, the company is aware of the need for people to interact and share instant messages and videos on social media. Google then links this need in the market to Google+, encouraging more clients to subscribe.

Another model that can be used to represent the market communication

strategies at Google is the advertising exposure model. This model suggests that advertisement objectives can only be met if it created five effects to the target consumer (Fill & Hughes, 2013). These effects are; creation of awareness, conveying messages about the positive attributes of the products, generation of feelings among the target audiences towards the brand, creating a brand personality and triggering purchase intentions (Dahlen et al., 2010). This model also relates to the advertisement efforts that have been implemented by Google as it markets a wider range of its products.

The AIDA model can also be used in explaining marketing communication. It is regarded as one of the oldest and most popular market communication models. This model states that there is a hierarchy of events that have to occur for a marketing communication strategy to be termed as having been successful. In chronological order, these are attention, interest, desire, and action. After the attention of the target clients have been drawn, marketers are required to raise their interest in the products or services being advertised through highlighting their advantages. After this has been done a sense of desire is created in the clients by providing them with the assurance that the products or services will satisfy their needs. This will trigger action from the buyer, which is demonstrated by making the purchase. At Google, this model has been widely used, especially when it spent approximately 231 million to market its products in 2012 (Efrati, 2012). However, this model has received criticism for being out-dated and irrelevant for the present market environment.



## **The Communication Mix of Apple**

The communication mix is referred to as the specific approaches that are used by companies to promote their services or products to their target customers. There are five elements that make up a communication mix. These are discounts and promotions, public relations, direct marketing communication, advertising and personal selling (Wright, 2012). At Apple, the marketing mix element that is mainly used is direct marketing communication. This approach involves interactive communication with the aim of seeking a certain response from the target audiences. With reference to the recent development at Apple when it was preparing to acquire PrimeSense, an Israeli 3D chip developer, it was vital for the company to inform its external and internal stakeholders of the impending acquisition (Velazco, 2013). Some of the approaches that the company could use to pass this information include direct email communication, social media interaction with its clients and through its website. The company has maintained a large customer data base that contains the contacts of its customers and other Apple stakeholders (Wright, 2012). This also makes it easy for the company to pass such vital information directly to its customers and other external stakeholders. Internal stakeholders, who mainly comprise of employees, can be formally informed through circulation of a memo or posting the message on internal communication platforms.

## **Importance of Cross-functional communication**

Cross-functional communication is applicable within the organization. It is referred to as the communication among people from different departments or functional groups in the organization (Shimp & Andrews, 2013). The

importance of cross-functional communication that is beneficial to Apple Inc is the fact that it enhances cooperation within the organization as different teams work towards attaining the same organizational goal. Encouraging cross functional communication also promotes awareness of whatever is taking place across the entire organization, which eliminates cases of ignorance of misinformation. Some of the challenges that are associated with ineffective cross-functional communication in organizations include the failure for members of certain departments in the organization to appreciate or recognise the contributions made by other departments (Diefenbach & Todnem, 2012). This may result to destructive rivalry that may affect the attainment of organizational goals adversely. In a scenario where Apple might plan to acquire another company, cross-functional communication enables all the departments to be equally ready for any changes or additional responsibilities that may arise after the acquisition (Diefenbach & Todnem, 2012).

### **Analysis of an integrated Marketing communications campaign**

Marketing communication campaigns are defined as strategies that are implemented by organizations with the aim of increasing market awareness about their products or services. This is usually with the aim of increasing the purchasing intentions of the target audience. According to (Bergemann & Bonatti, 2011), ideal integrated marketing communication strategies effectively coordinate all product promotional messages to ensure that they are all consistent. This section presents a market communication campaign that was launched by Nike, a company that deals in the manufacture and

distribution of sports equipment (Nike, 2014).

The marketing communication campaign was implemented with the aim of increasing the company's market share in the UK to extend its lead. This is as a result of the stiff competition from Adidas (Thomasson, 2014). The campaign intended to make use of all the available avenues to increase awareness of the UK market about the brand. It also intended to market the new products that it had launched and seen as appropriate for the target market. These mainly included sports shoes. This marketing communications campaign targeted a wide range of customers, who ranged from 18 to 50 years of age (Nike, 2014).

### **Factors that make the campaign successful**

There are several aspects of the campaign that make this campaign successful in attaining its originally set goals. One of these is the wide range of media outlets were used to pass the message to the audience, basing on the fact that media consumption varies among individuals within different age groups (Bergemann & Bonatti, 2011). Another factor that made the communication campaign successful was the fact that it highlighted the favourable attributes of the company's products, which included the affordable prices and the comfort of the shoes. Referring to the heightened appreciation model, this is an effective trigger of purchase intentions among the target audiences (Fill & Hughes, 2013). Given that this marketing communication campaign was strategically designed, the only aspect that could undermine its capability to attain the intended goals is the launch of a similar or better campaign by its key competitors.

## **Media Used**

Different forms of media were used in this campaign to increase the size of the audience that could be reached. These were classified as print, broadcast and interactive media. Print media comprised of newspapers and magazines. These targeted different clients. For instance, ads that were placed in fashion magazines targeted the fashion enthusiasts who could need Nike's products to work out. Broadcast media basically comprise of radio and TV (Lamb et al., 2008). Different market segments were targeted by advertising on a wide range of TV and radio channels, and at different times. Given that communication campaigns in print and broadcast media are one way, they were designed to contain as much information as possible to answer any questions that clients could have regarding the product (Bergemann & Bonatti, 2011).

Interactive media comprised of all the media outlets that could allow the company and its clients to engage real-time with each other (Correa et al., 2010). These comprised of social networking, mobile and via the company's blog. As opposed to print and broadcast media platforms, interactive media provided capabilities for the company and target customers to engage constructively (Kim & Ko, 2012). Some of the major social media platforms that are ideal for such form of communication between companies and customers include Facebook, Twitter and Google+. Despite the advantage of real-time engagement that social media presents for companies, information on a flaw of negative attribute on the product spreads very fast (Correa et al., 2010).

Conclusion

This paper has covered a wide range of issues that relate to the present-day business environment. In regard to the technological advancements that are taking place in the present-day business environment, Google and Yahoo have been used as cases to discuss the opportunities and threats that these advancements present to the company. The paper has also presented an overview of internal and external communication in Google, which has incorporated that factors that are considered and the channels that are used in the communication. Different marketing communication theories have also been presented. These include the heightened appreciation model and the advertising exposure model. In the paper, different organizations have been used in the explanation of various concepts presented. Based on the arguments that have been presented in the paper, companies have to ensure that they effectively communicate with their customers and also encourage cross-functional communication so as to succeed in the current hypercompetitive business environment. Failure to implement an appropriate communication mix will not only have adverse effects on the marketing efforts of the company, but will also hamper internal operations. For future research, the marketing communication theories and models should be analyzed more broadly so as to establish their relevance to different businesses.

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