

## THE PLANNING PROCESS OF INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the planning process of integrated marketing communication. The integrated marketing communication has become more important for managing the marketing process.

Companies evaluate the impact the messages on customer attitudes and responses and adjust their marketing communication plans accordingly. Planning provides direction for creating and delivering brand messages.

We summarized this approach from various authors Duncan, Belch&Belch and Schultz.

We suggest new ideas for better planning of IMC process and connection with brand building in Serbian market.

### KEY WORDS

planning process, Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC), brand building

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### INTRODUCTION

Numerous new marketing communication options are today available to marketers due to rapid globalization and the development of the technologies. The process of integrated marketing communication provides new opportunities for advertising agencies and for companies to create added value for their customers. [6]

This paper investigates changes in the planning process of integrated marketing communication as a strategic issue in the marketing department. The process of IMC is important for better managing the communication mix with the target audiences and maintaining the strong market position through brand differentiation.

To reach this purpose we have studied how the IMC campaign planning process can be describe, what tools companies are used in IMC planning process, what is the relationship between IMC and brand building and what media and how much money they spent in Serbian markets.

### INTEGRATED MARKETING AND IMC

Creating a message and sending it to it receiver is called the marketing communication process. The message might become interrupted or disturbed by unplanned static or distortion, which result in the receiving getting a different message than the one the sender sent. This interruption called noise, is disturbing both the message and the channel through which it is send. Advertising agency acts as an intermediary for the company in their integrated communication process. Today marketer needs to focus their promotional effort in order to punch through the noise barrier and reach the target audience. An example of the change in the communication environment is the fact that the company in 1960 could reach two thirds of US households when running an ad in just three magazines: Look, Life and Saturday Evening Post. Today only the later too exist, and together they reach a mere two percent of the households. [6]

As a response to increased message distortion and arising need for more integration in marketing communication authors introduced a new concept in 1993 called Integrated Marketing

Communication [13] "IMC is a concept of marketing communication planning that recognize the added value of the comprehensive plan that evaluate the strategic roles of variety of communication disciplines (general advertising, direct response, sales promotion and public relations) and combine these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency and maximum communication impact. [11]. Even through marketers where slow to adapt this as a part in their planning process, IMC is today widely acknowledged as a key for superior communication. [4]. There are many of fundamental elements that need integrating in the IMC planning process. They include: employees, technology and agency, promotional tools, messages, structures, brands and relationships. [5].

It is necessary to explain the difference between the terms integrated marketing communication (IMC) and integrated marketing. Integrated marketing is concern with strategic issues and the management of strategic assets-particularly concept 4C which include customer, cost, convenience and communication. Integrated marketing communication has its primary concern the communication or promotion function. Promotion is a subset of marketing mix (fourth P: product, price, place and promotion) and IMC is a subset of integrated marketing.

Characteristics of IMC include: First, IMC is comprehensive, coordinate and institution wide – because it has its goal the communication of strategic messages. It must be able to draw on the full range of resources: people, budget and time. Second, IMC focused on strategic communication, not merely promotion. Strategic communication involves careful listening. Third, IMC has as its goal the transmission of mission-critical values and messages not simple slogan and themes, but enduring messages that represent the core values that grow directly from the company's mission and vision. And finally, IMC seeks to communicate in ways that target audiences notice, understand respond to. IMC recognizes that some audiences are strategic importance and that company must develop segment-based, often highly customized, messages that meet the needs of strategic audiences. [14].

IMC is generally considered to be a philosophy or process related to strategically managing the all brand messages in a way that contributes to the building of strong brands. Authors Kitchen, Joanne and Tao suggest the IMC is the major communication development of the last decade, and that are a potential drivers of competitive advantage. [10]. The power of IMC is said to counter a range of changes in the marketing communication environment that are having an impact on the ability of companies to attract, retain and leverage customers.

Authors Madhavaram, Badriarayanan and McDonald present the connection between IMC and brand identity as critical components of brand equity [7].

### **THE PLANNING PROCESS OF IMC**

The first step in the IMC planning process is to review the marketing plan and objectives. Before developing a promotional plan, markets must understand where the company (or the brand) has been-its current position in the market, where it intends to go, and how it plans to get there. Authors Belch G. & M. Belch presented that IMC planning model consists of:

1. Review of marketing plan (examine overall marketing plan and objectives, competitor analysis, role of advertising and promotion)
2. Analysis of promotional program situation (External and Internal analysis)
3. Analysis of communication process (Analysis receiver's response process, source, message, channel factors, establish communication goals and objectives)
4. Budget determination (set tentative marketing communication budget, allocate budget)

5. Develop Integrated Marketing Communication Process (Advertising, Direct marketing, Internet marketing, Sales promotion, Public Relations/Publicity, Personal selling)
6. Integrate and implement marketing communication strategy (create and produce ads, purchase media time, space, design and implement promotional mix programs)
7. Monitor, Evaluate and Control Integrated Marketing Communication Programs (take measures to control and adjust promotional strategies [1]).

According to Duncan six steps of IMC planning process are: Identification the target audience, analyzing SWOT, determining the MC objectives, developing strategies and tactics, setting the budget and evaluating and evaluating the IMC program [3].

Each methodology of IMC planning process needs to answer on three questions; what are our communication objectives? What is the brand attitude strategy? What do we want people to do as a result of our communication? [8].

### RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN IMC AND BRAND BUILDING

The authors Reid, Luxton and Mavondo concentrated their research on deeper understanding the relationship between IMC, market and brand orientation. [10]. This relationship is present on the Figure 1. Market orientation represents the culture of the organization through the adoption of the marketing concept and the systems and process that underlie being market oriented. Brand orientation represents the functional or business-unit focus on brands and brand strategies that support strong customer and stakeholder relationship.

IMC in this model represents the development of integrated marketing communication to achieve started brand and communication objectives and also provide the bridge between brand strategy and actions taken to build the necessary customer and stakeholder relationships.

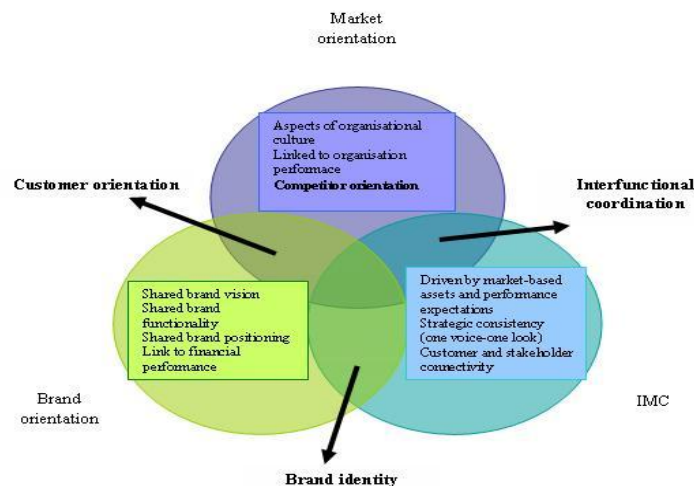


Figure 1. Relationship between market, brand orientation and IMC [10].

IMC draws on the cultural predisposition to work cooperatively, leveraging the market and customer-sensing mechanisms of the organization to devise message and media strategies. [10]. For the most part, the primary competitive advantage most marketing organization will employ in the twenty-first century will be perceptual brand value. By extension, marketer must compete at

the customer level with brands, branding and brand communication.

The challenge for brand communication managers must be build brand value for the both the customer and the organization. Too often brand building communication considers only one or two of the customer groups that the brand must serve. The communication manager must consider, reach, and motivate all customers and prospects for the brand. The second important factor in developing effective brand communication program is that, given the changes that have occurred and those to come in the twenty-first century marketplace, communication must move from a supporting role in a marketing effort to a leadership role in the organization. The brand moves from being an identifier of a bundle of product features, pricing and distribution to being the trust, quality and relationship value that the customer is buying. Communication moves from being a supporting, tactical player to that of prime motivator in the purchase decision. The twenty-first century marketplace is a marketplace of relationships and the brand must provide relationship between the marketer and its customers. [12].

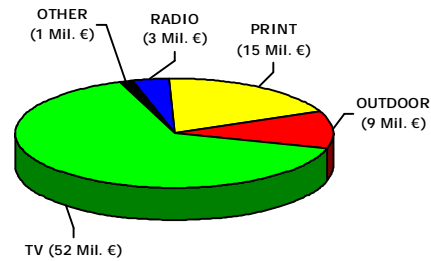
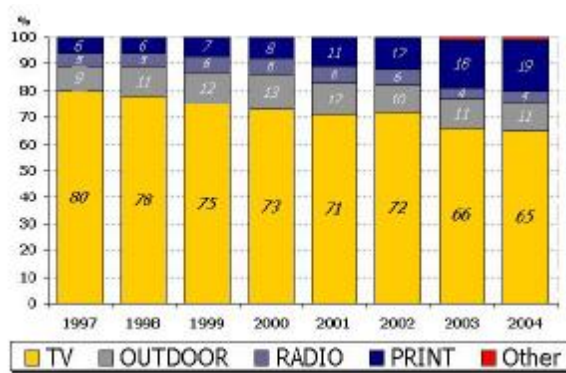
### FORMULATING THE IMC PROGRAM

The model of communication planning consists of 6M's model:

1. Market – To whom is the communication to be addresses?
2. Mission–What is the objective of the communication?
3. Message–What are the specific points to be communicated?
4. Media–Which vehicles will be used to convey the messages?
5. Money–How much will be spent in the effort?
6. Measurement– How will impact be assessed after the campaign? [2].

The market, mission and message part is basically figuring out the strategic and tactical objectives of the communication campaign, who is being target for impact, the desire impact on the target and the specific message to be delivered. We can analyze the consumer situation in the terms of stages in the purchase and consumption process. In the cognitive stage (unaware of product, awareness, knowledge) the communication job is to put some facts into the mind of consumer. The cognitive stage sets the foundation for an affective stage (liking, preference, conviction) wherein the prospect develops a feeling toward the new products. The process ends with an action advancing to the behavioral stage with a purchase of a product.

We explain two elements of IMC program on Serbian market on Figure 2.with includes: **media** segmentation during the (1997-2004) period and **money**: Serbia 2004 estimate of the real market value with includes TV (52 million €), Print (15 million€), outdoor (9 million€), radio (3 million €) and other (Internet, cinema) 1million €.



a) *Serbia/ Media segmentation 1997-2004, \* Rough estimate*  
 b) *Serbia 2004 estimate of the real market value, 80 million € Net [15].*

We also compared the real market value and the real TV market in Serbia and other countries and investigate that the TV investment decreased from 80 million € in 1887 to 65 million € to 2004.

Country	Real value of TV market in millions of € in the 2004.	Real market value in millions of € in 2004
Croatia	80	160
Serbia	52	80
Slovenia	48	140
Bosnia & Herzegovina	12	/
Albania	11	13-15
Macedonia	8	/

Table 1. Estimated real value of total market in some countries in the region of 2004[15].

### CONCLUSION

The aim of this research is to contribute the knowledge and understanding the importance of planning process of IMC. We present how company should develop their brand with implementing the IMC planning campaign with advertising agency.

Company Doncaffe successfully had implemented the IMC planning campaign on Serbian market. They got a reward for the brand building and IMC campaign “Doncaffe Classic inspires your life” for the 2005. [9].

Communication activity	Agency
Ideas for campaign	Synergy Leo Burnett
PR campaign	McCann Ericsson Public Relation
Below the line activities	Creativa
Media campaign	Idols&Friends

Table 2. Advertising agency which realized the IMC campaign for brand Doncaffe Classic

Company built their Doncaffe classic brand with the strong support of strategic planning external communication with target audiences. The fourth advertising agencies took part in the IMC campaign process.

Our suggestions for future research are summarized into interesting research issues: What is the role of client and agency in IMC planning process, what elements of promotional mix we should use on which media on Serbian market in the process of brand building and how should we evaluate planning process of IMC campaign

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