

Unit-7 Branding and Marketing Communication

Developing Integrated Marketing Communication Programs for Brand Building, Advertising & Brand Building, Managing Brands over time, Reinforcing & Revitalizing Brands.

Marketing Communications & Branding

How are you communicating?

Marketing communication isn't as simple as it used to be. There's more competition and more noise in the market. We help our clients communicate where their consumers are, in the way they want to be communicated with. Consumers today make decisions based on word-of-mouth, personal opinions and relationships more than on ads, lending more and more focus and validity to marketing communications tools, such as, public relations, social media and geolocation platforms.

Our marketing communications services include:

Branding, Packaging & Collateral Design

If your brand isn't effectively communicated it could be easy for customers to become confused and possibly give their business to another company. Branding goes beyond having a logo, to how you communicate on behalf of your company—verbally and visually. Elevate your brand and share it with the world.

Marketing Strategy

The old adage “failing to plan is planning to fail” is applicable in marketing just as it is elsewhere. For your company's marketing strategy to be successful, it should include SMART goals and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) with checks and balances planned along the way. Ensure the success of your next marketing effort with our award-winning strategic process.

Graphic Design

From identity packages and collateral to other creative elements, our team can bring your vision to life through graphic design. Not quite sure what you need or what look is right for your brand? We can help with that too. Let the world see your brand SHINE, with graphics from PTE.

Copywriting

Running into writer's block? We can help. Writing isn't everyone's forte, but it is ours. We can help you create the content best suited for your website, brochure, newsletter or other application. Let us craft your next message.

Print Production & Direct Mail

If your company wants to communicate in a more traditional sense, via direct mail or other print items, you've come to the right place. Pushing the Envelope, Inc. was started as a direct mail and printing company so we've got the experience to help you create a direct mail or print campaign to reach your goals. Push the envelope, literally!

Promotional Items

For trade shows, event sponsorships, or even just to thank customers, promotional items can come in handy. We can help you determine the right item for your brand or message and more importantly make sure it fits your budget and timeline. The power of a brand, in the palm of your hand.

4 Steps to Developing an Integrated Marketing Communications Strategy

Your marketing communications strategy will promote an awareness of your brand within your target market. When your audience gets to know you, and you get to know them, the sales process begins. When you create a consistent brand experience, you lay a foundation for better relationships and more sales. Use these four steps to develop a comprehensive marketing communication plan and jumpstart your success.

1. Identify different marketing communications

You can access a variety of marketing communications as part of your strategy. Choose from your available options and include as many as possible:

Content Marketing: Make your content available online through blogging, premium content, marketing automation, and dynamic website content to help your potential buyers connect and learn more about you even before they start the sales process.

Advertising: Advertising gets your message and brand in front of the people who most likely will buy your products and services. You can do this through pay-per-click ads, social media marketing, and a variety of other channels to ensure you are capturing the attention of your target audience.

Sales Promotions: Incentives, if used correctly, can definitely help to accelerate the sales process. Bonus offers, special discounts, trial offers, and other limited-time promotions can inspire a sense of urgency among shoppers, prompting many to make the buying decision.

Social Media: Social media has opened the door to building relationships, developing brand awareness, and generating website traffic. When combined with email marketing and search engine optimization, online marketing campaigns utilizing social media can truly bring exceptional results.

2. Develop a marketing communication plan

Focus your marketing communications to support your overall sales and marketing mission. Your marketing communication efforts need to align with all of your marketing and sales programs to ensure your messaging is consistent across channels.

One key to keep in mind is delivering the right content, at the right place, and at the right time. Your message needs to be focused on the buyer persona, or ideal customer segment, to help the message resonate, and pull them through the buying process.

For example, if you have an individual that is at the beginning stages of the buying process, you want to communicate higher-level information to help bring them through the marketing and sales funnel. Once they have done their own research, and have engaged with your brand, sending them more sales-focused communications is more appropriate because you have given them enough time to gather their own data at their own pace.

3. Understand the customer decision-making process

Understand what makes customers decide to buy a product or service, and then discover why they would decide to buy from you. Some customers use an extended decision-making process, but others use low levels of involvement to make limited, nominal, or spontaneous decisions. Most customer decisions follow a basic pattern while involved in a particular situation that could result in a sale:

- They recognize a problem.
- They search for information.
- They identify products and services that can solve the problem.
- They choose which alternative they will buy.
- They assess the after-the-sale experience.

Companies that understand the complex nature of consumer behavior can enhance the effectiveness of their communications by tailoring their message to the decision processes of their audience.

4. Implement your marketing communication plan

Create a customer-focused marketing communications mix that educates and bonds with your customers and prospects in ways that favorably differentiate your company as one that can best satisfy their needs. You must choose the communication methods that most effectively reach your audience and present an integrated, seamless, and consistent message. This will help separate you from the rest, and engage your prospects and customers at various levels of the buying cycle.

To help make your marketing communication strategy comprehensive and results-driven, continue to monitor the needs of real clients, focusing on the capabilities of your product that solve their problem, inspiring confidence in your brand, and generating audience excitement. And lastly, always stay ahead of the curve to find new ways to make your marketing communication strategy different from your competitors, so your communications effort contributes to the value of your brand.

Brand Building

Definition: Brand Building

Brand Building is generating awareness, establishing and promoting company using strategies and tactics. In other words brand building is enhancing brand equity using advertising campaigns and promotional strategies. Branding is crucial aspect of company because it is the visual voice of the company. *Goal of brand building is creating a unique image about the company.*

Importance of Brand Building

Brand building can be initiated with a well thought **brand identity** which can help create a strong **brand image** which goes a long way in consolidating the brand.

Brand Building comprises of creating value to consumers that how consumers feel, think and know about your brand. There are three popular brands known-

• Product brand:

A physical product or items or goods are a product brand. Brand building is ensuring a good quality product is given to the customer along with good brand visibility, packaging, warranty etc. All these cumulatively help in brand building. Example of product brands are Adidas, Rolex etc

• Service Brand:

A non-tangible offering is a service brand like telecom service, ecommerce etc. In this case, brand building is most dependent on the experience that a customer gets. Example of service brands are McDonald's, Starbucks etc

• Retail Brand:

Retail brands are a combination of service & product i.e. products are sold through a service offering. Hence brand building has to ensure good customer experience as well as high quality products. Example of retail brands are Tesco, Walmart etc.

Process of Brand Building

There is no definite way of brand building. Brand building requires innovation, creativity, correct value proposition, constant monitoring & ensuring good customer experience.



Brand Building Steps

Steps involved in brand building are-

- **Describe your brand:**

The first step of brand building is to describe the brand. This can be done through product description, packaging, logos etc. The way a brand is defined builds the **brand equity** and forms the foundation of the customer perception.

- **Brand Differentiation & Positioning:**

Once a product or service is created, it is critical that the brand is differentiated from its competition with some unique value. Also, positioning the brand correctly is an essential element of brand building.

- **Brand Promotion:**

Advertising & promoting the brand using TVCs, social media, print ads, online advertising etc is one of the most important pillars of brand building as it helps in creating **brand awareness**. Correct communication and effective media channels can help build a strong brand and helps increase **brand recall**.

- **Personalise the Brand:**

Brand building can be effective if a customer feels connected to it. Hence giving a personal touch to the customer, through innovation and customization can help building a stronger perception in the mind of the customer.

- **Evaluate the Brand:**

It is important that a company keeps on monitoring and reviewing the performance of its products, services and brands. Hence evaluation & review of a brand is an essential element of brand building.

Brand building strategies should be adopted accordingly which helps in creating and differentiating **brand value** and developing right impression for the company for which it truly stands. Depending on your brand building exercises, your brand may grow, remain stagnant or recede with time. So in brand cycle there is continuous need of bringing new strategies, events and activities that maintain the brand promise. Consumers are co-creators of brand so their preferences and demands should be met and strategies should be designed by keeping consumers in mind. To create a unique and powerful brand there is need of time and consistency. So brand Building is an integral part of business development and involves various strategies and tactics over time.

Hence, this concludes the definition of Brand Building along with its overview.

Managing Brands Over Time

The markets in which companies operate are highly dynamic in nature. There is constant evolution in products, introduction of new technology, government rules, regulatory framework, consumer taste and preference. Between all these companies have to devise marketing communication and branding programs, which look forward to maintaining consumer based brand equity. For example, consumer promotion activity like providing 20% extra for the said product will not create the same response but may raise expectations of 20% during the normal purchase also. Companies have to balance brand management that they are able to understand the future preference of consumer. This calls for companies to be pro-active and thinking standing on their feet.

One way of brand management over time is to strengthen brand equity by developing marketing programs, which express brand knowledge consistently as not to confuse the consumer. For example, Apple, their programs are developed to reinforce their commitment to offer world class full entertainment and communication devices, so introduction iPhone had ready acceptance from consumers. Market leader like coca-cola has constantly run marketing program even after been market leaders. However, this does not imply that same campaign is running repeatedly, rather coming up innovative strategies to reinforce brand knowledge.

Brand knowledge comes from brand attributes and brand association; if companies try to fiddle with these sources of brand equity consequences can be disastrous. In early 90s Intel microprocessor had a technical flaw but the company was not swift enough to rectify the problem, thereby damaging brand equity source of power and safety. Intel realized the importance source of brand equity and was quick in solving the problem by offering replacement. Another dilemma for companies is of choosing the right way to use the developed brand equity, normal course is to generate maximum price premium, but that should not be at cost of brand equity.

Innovation is one of the keys in managing brand and ensuring that brand remains ahead of the competition curve. If companies operating in entertainment category or matter of fact insurance do not innovate then value of their brand is lost as these categories are product driven. For example, Apple, without its innovation in the form of ipod mp3 player, apple would have found it difficult facing completion from Sony. If the company's category is not a product driven marketing campaigns associated with brand image play an important role in sustaining the brand. For example, Pepsi, it is operating in highly competitive carbonated drinks' category, over the years their marketing campaign is focused on their highlighting their brand position as a drink for young generation.

Every brand faces challenges as it moves in the product life cycle and at some point faces saturation. At this point, it is important to focus on expanding brand awareness that is looking for ways to generate more consumption by highlighting instance of consumption. For example, toothpaste revitalized consumption by highlighting advantages of twice daily usage. Another way to increase consumption is by highlighting diverse ways and occasion where brand can be consumed. This is more prevalent in food and beverages industry.

Along with brand awareness brand image also plays a pivotal role in revitalizing brand performance. This can be done by highlighting pointing of difference, which may have been lost in all other marketing campaigns. Another way to enhance the brand image is by adopting new brand elements like brand symbol, logos, etc., For example, Federal Express modify to FedEx as a move generating more interest in face of competition from UPS.

For companies to sustain a brand over long period of time, it is absolute essential that marketing program look at strategies around effective brand management. Effective brand management strategies constantly assess the consumer perceptions towards the brand and strive

to attract her attention. Strategies have to be flexible as to maintain the pace with the dynamic environment. Only then it is possible have a successful brand.

What is Brand Reinforcement and Revitalisation?

Brand Reinforcement is all about maintaining brand equity; in other words, it is about making sure that the consumers do have the desired knowledge structures so that the brands continues having its necessary sources of brand equity. This could be done by marketing activities that would persistently carry the meaning of the brand, to the consumers - which could be in form of brand awareness and brand image. However, sometimes, even a well-designed reinforcement strategy fails for various reasons like emergence of new technology or competitors, change in customers' taste and preference, etc. In this situation, the brands need to revive their fortune by returning to their roots, in order to recapture the lost sources of equity. This is what is meant by Brand Revitalisation (Keller, 1999).

Important considerations of Brand Reinforcement

Chernatony et al. (2011) says, in order to maintain brand equity, brands need to be managed over their period of life cycle and the marketing activities required for the same, would be different in its different phase; namely the growth phase, the maturity phase and the decline phase. According to Keller (2012), Brand Reinforcement involves the following:

Maintaining brand consistency - This helps to enhance brand's positive reputation with customers and without it, the meaning of the brand would vary across its several touch points. Brand consistency leads consumers to get familiarised with the brand and enhance their perception about brand uniqueness, resulting in brand reputation (Miller, 2010). E.g. - Coca Cola's "open happiness" proposition across the globe (See Appendix 3).

Protecting sources of brand equity - Though brand should always try to defend the existing sources of brand equity, they should also look for potentially powerful new sources of equity. However, there is very little need to deviate from a successful positioning, unless the current positioning is being affected by some internal or external factor which is making it less powerful (Kellar, 2012).

Fortifying vs. Leveraging - Fortifying refers to enhancing brand equity in terms of awareness and perception, whereas Leveraging refers to making money from a brand. Failure to fortify a brand might result in brand decay and there would be no leveraging from the brand any more. Therefore, there should be a proper balance between fortifying and leveraging brands.

Fine-tuning Supporting Marketing Program - This could be done through improving product related performance associations and non-product related imagery associations. This should also be done, only when the current ones are no longer creating the desired results to maintain and strengthen brand equity (Kellar, 2003).

Brand Revitalization strategies for a company

It is very important for a company to know, what marketing or managerial actions possibly will revitalise the brand in the minds of the consumer (Andrews and Kim, 2007). The main key to revive a brand is to increase its differentiation, which could be achieved by asserting the "core relevance through incremental and continuous innovation". Another element that needs important consideration is the presence of brand's core image in the minds of consumer, in the revitalisation strategy. When a brand is revitalised, many people will recognise the brand but will however want to know what's "new" in it. So, to support the revival, there must be well planned advertising and promotional campaigns. (Bellman, 2005). Chernatony et al. (2011) suggests the following steps to revitalise a brand :

According to Kapferer (2004), in order to revitalise a brand, it is necessary to redefine its brand essence, which will then be embodied in new product or services, targeting a new set of audience. Therefore, according to him, revitalisation could happen through:

new uses - to develop new user occasion of the product

distribution change - to develop newer ways of reaching target audience

innovations - to technologically advance the product

segmentation - to segment brands and if necessary, create sub-brands

opinion leaders - to target the trend-setters

360 degree communication - to make use of all marketing communication tools together

change in business model - to let the brand be handled by new set of people, which usually happens in case of acquisitions or mergers.

However, Kellar (2012) believes there are three main strategies of Brand Revitalisation and they are:

Expanding Brand Awareness through:

Identifying additional or new usage opportunities - This includes reminding the consumer about the brand usage and trying to increase its frequency of use, and to also create new usage opportunities of the brand for the consumers. E.g. - Neutrogena's launch of oil-free acne face wash (See Appendix 4).

Identifying new and different ways to use the brand - This refers to changing the unique selling proposition of the brand by identifying new ways of using the brand. E.g. - Cadbury's change of USP in India from "Shubh Aarambh" (having something sweet before embarking on something new) to "Khaane Ke Baad Meethe Mein Kuch Meetha Ho Jaaye" (positioning Cadbury Dairy Milk as a post dinner dessert) (See Appendix 5).

Improving Brand Image through:

Repositioning the brand - This refers to establishing more convincing points of difference or to establish a point of parity on some key image dimension. E.g. - Repositioning of Airtel (India's largest telecom service provider) in 2010 (See Appendix 6).

Changing brand elements - This refers to changing of one or more brand elements in order to convey that the brand has taken a new meaning because either the product or market campaign, has changed. E.g. - evolution of Starbuck's logo (See Appendix 7).

Entering new markets: It refers to identifying growth potential in other target market/s and building a new marketing communications plan to build a position of the brand in the new market segment. E.g. - Horlicks launched "Women's Horlicks" in India, in 2008, identifying growth potential in that segment (See Appendix 8).

Conclusion

This paper has been initiated with explaining the building block of the topic, i.e., brand and brand equity. Sustaining Brand Equity is the main reason behind managing brands and so to understand it thoroughly, this papers explains its significance and creation, before finally

moving into looking at, why at all brands need to be managed over a period of time? Brand Management is all about reinforcing and revitalising brands, and several authors have suggested their own strategies to do the same. However, this paper recognises the fact that there is no one rule of the game. It all depends on the nature and characteristic of the brand and also its marketing environment. There are many brands in the world that do not follow the rules and yet becomes the market leader. For example - Boroline, an antiseptic cream brand in India, owned by GD Pharmaceuticals, has not changed its packaging or logo and has not moved into any brand extensions, in the last 80 years and is still doing very well (barring a few up and downs in between), with huge customer loyalty (See Appendix 9). Similarly, there are also other brands which has challenged the rules and got victory. Vodafone India created a new brand identity, when it was already doing well and took the risk of creating new creatures called ZooZoos (See Appendix 10). The campaign done by O&M India was a huge success and went viral across the country, with each of its series launched. But if some other brand had taken this risk, they could have failed miserably, as there is no one "success mantra" that could suit any brand. Every brand needs to break through the clutter and create its identity, by winning the brand battle, through its own tailor-made rule and that's the key to success.