

# Communication process model

[Sociology, Communication](#)



The Portfolio chosen, “Coca-Cola”, consists of three bill boards and one print ad, all of them trying to send a simple message. The common point of all the ads is the simplicity, and the freedom accorded to the viewer or the reader to decipher the meaning by themselves. The message is succinct, very brief and is aimed at consolidating an existing brand image. As is usual in a masscommunicationmedium, where the unique perception variants of the receivers are not easy to be deciphered, advertisers try and rely on eliminating identifiable anomalies.

The resultant product is reliable in conveying a simple symbol and leaving the rest of the perceptions variables to be as individual as possible. The three bill boards try to capture the three primary and automatic reactions to consumption of Coca-Cola. The basic theme of the three billboards is to capture the consumer reaction to the visual representation of a chilled Coca-Cola bottle. The advertiser has zeroed on the visceral reactions rather than letting the viewer bother himself about any other message that theadvertisementmight have.

Minimal effort is required from the viewer’s mind, where the conditioned responses to the appealing sight of a chilled carbonated drink are replicated aesthetically on oversized representations in billboards. Besides, disparate imagery is used to create the desired over all effect. The differences in the pictorial qualities of the bottle and the symbol or words embedded on them are distinct. But they help create a unified mood and message to the viewer.

As William mentioned in Social communication in advertising, “The consumer society abolishes all such limits and creates an “open set” of intersubjective comparisons; advertising is one of the most important

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vehicles for presenting, suggesting, and reflecting an unending series of possible comparative judgments. "(Social Communication in Advertising, 234) The Communication Process Model at its most simplified and effective version is presented in the three billboards.

**SENDER (Encoding of the message)** The sender or the advertiser acting on behalf of the Coca-Cola Company has effectively removed all the encoding of the message by eliminating the complex elements of family, culture, skills, attitudes, and values. The two predominant elements used in encoding of the message are 1. Self-concept 2. Feelings The Self-concept of the carbonated drink is the universally accepted and time tested image of a refreshing and exciting potable interlude in daily life.

The feelings that have been drilled in through popular perception and a long tradition of visual, audio, and social suggestion matrix is a sense of primary desire and an anticipation of quenched thirst and reaching a refreshed state.

**RECEIVER (Decoding of the message)** The decoding process of the receiver is effectively shortened by limiting the requirement to responses based on feelings than on intellect. Mutually accepted visual symbolism and culturally trained interpretation skills automatically translate the sender's message.

**MEDIUM** Billboards is one of the most undemanding media of all as it subtly occupies the mindscape of the consumer and is as unobtrusive as it is effective in reiteration of an existing image. This medium is hard to be ignored and in this campaign, the clincher is the absence of any other form of messaging as Billboards have a short attention window and the conveying of a message, especially in the case of Billboards is expected to happen in the 1-3 second period of primary focus. **INTERFERENCE**

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While explaining about the role of commonsense in advertising, Iain MacRury writes “ Advertising does not depend upon the acceptance of any general rationale or consensus to operate: it merely needs a critical mass of institutional and individual activities in society; processes binding consumers, advertisers, agents, media owners, corporate financiers and regulators in complex contracts of commercial and cultural habit; and perhaps paradoxically a certain indifference to advertising from those who (nevertheless) remain fascinated by it. ” (Advertising. 41).

While this holds true of the advertising industry as a whole, it is also the scale by which most advertisers gauge the interference in their communication process model. The existing prejudices to advertising images (the industry has indeed grown old enough for such prejudices to exist) need to be factored in while trying to convey the message intended. The presence of attention-grabbing billboards of soft drink companies and brands is a regular part of the mindscape of the audience that it might go un noticed which is a natural enough hazard, considering the product being marketed.

But it is also self-evident that such life style products’ advertisements are routinely observed for the advertising quality than any other new feature. Tom Hanks advertisement of Pepsi, did not speak about any new product or any innovation to an existing product, but still had the power to grab attention and give a considerable push to the brand image and non-season sales for the company. This is not cynicism but pragmatic approach to the reality of over exposure to advertising from certain brands.

As pointed out earlier, any interference that has the capability of distorting the message has been effectively eliminated by restricting the appeal to the <https://assignbuster.com/communication-process-model/>

primary senses and not on intelligent decoding of the message. External interference not part of the receiver-sender protocol is a hazard traditionally associated with outdoor media and is always factored into measurement of such responses. FEEDBACK While exploring the growth of the advertising industry Pamela Walker Lasird, draws attention to the value of feedback laid from the last decade of the 19th century.

“ Advertising professionals’ claim that they could accurately predict consumer responses belied Claude Hopkins’s emphasis on the lessons from feedback that compared successes and failures. ” (Advertising Progress, 276) The business of collating feedback to advertisements is therefore not a new art. However, the methods of collating and studying such feedback are based on a lot more scientific grounds today than ever before.

The DAR(Day-after Recall) of the Billboard is a perfectly quantifiable response to the initial messaging and any improvements to the message can be performed on the basis of such feedback. In fact the billboards that were placed might have even been the end result of studies conducted on the sample population even before the launch. The surveys related to the billboard might obtain the responsiveness to the advertisement. Billboards traditionally have an advantage of being modified in the subsequent editions depending upon the reactions of the gauging public.

Next generation of Billboards in the same location can take up the role of rectifying approach errors to advertising or reinforcing positive outcomes. CONTEXT Maidstone has always enjoyed a position in the top counties in terms of shopping yield. This automatically translates into a lot of people spending their times out of home in shopping centres and commercial

establishments. Billboard advertising, especially of the instant recognition variety is assured great eyeball coverage. Therefore, the billboards of Coca-Cola are sure to get the intended coverage. PRINT AD

SENDER Coca-Cola has concentrated on its corporate socialresponsibilityfocusing onenvironmentand socialhealthin this print campaign carried in the style supplement of Times. As Tony Yeshin points out “ Whilst brands receive the majority of the expenditure on advertising, there are instances where a company seeks to develop an image for itself beyond that of the brands it manufactures. Corporate advertising is attracting increasing attention with the recognition that many consumers wish to identify the values of the company from which it buys products and services.

” (Yeshin. 6) The Self-concept is of a soft drink major concentrating on the health of the consumers and claiming to shy away from all the recognized modern evils of artificial flavours and preservatives, which have been the subject many great debates around nutrition and health. The visual image of an empty bottle depicts the absence of anything and since the ad primarily focuses on negating the presence of any evil influences, the ads visual is captivating and the message is simple and evident.

The claim to be the real thing is a dig at the competitors, which have a shorter history and also a reminder to the consumer who the pioneer is in this particular segment. A great amount of stress is placed on the corporate values and it is evident from use of capitals to announce the absence of any New-age evils. Additionally, the quotes around “ the Real thing” are an attention-grabber to the pride associated with the company’s pioneer status.

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The mention of year of inception is an attempt to remind the consumers of a more than a century-old tradition.

Generally, a tradition is a value proposition which instantly and at a sub-conscious level, builds the sentiments of reliability and trustworthiness around a brand. Though experts like Yeshin point out that subliminal advertising does not have evidence to back up its validity, we would like to believe that it works in this particular case. Encoding of the message is complete in the sense that it starts out with an aim of talking about values rather than feelings associated with the product. Therefore, the use of the “letsgettogether. co.

uk” is an apt and subtle action phrase to focus attention on the shared values of the corporation with the general consuming public. As pointed out in the “ Advertising and the mind of the Consumer” By Sutherland, & Sylvester, “ The company website starts out its life as just one more way to ‘ advertise’ and provides a point of contact with potential and existing customers. But pretty soon it gets to be more than that. The focus builds on ways for visitors to enjoy the experience and the site is used to try to build closer relationships with them” (Sutherland & Sylvester, 238).

In fact, the website of Coca-Cola primarily talks about the corporate social responsibility of the corporation highlighting on the environmental measures undertaken in the company. It also provides a forum for consumers to share their concerns and claims to engage in a fruitful dialogue. RECEIVER The current scenario in all educated communities has been skewed towards ensuring corporate social responsibility in all profit making corporations with a special focus on health and environment issues. Any attempt by <https://assignbuster.com/communication-process-model/>

corporations to incorporate factors that positively affect health and environment preservation is received positively.

The culture, values, attitudes and feelings in decoding the message from the Coca-Cola print ad are a perfect match in this case. The interesting information about the inversion of preferences once the brand names were announced after the conclusion of a ‘blind taste’ test involving Coke and Pepsi is an example of the brand identity that Coke has been able to build through such corporate advertising. Yeshin reports “In countless ‘blind-taste’ tests, the consumers are unable to identify the identity of the brands and often elect as ‘the best’ a product which they decry once the brand names are revealed.

The perennial example of Coca-Cola versus Pepsi serves to illustrate. In a direct comparison of the brands with the identities concealed, the preferences expressed were: Prefer Pepsi 51% Prefer Coke 44% Equal/Can’t say 5% Once the brand identities were revealed, the following preferences were expressed Prefer Pepsi 23% Prefer Coke 65% Equal/Can’t say 12% (Source: de Chernatony and McDonald, 1992)”(Yeshin, Integrated marketing communications, 38) MEDIUM Times enjoys a robust readership in England.

Besides the “Style” supplement has a clearly designated demographic readership of upmarket and socially conscious individuals with a special accent on lifestyle issues and problems. It is a perfect medium to send messages that seek to reinforce branding around CSR and environment friendly nature of any corporation. This medium also ensures that at least a percentage of the readership will also follow up by visiting the website



mentioned, there by increasing the activity on the interactive forum of Coca-Cola. INTERFERENCE

As described in detail in “ Dynamics of Advertising”, “...the meaning of all communication is to some extent carried by the detail of their content and execution. While the whole is greater than the parts, the greatness of the whole is derived from the particular choice of parts and their relation to each other, which by the simple aggregation or cross-tabulation of frequencies.... , a number of our variables refer to qualities which – though possibly located in just one element of the advertisement – may often be the theme around which the overall experience of the advertisement coheres” (Dynamics of Advertising, 166).

It is in this context that the whole packaging of the Print ad of Coca-cola needs to be viewed. The Interference in the Print medium depends upon the variables of the reader demographic. This is negated to a large extent by targeting the niche segment of devoted readers of the “ Style” supplement rather than the sports, economic or other sections of the daily. The placement of the ad on a Sunday also ensures a slightly leisurely viewing and assimilation of the message than on any other working day. It can be concluded that the advertisers have succeeded in minimizing the interference from the decoding factors.

In fact the choice of the newspaper, the day and the supplement have been the essential parts which have created the coherent picture of a large FMCG corporation with a soul. FEEDBACK The readership feedback to advertisements is measured from ratings available that form the basis of pricing of ads in the news papers. Besides, the call to action phrase of asking  
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the readers to engage in dialogue through the website can also give the advertiser a quantifiable feedback on the effectiveness of the campaign.

Like its counterparts in the US, Coca-Cola UK has succeeded in creating print campaigns that can be described as family safe and stylish without giving up on the essential function of delivering the intended message. CONTEXT The whole campaign has been played out in the context of increased concerns over use of plastic and non-bio degradable materials in packaging industry of FMCG goods and the rate at which non-reclaimable land is being created with land fills. Besides there is an increased awareness towards healthy lifestyle and consumables which can even be equated to a trendy fad.

Whatever the long term implications of this heightened consciousness, it is entirely advisable for any corporation which has a daily dealing with its consumers (FMCG) to be on the right side of the debate and be seen contributing positively to this cause. This campaign addresses two issues. The direct message is health related with claims of purity bordering on complete absence of any artificial (read harmful) elements in its complete product. The indirect message through the website is to increase awareness of Coca-Cola's efforts to 1. reduce non-bio-degradable waste 2. reduce carbon signature 3.

reduce emissions by increasing use of smarttechnologyAs the " Marketing " magazine's website points out " Coke's recent TV ad, which emphasised that Coke is still made to a 122-year-old recipe and is, therefore, free of modern preservatives or flavourings,". This shows that the focus of the company is perfectly aligned across media-mix in that thegoalsseem to be common. The ad is topical and ensures that it conveys the message without much ado. The

most subtle part of the ad is to draw attention (subconsciously) to the long and illustrious history of the company and reinforce the feeling of trust in the mind of the readers.

**NOISE** The cognitive culture that has been taken into consideration while deciding the campaigns is very comprehensive though not exhaustive. For example the “ Lips” campaign might, in theory, prove distasteful to a senior citizen or a person of strict religious beliefs. It might also be offensive to parents who do not want their children to be exposed to the vibrancy of the youth culture before a certain time. But considering the demographics of Maidstone, Kent and the probable selection of the Billboard sites, the noise is reduced to a minimum.

The almost suggestively orgasmic “ Ahhh” campaign can be viewed in similar light. That is a limitation of the particular media and unlike targeted advertising of Internet, there is no work around for this particular Noise effect. By the same token, it can also be noted that the campaigns have taken the adequacy of the particular world view noise to be the basis of their approach (The way the ads would be interpreted by the largely educated and upwardly mobile audience in the region forms a prime basis behind devising the ads in their current form)

**ANALYSIS OF THE CAMPAIGNS ON RESEARCH PARAMETERS** Lips Ahhh Gulp  
Print ad Aesthetic attention the desire created to drink the beverage stimulated by the very sight of the chilled bottle The immediate and automatic response of the thirst quenching expression the symbolism of gulping down the aerated drink Emptiness symbolic of being devoid of any harmful substances Brand Linkage High. The chilled bottle is almost  
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synonymous of the brand High High Novel as it is rare for a soft drink bottle to be advertised empty. Flow of Attention Instant.

As is required by the constraints of the medium Instant Instant Arresting. Visual is persuasive to lead into the text of the advertisement Flow of Emotion Instant. The desirability is photographic depiction Instant Instant Gently nudges the attention of the reader to the main issue which is aim of the advertisement Stickiness High. Good seasonal visual as it evokes strong and similar reactions High High Has lot of captivating elements. The call to action phrase might actually lead a portion of the readers to visit the website.

Stopping power Low. It is a reinforcement of automatic and seasoned responses to thirst and the visual of a soft drink bottle Low Low The unusual visual has the stopping power to lead to the corporate messaging contained SUMMARY The visual appeal of the Billboards also extends to another level in the fact that it uses very basic oral sounds rather than words to convey its intended message. This is in fact advancement on the recognized tradition of oral expression in advertising as compared to any other form of literature.

AS Guy . D. W. Cook elucidates in is book “ the discourse of Advertising”, “... for the transition from oral to written communication is ontogenic (i. e. our personal individual) development as well as phylogenetic (i. e. the history of human) change. We all lived in oral, personal, affective world in infancy. This kind of communication remains powerful and pleasurable through out life, while the depersonalized voice of objective facts remains somewhat alien. ” (the discourse of advertising. 80). This is where the Billboards score in appealing to what the American advertisers often refer to as ‘ gut’.

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Both the media have been effectively used by Coca-Cola UK to implement its branding strategy. The Communication Process Model has been strictly adhered to in terms of both limitations and advantages. The best learning from these campaigns is that negation of any interference is a valuable strategy in ensuring that the message delivery is aligned with the medium in the right context. Elimination is a smart strategy when ambiguity can be caused by factoring in too many details. The story boards that form the basis of both the campaigns should be excellent case studies in simplification of the message delivery process.

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