

Integrated marketing communication

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



Topic: ADVERTISING 6th November Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is one of the major tools that marketers cannot overlook if they are focused at retaining a strong positive customer-product relationship. Based on the need to expand their market share and put at bay their competitors, UK based advertising agencies have in the last decade of the twentieth century emulated IMC as a competitive advantage. Integrated Marketing Communications takes various definitions. For instance, according to American Association of Advertising Agencies, IMC is an aspect of marketing communication planning that recognises the added of a comprehensive policy that evaluates the specific duties of a variety of communication subjects. Major aspects that make up IMC includes public relations, advertising, direct responses and sales promotion. Integrated marketing communications has been seen by majority of advertising agencies in UK and academic writers as a philosophy of marketing communication practise that created a linkage between traditional and historical marketing strategies with the modern and information driven market systems in the 21st century. According to Cornelissen (2003), IMC brought about changes in the UK marketing communication that replaced traditional and rigid mass communication with modern promotion and advertising strategies. Out of the Cornelissen (2003) arguments on IMC, there emerged two vital thesis concerning IMC. First thesis argued that there should be consistency in communication materials. The second thesis advocated for zero-based media planning. To attain an effective communication within UK organizations, Duncan and Everett (1993) argued that there should be adequate inter-connection of marketing communications disciplines at the corporate and

department levels. One of the aspects of IMC is that most of the studies done by the marketers and advertisers focused at the benefits generated by IMC. For instance, Duncan and Everett (1993) argued that if advertisers adopted the integrated approach in their communications, the outcomes would be clear understanding of the messages, communicability and strong consumer-marketers relationship. Additionally, Eagle, et al, (2007) argues that for a firm to achieve an effective integrated marketing communication as well consumer's loyalty, it is vital to connect IMC with other aspects of promotional mix. According to Kitchen et al, (2008) there are various factors that led to integration of marketing communications. These includes mergers and acquisition of communication agency, expansive sophistication of consumers and retailers, high costs of traditional advertising media, stiff competition in the international market and decreased efficiency of traditional media. In the same way, various communication functions have been adopted by organizations in UK as well as in other countries in order to have a strong IMC. For example, the use of public relations especially by companies selling services has been adopted as a way of creating strong customer trust and loyalty. On his part, Cornelissen (2003) argues that integrated marketing communication is one of the affordable avenues through which companies can maximize their return on investments. Despite the growth in marketing communication, Duncan and Everett (1993) reported that 16% of UK advertising agencies did not get any request for any kind of IMC from the customers. The studies also indicated that global penetration of IMC has not fully been achieved. This is not only in UK where 70% of all public relations agencies reported that less than 50% of their

clients requested for IMC but also in US and Korea among other developing countries. Yeshin (2006) depicts that direct marketing which is also a major aspect of integrated marketing communication is highly developed in UK advertising agencies with over 73% using the strategy as a way of retaining their customers. However, direct marketing in public relations agencies is less emulated in UK as compared to US and Korea. One of the communication disciplines that played a major role in the development of IMC at the last decade of 20th century and during the 21st century is digital communication. This has been propelled by the growth of internet thus making majority of UK and other international advertising companies to use e-commerce as a way of reaching high number of consumers. One of the vital aspects that have contributed to sustainable growth for integrated marketing communication is the coordination between UK advertising agencies and the public relations agencies. As a result of the coordination, five consequences have emerged. First, communication has been more effective. Secondly, there is cost savings based on the fact that the two agencies can share the variable costs that arise. Thirdly, the decision making process has improved since there is adequate consultation between the agencies. Fourthly, customers can promptly respond to any matter that may arise due to environment changes. Fifthly, the roles of the agencies are more clearly defined. References Cornelissen, J. (2003). Change, Continuity and Progress: The Concept of Integrated Marketing Communications and Marketing Communications Practice. *Journal of Strategic Marketing* Vol. 11. Duncan, T. And Everett, S. (1993). Client Perceptions of integrated marketing communications. *Journal of Advertising Research* 33 (3). Eagle, L., Kitchen, J.,

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