

9.2: Integrated Marketing Communications - United We Stand

Learning Objectives

After studying this section, students should be able to do the following:

1. *Describe* the integrated marketing communications perspective.
2. *List* the various forms of marketing programs that are united by integrated marketing communications.

The punk band Paramore is getting noticed; the group from a small town in Tennessee sold more than 350,000 copies of its recent second album “Riot!” and it’s packed the house on the Vans Warped Tour. Part of the band’s appeal is the cult following for lead singer Hayley Williams (and legions of young girls imitating her shaggy blonde and orange hairstyle). But the group’s success is also due to a new business model in the music industry, where musicians work with their label to coordinate a marketing campaign that includes album sales, concert tickets, and merchandise. This model is called *multiple rights* or “**360**” deals; the biggest to date is Madonna’s recent \$120 million package with the concert promoter Live Nation. Lordi, a Finnish metal band, has its own soft drink and credit card, and the Pussycat Dolls opened a Dolls-themed nightclub in Las Vegas. Welcome to the new look of integrated and cross-channel marketing.

Integrated marketing communications unites all forms of marketing programs aimed at a target audience, including magazine ads, TV commercials, coupons, an opportunity to win a sweepstakes, a display at the store, and a visit from a company sales rep. There’s good reason to integrate: by coordinating the messages across all the communication tools, a company will speak to its customers and potential customers in a single, unified voice. This unified voice creates a more powerful and memorable message than disjointed efforts produce.

Dig Deeper

When Unilever introduced its All Small & Mighty detergent, it used a traditional ad campaign (TV and print) to make the point that the new detergent is concentrated, packed in a smaller bottle to create a smaller ecofootprint while delivering the same results. In addition, Unilever handed out samples from a bus; it made the bus noticeable by draping it in laundry. Anyone who spotted the bus could also send a text message to enter a sweepstakes. Unilever also projected “videoscapes” onto buildings and did a product placement on *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*, in which the studio audience did their laundry.

Campaigns that utilize multiple media platforms make a lot of sense, especially in today’s media environment. The simple truth is that consumers increasingly rely on a greater mix of media for news, entertainment, and product information. According to a late 2007 survey, 55 percent of consumers who watch TV watch some type of video on devices other than their TV sets, including their computers, mobile phones, and digital media players (e.g., iPod). Not surprisingly, video watching on these alternative devices is more popular among younger consumers (66 percent) than older ones (36 percent).

Creating integrated marketing communications requires deciding what kind of campaign the client needs and identifying the best tools to deliver on those objectives. The integrated program will include anything from advertising, consumer sales promotion, and trade promotions to public relations, personal selling, direct marketing, and more. The messaging works across platforms, and is also referred to as cross-platform marketing. Let’s look at each of these in turn.

Key Takaway

Traditional agencies tend to focus on what they do well, but customers touch clients’ products in many ways. An integrated perspective recognizes the value and efficiency of carefully planning and coordinating all of the communications tools—from glitzy TV commercials to employees’ uniforms—that impact the impression the client makes in the marketplace.

EXERCISES

1. Describe the integrated marketing communications perspective and comment on its usefulness to advertising professionals.
2. Explain how the SS+K advertising agency seems to differ from other advertising agencies with respect to communications and media focus.

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