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MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

Introduction

Integrated marketing communications processes will assist to boost the sales rate of an organisation. Therefore, this report will analyse about the importance of integrated marketing communication. Apart from this, here will discuss the Sportswear brand in the UK which is why Umbro has been chosen for this report. This organisation has used different types of marketing communication strategies for its business which will be discussed below. In addition, proper recommendations will provide which need to follow by the management team of this organisation. In this way, this report will evaluate the importance of AI tools and techniques to improve the marketing communication process.

Task 1

Concept of Integrated Marketing Communications.

The concept on which the term, Integrated Marketing Communications relies, is the understanding, and transmission of sound data, and analysis of customers' perception towards their every product. Conveyance of rules and regulations carried forward by the employees to the managerial department for better performance of a brand. And maintaining the continual process of cooperation between the board members (organization) and between its members (employees). This results in the desired outcomes an organization would like for better development and effective management of resources. The main basis of the aforementioned term emphasizes cooperation, common goals shared, healthy workflow, and harmony between each employee that will help any organization, albeit small consisting of 30 people with the inclusion of the board members or a full-fledged bustling organization with over 2000 members and counting.

This method readily helps an organization reach new heights on a daily purpose and maintains tranquility in each process of the organization. In this assignment, Umbro has been chosen as the brand for assessment of their rules, regulations, beliefs, and so on, whilst recommending them better-refined opportunities to conjure the market with their fleet of sportswear apparel and clothing to better-targeted customers, who'll buy their newly launched products without skipping a beat through flash sales, occasional discounts, and attractive deals that will flock up customers at their doorstep (Fill and Turnbull, 2019).

Background of the sportswear brand: Umbro.

The company is a highly popular sportswear brand around the world, meanwhile is a highly acclaimed company in the UK, the whole of Europe in general, and in the southern peninsula, all thanks to the craze of football and soccer frenzy in the above-mentioned continents. As of

right now, Umbro has around 300-557 employees. Umbro's parent company is Iconix Brand Group. Their main headquarters is situated in the United Kingdom, Manchester.

Umbro's net worth ranges from \$270.00M-\$M520.00M as of January 2023. Umbro has had such a huge impact in the market of sportswear and sports apparel, all due to their commitment to refining and retaining customer relationship for better prospects.

Implementation of Integrated Marketing Communications of the aforementioned Company.

Implementation of the tactics used by Adidas, Nike, Reebok, and so on, Umbro could outsmart the whole market through the implementation of marketing strategies with the help of integrated or fixated regulations and product diversity in their fleet of products, already. Umbro with their names written in the Hall of Fame in sports, Umbro could readily use this name of theirs to increase product output, whilst making more diversified products for the masses that would cater to all of their needs instead of buying shoes and jerseys from Umbro and buying sports apparel from Nike, Reebok or Adidas, thus, saving time for the customers and in turn helping Umbro to grasp and make a base in the big leagues like Adidas or Nike has.

This simple yet comprehensive idea, implementation of integrated communications and marketing could turn the tables for other companies or organizations, all due to Umbro rising into the big leagues by diversifying their product range and with their already strong brand image and quality of products, they could easily dethrone any brand that sits atop. Easily making Umbro the new Adidas or Nike of the 21st century. A few tips and tricks that could be used by Umbro are, a proper team dedicated to social media handling and proper hiring of employees for it, assessing great athletes and great players all around the world for better reach, and bringing in proper competition in the Nike VS Adidas leading marketplace. and increasing its value tenfold the time as of right now (SHEZI and REDDA, 2022).

Importance of the approach to the company.

In the 21st century, after the invention of the internet, the world is advancing at such velocity, that inventions, advancements, theories, and so on, are being developed daily. New ideas, innovations, and formulas, are created, refined, implemented, and used by companies for better reach and to gain marginal advantages over the competition they are facing. To stay ahead of the curve, it takes a huge amount of pooling in resources at the telemarketing and telecommunications department to influence, inspire and enhance the quality of their product for the masses and the athletes. Athletes and fans are what drive every sportswear company nowadays. Having an incremental reach and active social standing helps a company reach the masses, and the masses reach such brands through the palm of their hand with the help of

smartphones or computers. Umbro could invest more into the social activeness and advertisement sector for better reach to compete with the socially advanced companies lately, and they could also invest their resources into freebies and better-refined modes of communication with the masses for huge following and engagement resulting in greater outcomes (Zhavoronkova, 2021).

Task 2

Analysis of the marketing strategies used by the company

Every country has its athletes who are worshipped by their fans and the athletes are their biggest inspiration. When athletes advertise for a certain brand or wear sportswear from any brand, the fans tend to buy sportswear from that particular brand and get heavily inclined towards buying the product their favourite mentors, athletes wear for their practices, warm-ups, matches, and so on. Sportswear brands are driven and entirely based on what kind of sports apparel they are making manufacturing and promoting, whilst the core emphasis is on the athletes they are promoting for better reach and the fans they are targeting for their market gain. Sportswear brands and athletes share the same goal, where they usually find common ground, which is the endorsement from the public, and this approval fortifies the base of the company/organization and solidifies the legacy/fame the athlete has created through their lifetime or career. This inspires the fans, which in turn, helps the companies/organization gain market and create a wide array of products in the sportswear category, and also helps the athlete gain more popularity (like a symbiotic relationship) which is a win-win situation for both sides (Sharma and Jain, 2019).

- 1) Umbro could use social media, for example, Instagram for engagement, Twitter for a strong brand portfolio, and Facebook for reach. Some important aspects of social media activeness also include customer feedback, inquiries, queries, and complaints. They could easily use and implement their services at Amazon for online coverage of their sportswear and apparels all around the world, resulting in large outputs and better product manufacturing.
- 2) Umbro is highly price conscious, when making their products, they focus on the quality and feel of their product, which can make quite a dent in one's pocket, and there's a catch when comparing Umbro to other brands in the sportswear segment, for example, Adidas VS Umbro or Nike VS Umbro, it turns out that Umbro is the better brand in terms of quality of product, the price range of their product, and reliability of the product.

- 3) Even though Umbro has a good amount of reach, around 90 countries so far. Umbro could definitely 1-up their game and bring in a higher number of sales resulting in greater reach than ever before and high sales margin, competing with big brands like Adidas, Nike, Reebok, and so on. To date, Umbro is quite active on social media platforms, unfortunately not active enough to increase their number of sales on a large scale like Adidas or Nike.
- 4) Better engagement with customers and fans after endorsing their products with the athletes and players could radically bring in more revenue through social media platforms.
- 5) Lastly, collaboration with athletes and players all around the world would greatly help Umbro. And in the very near future, it would also bring fame and recognition on a global scale, resulting in an active presence on the field and off the field.

These are a few things that could be maintained and enhanced by Umbro for better outcomes and great inputs (Khushaim, 2022).

Evaluation of the marketing strategies imbibed by the company.

As of right now, Umbro is slowly and surely, gaining a competitive advantage over its competition at the moment. Still, it needs to be more observant of opportunities, to grab them and use them for Umbro's advantage. Needs to be pickier when choosing athletes and players around the world as their ambassador brand, in turn being the call sign or emblem for their brand. Sometimes, bad judgement and half-checked assertions could lead to drastic consequences, hiring and endorsing athletes or players with somewhat bad reputations, things could get ugly for the organization, which is quite harmful to a company, that is solely reliant on the public's opinion and the athlete's perception of each and every brand eh/she is offered and they comply with.

Keeping these things in mind, Umbro could overcome such troubles and hassles with the help of a team that is purely dedicated to social media activity, external affairs, endorsement management, product promotion, and lastly distributor management.

Product promotion is just as important as hiring the right athlete or player for endorsement. Promotion of product means, the implementation of available resources at hand, which helps in the handling of the product and features of such promoted product to be shown to the public virtually with the help of social media. This helps in maintaining and understanding what the people want in their budget and gives the athletes a more versatile and great ergonomic choice in the market of expensive yet showy characteristics of sportswear. And in order to understand

and cater to the needs of the public and to the players and athletes, Umbro must understand what the people want in actuality.

Distribution management means, for example, Nike and Adidas are basically all around the world, 170 countries and 160 countries respectively, unfortunately, Umbro so far has only expanded to a little over 90 countries. Even though Umbro is growing, albeit slowly, it is a testament that people understand the difference between quality and quantity. Nike and Adidas readily make good products with great diversity, when it comes to comparing Umbro with Nike or Adidas, turns out that Umbro is around 30-24% less expensive than their competition. Umbro needs to create a cult-like following just like Nike or Adidas, if they want to gain that 1-up against their competition, they need to follow the aforementioned techniques, ideals and most importantly, integrated marketing practices for better outcomes and to create a huge impact of sportswear market that mostly dominated by Nike and Adidas (Umbro 2023).

Task 3

Current ways that help the company maintain and retain customer relationships.

For retaining and maintaining customer retention, whilst maintaining the relationship between the customers and organisation, Umbro already knows how to do that but in order to leap forward on a humongous scale, Umbro needs to understand the few basic steps of integrated marketing strategies, i.e., cooperation, teamwork, sound communication, harmony between employees, delegating work to each employee for better execution of tasks, and lastly, the most important of all, modernization. The ways that Umbro applies and implements their technique and ideas into one and uses them for their production and ethics, these methodologies of Umbro are ancient in front of Nike or Adidas (Okholm Kryger *et al.*, 2020).

- 1) **Primary change:** Umbro should be focusing more on social media engagement for a better understanding of what the people and athletes of each country want to better suit and cater to budget and needs. If they can be much cheaper and cheaper in the same price segment and are of better quality, people will flock to Umbro for that same sportswear rather than Nike or Adidas.
- 2) **Secondary change:** Even though Umbro is good at marketing, great at promoting their product, and adequate when endorsing athletes as their ambassadors for their product line-up. Unfortunately, when compared to Nike or Adidas, they simply kick out Umbro from the count and even Reebok 1-up's Umbro when comparing their social presence, authenticity, endorsing, promoting, and so on.

- 3) In need of more professional athletes who are into popular sports: Umbro, when it comes to football, rugby and futsal, is no stranger to it, Umbro actually gained popularity and love for the brand through them, if Umbro did not exist back then, football, rugby and futsal would have become famous and it would have taken a long time. Umbro is no exception when it comes to maintaining and holding onto the tradition they once created, fewer brands do that, especially in small-scale industries. Umbro still maintains its tradition to this day in the big leagues. The main point here is, in order to become relevant and famous again, Umbro needs to pick up the pace by hiring new faces for their product promotion and endorsement, who are famous and have a cult-like following for the sports they have their career in (Kachitsa, 2020).

Recommendations that could further help develop the company's brand equity and secure its name.

Better social media engagement: What it means is, Umbro needs to be proactive and hastily needs to collaborate with social media influencers on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and so on. With better social media activity it would seem that Umbro is readily active, engaged with the customers, and actively taking and working on the feedback they receive. Being more active on social media indirectly lets the public know that Umbro does not stay dormant on social media platforms and they actively engage with people through that on a daily basis. Umbro is a great brand, all it needs is a little push to get back on track and show the world that it can do sportswear better than anyone, whilst maintaining traditional methods intertwined with modern-day technology.

Better Marketing Models: In order to be better and more efficient in production rates and quality, Umbro can definitely use AI (Artificial Intelligence) in their industrial purposes, for better handling of public's demands, reducing costs, decreasing product output on a large scale, bringing down the need for extra employees on a field were AI can do the trick with the flick of a switch and so on. Umbro can even use AI for packing and moving products to their delivery transport for effective time saving, and less packing times, which is an extra cost-saving process.

Implement AI technology

This organisation should focus on AI technology to improve its brand quality and fulfil the satisfaction of their consumers. For the instant delivery process, this organisation can use a drone system which will help to deliver their products to their consumers. Apart from this, this organisation should implement robotic technology for their customer's services that will provide 24*7 services.

Need to upgrade websites

This organisation have their own websites where they provide proper information about its products yet on its websites the management team should implement some specific strategy such as a delivery system, review option, video conversion options and others. In this way, consumers easily communicate with this organisation and provide the problems they face with this product. Umbro can use and implement return policies on their website for better customer feedback on products with defects or problems, in turn helping Umbro to create a better and enhanced version of the products they will produce in the future.

Conclusion

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that Umbro needs to use some AI technology to improve its marketing communication strategy. In this way, this organisation can boost their sales rate in the global market and fulfil the goals of every consumer in the entire market. In the present time, this organisation is active on their social media handle for the marketing of its products where this organisation has their own websites and Consumers easily buy its important products from these websites.

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