



INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION: A LITERATURE REVIEW

Said Ma'ruf¹, Anwar²

^{1,2} Universitas Paramadina, Indonesia

Email: saidmaruf100@gmail.com

Article Info

Article history :

Received : 16-03-2024

Revised : 18-03-2024

Accepted : 20-03-2024

Published : 22-03-2024

Abstract

The concept of Integrated Market Communication relates to marketing communication planning and highlights the benefits of having a comprehensive plan that assesses the strategic roles of different communication disciplines, including public relations, advertising, direct marketing, and sales promotion. By combining these disciplines, the plan can maximize communication impact and clarity. The notion of integrated marketing communication aims to plan, create, consolidate, and implement many marketing communication benches. These benches include advertising, sales, promotion, publicity hubs, and direct marketing. Using a literature review approach, this research highlights some related previous studies as well as available relevant literature to get a deep understanding and meaningful insight about IMC. The review result shows that among the effective IMC strategies assist companies in marketing their products and services by sending out complimentary, understandable signals that are ultimately intended to turn prospects into consumers. In addition, it recommends that marketing managers consider the six Ms: market, mission, message, media, money, and measurement while developing an IMC plan.

Keywords: *Integrated Market Communication, Company marketing, Sales promotion*

INTRODUCTION

Integrated Market Communication is a concept of marketing communication planning that introduces the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of various communication disciplines such as advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, and Public Relations and combines these disciplines to provide maximum clarity, consistency and impact communication. The theory of integrated marketing communication consisting of advertising, sales, promotion, publicity hubs and direct marketing is a form of communication aimed at the planning, creation, consolidation, as well as implementation of several benches of marketing communication (Novrian & Rizki, 2021).



The goal of integrated marketing communications (IMC) is to increase awareness of the brands' goods and services while also achieving the promotional goals of reaching target markets. As a result, integrated marketing campaigns (IMC) may incorporate a variety of promotional strategies, such as public relations, advertising, direct marketing, interactive marketing, personal selling, sales promotions, and publicity. The IMC instruments that comprise the promotional mix are covered in this chapter. It describes the features of every tool used in marketing communications. It also takes into account all the different aspects that could affect how well an IMC strategy is implemented, including how effective the plan is measured (Camilleri, 2018).

IMC is carried out with the aim of indirectly or directly influencing the behavior of the audience that has become the target of marketing communications. IMC also is implemented by considering the entire point of contact, or source of contact owned by the customer or potential customer with the brand as the channel of delivery of messages and using all communication methods relevant to the customer / prospective customer (Nurjanah, 2020) as cited in (Novrian & Rizki, 2021).

It becomes clear that integrated marketing communication is a potent instrument that helps professionals create and carry out marketing communications more consistently and successfully (Asemah, 2012). Though nothing is known about its tangible or visible shape in the marketing communication process, this concept's inception has become one of the most important examples of advancement in the marketing discipline, despite its ongoing attractiveness. It is the most creative marketing function that professionals in advertising and marketing support. Using promotional materials in a coordinated manner to generate and accomplish a synergistic communication effect is now considered integrated marketing communication, going beyond simple communication.

IMC is used by researchers because it can be used to analyze problems that researchers find in the field, so that, in this article, researchers conduct a literature review on some related previous studies as well as available literature to get a deep understanding and meaningful insight about IMC.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. The Nature of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC)

The Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) approach gained popularity in the marketing industry starting in the late 1990s (Kitchen & Schultz, 2009; Madhavaram et al., 2005) as cited in (Theodora, 2021). In the past, the majority of marketing initiatives exclusively employed traditional advertising media; however, this has changed, with the company's marketing funds now being distributed among a range of communication initiatives, including public relations, advertising, direct consumer sales, branding, and sales promotion. The idea behind integrated marketing communication is that a business can transmit a consistent, compelling message about itself and its products by integrating and coordinating many communication channels.



The importance of marketing communications in the marketing mix has increased dramatically in recent decades, with some claiming that marketing and communication are inextricably linked. Whether a company engages in business-to-business (B2B) exchanges or business-to-consumer (B2C) exchanges, marketing communications is a critical component of their overall marketing mission and a major determinant of their successes or failures (Shimp, 2007). Traditional mass media advertising (TV, magazines, etc.); online advertising (Websites, opt-in e-mail messages, text messaging, and so on); sales promotions (samples, coupons, rebates, and premium items); point-of-purchase communications and store signage; direct-mail literature; public relations and publicity releases with a focus on marketing; salesperson presentations; and various collateral forms of communication devices are among the main forms of marketing communications. All together, these media and communication instruments make up what has historically been referred to as the marketing mix's "promotion" component (Shimp, 2007).

There are several definitions of IMC (Integrated Marketing Communication), according to Four As (the American Association of Advertising Agency) in Sulaksana (2005:30), IMC is a concept of marketing communication planning that acknowledges the added value of a comprehensive plan that examines the strategic roles of each form of communication, e.g. advertising, direct response, sales promotion, and humas and combines them to clarity, consistency, and maximum communication impact through message integration (Anwar, 2021) as cited in (Chrisnayani, 2009). As well as according to Tjiptono (2008:507) (Chrisnayani, 2009) IMC is a distinction between IMC and promotion, whereas IMC emphasizes two-way interaction. Consequently, promotion is prescribed as a form of mass communication, while IMC has a more personal or individual nature.

Meanwhile, any integrated marketing communication process aims to increase favorable brand perceptions and associations between products and brands, as well as raise brand awareness and spread brand information. IMC is crucial in convincing clients to buy goods or services from particular businesses and contributes to the development of brand loyalty. IMC is quite valuable in the long run because it helps build a company's brand equity or product brand. The total revenue generated by any activity undertaken on behalf of the company and its brand, including corporate communications initiatives and product sales, is known as brand equity (Theodora, 2021). In addition, building brand equity for products through communication synergies is one of the major advantages of IMC for businesses. Consumers' exposure to and interaction with brands through integrated marketing communications can enhance and expand brand equity. Businesses can employ integrated marketing communications (IMC) to attain high corporate brand equity through targeted brand contact marketing. Examining the correlation between integrated marketing communications and corporate brand equity can facilitate the identification of communication elements that capture customers' interest and the impact these elements have on the development of brand equity (Theodora, 2021). The utilization of several communication channels frequently results in inherent variations in the impact on brand equity.



Moreover, according to Sulaksana as cited in (Chrisnayani, 2009) stated that there are various underlying reasons for a company of both services and products to choose IMC (Integrated Marketing Communication) as their marketing communication strategy, namely a flood of information that tends to piss off consumers, a trade liberalization that opens up the barricades of enterprises that have been domestic enterprises, a commoditization of products that is increasingly rapid as the impact of innovation and increasingly intense competition, various media that have succeeded in seizing public trust as a source of facts and truth so that have a huge influence on the lifetime of an enterprise, and high advertising expenditure so that marketing communication becomes overloaded and becomes more and more ineffective as consumers tend to decrease their ability to remember the message that has been seen and heard.

2. Important IMC Characteristics

There is a number of crucial elements that serve as the intellectual cornerstone of this discussion. Before moving forward, it is crucial to understand that these components are interdependent and that the listing does not imply any particular order of priority. According to (Shimp, 2007: pp, 8-13), it is imperative that students acknowledge the significance of all five elements in comprehending the IMC philosophy and realizing the necessary steps to put this philosophy into practice. It is worthwhile to commit these five qualities to memory.

- a. The customer serves as the foundation for all marketing communications efforts.

The process of identifying the best messages and media to inform, persuade, and induce customers and prospects to act favorably toward the communicator's brand should begin with the customer or prospect and work backward to the brand communicator. This is a fundamental component of integrated marketing communications (IMC). The IMC approach starts with the customer ("outside-in") to identify those communication methods that will best serve the customers' information needs and motivate them to purchase the brand, as opposed to taking a "inside-out" (from company to customer) approach.

- b. A Wide Range of Marketing Communication Tools Should Be Available for Use by Brand Managers and Their Agencies.

The focus on beginning with the consumer in the first element naturally carries over into the second. An analysis of the tools used by workers in craft sectors like carpentry, plumbing, and auto repair and those available to marketing communicators (advertising, sales promotions, sponsorships, etc.) can be helpful in understanding this second important aspect of IMC. Every one of these artisans has a toolbox full of various instruments. Think about,

- c. A Single Voice Must Speak Several Messages.

The requirement that a brand's various communication elements (advertisements, point-of-purchase signage, sales promotions, event sponsorships, etc.) all work toward presenting the same message and conveying that message consistently across diverse message channels, or points of contact, is inherent in the philosophy and practice of



integrated marketing communications (IMC). Stated differently, marketing communications need to have a unified voice. To build a strong, cohesive brand image and inspire people to take action, media and message coordination is vital.

d. Develop Relationships Rather Than Engage on Flings.

The idea that effective marketing communication necessitates fostering relationships between brands and their clients or consumers is one of IMC's four defining characteristics. An enduring connection between a brand and its patrons is called a relationship. One could even argue that IMC is a major component of relationship building, and that relationship development itself is the cornerstone to modern marketing. Strong bonds between consumers and brands encourage recurring business and possibly even brand loyalty.

e. Don't Lose Focus of the Ultimate Objective: Affect Behavior.

The intention to influence the target audience's behavior is a last aspect of IMC. This implies that marketing communications need to accomplish more than merely raise consumer awareness of the brand and improve their perceptions of it. Rather, for IMC to be effective, communication efforts must be focused on promoting a behavioral response of some kind. Put another way, the goal is to inspire individuals to take action. Be cautious not to misunderstand this idea. The ultimate test of an IMC program must be whether it modifies behavior; yet, it would be naive and impractical to anticipate a response to every communication effort.

3. IMC Implementation

In IMC implementation, the role of top management is crucial. IMC is basically a strategic communication application that covers the entire business activity. From communications that were once boxed and localized in each department or department to integrated communication involving roles and all significant stakeholders. The forms of implementation are very varied. Estaswara as cited in (Wilardjo, 2009) classifies it into two groups, strategic IMC and operational (tactical). Integrating all communication elements such as advertising, public relations, personal selling, sales promotion to technological direct marketing in an attempt to create a single message is a tactical IMC implementation.

Moreover, call centers and information centers can be used to add value to products. Membership and community-building are another technique. Communication programs are other techniques. Internal communication programs like outbound, training, to internal magazines are some of the techniques that can be used to perceptive alignment efforts. As the name suggests, the IMC seeks to combine various tools in communication to form a strategy that has a strong fundamentalism. With the increasing complexity of the communication media, the task of the marketer of the future is how to keep all of this complexity to stay focused on the desired target. IMC actually emerged to cover up the weaknesses of traditional promotional methods (Wilardjo, 2009). The following discussion mentions some relevant previous studies related with the implementation of IMC in the marketing fields.



A previous research conducted by (Asemah, 2012) stated that public relations, direct marketing, sales promotion, advertising, and personal selling are the components of integrated marketing communication. Although integrated marketing communication is quite labor-intensive, firms can reap several benefits from it. IMC has several benefits, including the ability to generate a competitive edge, increase sales and profits, and save costs, time, and stress. Nevertheless, there are drawbacks to integrated marketing communication, one of which is the program's high operating costs. The study comes to the conclusion that integrated marketing communication has the ability to unite the concepts of integration, alignment, measurement, and accountability in communication and serves as the foundation for a large portion of the ongoing interest in one-to-one marketing and customer relationship management. The future of marketing communication surely lies in combining these concepts into a strategy that acknowledges and capitalizes on the convergence of old and modern interactive marketing tactics. Consequently, it suggests, among other things, that businesses employ integrated marketing communications to boost sales of their products and services as doing so would have a greater impact on customers than merely utilizing a single element of a planned communication campaign (Asemah, 2012).

The second study was conducted by (Rismayanti, 2016). This research aims to describe the effectiveness of implementing IMC in PT Halo Rumah Bernyanyi. In general, PT Halo Rumah Bernyanyi had carried out marketing communications activities that include advertising, ads, direct marketing, sales promotion, personal selling, and public relations. However, the implementation of all aspects of the IMC has not been effective for two different brands under its auspices, Hello FKTV Yogyakarta and Inul Vizta The Park Mall Solo. PT Halo Rumah Bernyanyi has no basic guidelines in choosing and conducting IMC activities. In fact, the marketing plan is made in a single strategy and applied to all outlets, with the aim of reaching all the consumer target segments of both brands. Same strategy in the midst of a lot of differences can lead to cannibalization between brands, especially for new brands to be developed.

The next previous research was conducted by (Esti P, 2020). The study aims to describe the Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) Strategy in building brand identity with the Telkom Flexi case study in building broadband internet identity. The dynamics as well as the competition in the telecommunications market, demanded Telkom Flexi to form a strong brand identity. The brand identity is built through communication using an IMC strategy based on segmentation, targeting and positioning. This phenomenon then became an interesting study to study, namely by looking at what Flexi was aiming for when doing rebranding as well as the IMC strategy that Flexi did to build broadband internet identity. The researchers used a descriptive approach with qualitative data. Through in-depth interview gathering techniques as well as observations of documentation studies, researchers conducted interviews with Flexi Marketing and Promotions managers and staff. The results of this study conclude that there was a shift in positioning on Flexi when rebranding its identity. Flexi has expanded its segmentation



as it transforms its brand identity into broadband internet. By retaining and retaining its customers, most of whom are adult segments, Flexi brands and shapes its identity through its approach to adolescent segments.

Meanwhile, (Novrian & Rizki, 2021) conducted a research on essential component of a coffee business as brand awareness. because it has the potential to increase business consumers' degree of enthusiasm. This is similar to the present strategy being used by the Sodare Kopi shop, whose sales are dropping due to the pandemic, to raise brand awareness through integrated marketing communication. Finding out the integrated marketing communications mix that the Sodare Kopi shop uses to raise brand awareness is the goal of this study. The integrated marketing communications theory, which encompasses sales promotion, events and experiences, public relations and publicity, direct marketing, interactive marketing, and personal selling, was employed in this study. This study is qualitative in nature. The findings demonstrate the Sodare Kopi shop's use of a marketing communications mix that includes social media advertising, sales promotion through various variations, events and experiences through partnerships with outside parties, public relations and publicity through the dissemination of information through social media, direct marketing through the provision of knowledge about products, positive interactions with customers as a means of personal selling, and interactive marketing through Instagram polls (Novrian & Rizki, 2021).

CONCLUSION

It becomes evident that integrated marketing communication is a powerful tool that experts may use to develop and implement marketing communications more successfully and consistently. Despite its continued allure, this concept's origin has grown to become one of the most significant examples of growth in the marketing discipline, even though nothing is known about its concrete or apparent shape in the marketing communication process. Advertising and marketing experts assist this most innovative marketing function. Beyond basic communication, integrated marketing communication today refers to the coordinated use of promotional materials to create and achieve a synergistic communication effect.

Meanwhile, much of the continued interest in one-to-one marketing and customer relationship management can be attributed to integrated marketing communication, which brings together the communication ideas of integration, alignment, measurement, and accountability. Bringing these ideas together into a plan that recognizes and takes advantage of the convergence of traditional and contemporary interactive marketing techniques is undoubtedly where marketing communication is headed. As a result, it recommends, among other things, that companies use integrated marketing communications to increase sales of their goods and services because doing so would influence consumers more than using just one component of a strategic communication effort.

Furthermore, there are a number of underlying reasons why a company that offers both services and products would decide to use integrated marketing communication (IMC) as their



marketing communication strategy. These include an abundance of information that tends to irritate consumers, trade liberalization that lifts barriers for domestic businesses, the rapid commoditization of products due to innovation and increased competition, various media that have been successful in gaining the public's trust as a reliable source of information and truth, which has a significant impact on an enterprise's lifespan, and high advertising costs that cause marketing communication to become overburdened and increasingly ineffective as customers tend to forget things.

In addition, one of the four main components of the marketing mix is promotion. As a result, a company's entire marketing plan may need to include an integrated marketing communications (IMC) strategy that makes use of a variety of promotional techniques. Various promotional techniques can enlighten consumers about the characteristics and benefits of a company's products or services, improve consumer awareness of them, and encourage them to make a purchase. The study looks at each of these advertising tools separately in light of this. Effective IMC strategies, according to a theory, help businesses market their goods and services by delivering messages that are complementary, clear, and ultimately meant to convert prospects into customers. Finally, it suggests that when creating an IMC plan, marketing managers should take into account the six Ms: market, mission, message, media, money, and measurement.

REFERENCES

- Anwar, K. (2021). Pancasila Village, Multicultural Education and Moderation of Diversity in Indonesia. *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 4(2), 221–234. <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v4i2.1238>
- Asemah, E. S. (2012). Integrated marketing communication as a strategy for persuading consumers towards product purchase. *Benin Mediacom Journal*, 5(May 2012), 120–136.
- Camilleri, M. A. (2018). Integrated Marketing Communications. In *Travel Marketing, Tourism Economics and the Airline Product* (pp. 85–103). Springer Nature.
- Chrisnayani, A. A. R. I. (2009). *Komunikasi Pemasaran Terpadu Kampoeng Batik Laweyan Surakarta*.
- Esti P, L. (2020). Strategi Integrated Marketing Communication (Imc) Telkom Flexi Dalam Membangun Brand Identity Sebagai Internet Broadband. *Commonline Departemen Komunikasi*, 3(2), 171–182.
- Novrian, A., & Rizki, M. F. (2021). Integrated Marketing Communication Kedai Sodare Kopi Dalam Meningkatkan Brand Awareness. *Medium, Jurnal Ilmiah Fakultas Ilmu Komunikasi Universitas Islam Riau*, 9(1), 81–91. [https://doi.org/10.25299/medium.2021.vol9\(1\).7444](https://doi.org/10.25299/medium.2021.vol9(1).7444)
- Rismayanti, R. (2016). IMC di PT Halo Rumah Bernyanyi. *Ilmu Komunikasi*, 13(2), 253–266.
- Shimp, T. A. (2007). Integrated Communications in Advertising And Promotions. In *Thomson South-Western* (7 th). Thomson South-Western.
- Theodora, N.-. (2021). Relationship Between Integrated Marketing Communication and Brand



Equity. *International Journal of Social Science and Business*, 5(2), 278–283.
<https://doi.org/10.23887/ijssb.v5i2.33782>

Wilardjo, S. B. (2009). Integrated Marketing Communications. *Value Added, Jurnal Unimus*, 5(2), 1–12.