

INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS: THEORETICAL BASES

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Integrated marketing communications (IMC) is integration of all marketing tools, approaches, and resources within a company which maximizes impact on consumer mind and which results into maximum profit at minimum cost. IMC focuses on consistency within the communication strategy of an organization. Its ultimate aim is to achieve synergy between its component parts in order to generate a more effective approach to communications.

Accordingly IMC involve:

1. The strategic choice of elements of marketing communications (advertising (by using different medium), sales promotion (sales and trades promotion), personal selling activities, internet marketing, sponsorship marketing, direct marketing, database marketing, public relations & etc.) which effectively and economically influence transactions between an organization and its existing and potential customers, clients and consumers.

2. The management and control of all marketing communication elements.

3. Ensuring that the brand positioning, proposition, personality and messages are delivered synergistically across every element of communication and are derived from a single consistent strategy.

Several shifts in the advertising and media industry have caused IMC to develop into a primary strategy for marketers: 1. From media advertising to multiple forms of communication. 2. From mass media to more specialized (niche) media, which are centered around specific target audiences. 3. From a manufacturer-dominated market to a retailer-dominated, consumer-controlled market. 4. From general-focus advertising and marketing to data-based marketing. 5. From low agency accountability to greater agency accountability, particularly in advertising. 6. From traditional compensation to performance-based compensation (increased sales or benefits to the company). 7. From limited Internet access to 24/7 Internet availability and access to goods and services.

The major advantages from the integration process and possible barriers or restraining forces of a move toward greater integration in marketing communication are given in a table 1.

Table 1 – The major advantages and possible barriers (restraining forces) of application of IMC

Advantages	Barriers/restraining forces
strategies should reinforce each other	resistance to change
messages are given which are consistent	old planning system downgrade promotional decisions to tactical level
integrated strategies may be synergic	traditional (functional) organization structures with responsibility for only one element of communications
intention procedures cost savings	centralized control
above all integration achieves business results	external agencies organized in limited specialist areas
consistent creative approach	
better use of all media	
greater marketing precision	
easier working relationship	
sustainable competitive advantage.	

There are a lot of methods of overcoming the barriers and methods of integration, such as: top management commitment and top management policy decision; marketing organization development; training and development; communications as a competitive advantage; achieving the results; hierarchy of objectives and control; unctional integration and other.

In conclusion we must say that integration allows to obtain the increase of efficiency of communications, strengthening of adherence of clients to the trade mark of firm, strengthening of influence on the marketing of communication program and providing of compatibility with the global marketing programs.

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