

Integrated Internet Marketing Communications (IIMC)

In the past three decades, the perspective towards marketing communication changed from it being specific variable oriented to being more integrated where all promotional tools are given strategic importance at the same time.

This was the beginning of the phase where marketing communications planning which recognized the added value of a comprehensive promotional plan with all ingredients of promotion was accepted as a norm of effective communication with the customers. A combination of general advertising, direct selling, sales promotion and public relations was being recommended to provide clarity, consistency and maximum communication impact.

The Integrated Marketing Communication seeks to have all promotional and marketing activities of an organization together, project a unified and consistent image of the organization to the target market. It has a centralized messaging function which focuses on a common goal and positioning.

It enhances the image of the organization as it sends all customers a consistent message about the company and its brands. The companies, who adopt this integrated marketing program over the traditional method of promotion where all elements of promotion are treated separately, are more effective in communicating all about themselves and their brands in the market place.

The fourth P of Marketing is Promotion, as termed by McCarthy. Promotion is the coordination of all the efforts, the company undertakes to aware and persuade the consumers to buy goods and services. Robert Lauterborn calls promotion as communication from the perspective of the consumer. Now it is widely known as Integrated Marketing Communications.

Earlier it was known only as marketing communications, as the media vehicles were few and doing promotion was simpler before 1980s. Now it has become more complex. Today, a company needs to integrate all the marketing communications activities to get the maximum reach to the target audience with minimum resources.

Earlier advertising was restricted to mass media vehicles like newspapers, magazines and television. Now there are so many options to choose from like Websites, Posters, Leaflets, Point

of purchase Materials, Hoardings, Video Films, Directories, Sales Meeting, Fairs and Trade Shows, Online Shopping, Telemarketing, Catalogue Marketing, Contests, Events, Demonstrations, Seminars etc. besides Print Advertisement in newspaper and magazines and TV Commercials (TVC).

A marketer becomes confused to choose the right media vehicle among the plethora of choices available to promote a product. Here IMC can come to the rescue to formulate right kind of strategy for the company.

Tools of Integrated Internet Marketing Communication

1. Advertising

Advertising is the non-personal and paid form of communication. It is one of the most effective forms of communication where it reaches a mass audience at once within a short period of time. It not only increases sales but also creates awareness among consumers. Marketers need to ensure that the right message should be delivered in the right manner to the consumers.

The various media used are print media, radio, billboards, television etc.

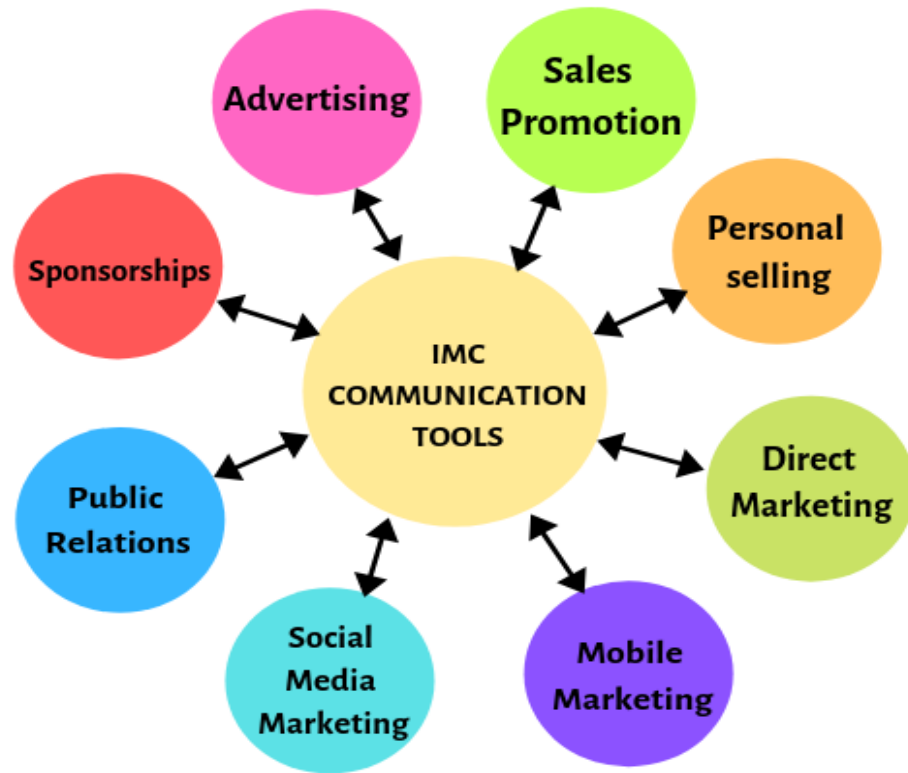
2. Personal selling

Personal selling includes face to face interaction with the end-users with the motive of promoting the product and convincing the buyer to purchase the product. It is the most effective tools in IMC as salesperson directly communicates with the buyer, resolves their issues on spot, Improvise his pitch as per the need of the buyer and focus on building a long-term relationship with end-users.

3. Direct Marketing

It is the oldest form of communication where organizations directly communicate with end users through emails, telephone, fax, text messages, catalogue, brochure, and promotional letter.

Nowadays people buy more online, so marketers help consumers in the buying process by sending those catalogs and other marketing material which makes the process easier for consumers.



4. Mobile Marketing

Mobile marketing involves communicating with customers through mobile by sending them a text message. It is the cheapest traditional means of promotion.

5. Social Media Marketing

It is one of the most powerful media where the promotion of the brand or business can be done through the social media channel. It is one of the low-cost promotional methods where a large number of users are targeted at once.

6. Public Relations

It is the practice of managing the relationship between an organization and the public. It is a two-way communication where the public shares their feedback to the organization. PR is done to create the goodwill in the market and present the product of the company in the positive light.

Promotion can be done through press releases, public appearances, event sponsorships, news, etc.

7. Sales Promotion

Sales promotion is the short term incentives given to consumers to accelerate the sale. It gives them a reason to buy the product by providing attractive offers like discount coupons, contests, premiums, samples, sweepstakes, price packs, low-cost financing deals, and rebates.

8. Sponsorships

It is a mixture of sales promotion and public relations. Sponsorships create brand loyalty and help in differentiating the product with competitors.

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