Media Selling, 4th Edition

Chapter 15 – Marketing

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Media salespeople no longer can think of themselves exclusively as print, broadcasting, cable, or Internet sales professionals. They are media representatives or marketing communicators, who, although they may work in a specific medium, must have the knowledge and ability to integrate competing media and the 5Ps of marketing – product, price, promotion, place, and post-purchase service – in order to find, satisfy, and retain customers while making a profit for those customers and their companies.

It is important to understand that all 5Ps in the marketing mix communicate messages to consumers and customers, not just the marketing promotion P represented by such tactics as advertising, public relations, sales promotion, event marketing, the Internet, and personal selling. As a media salesperson primarily focused on the marketing promotion P, which includes advertising, you still need to know which of the other 5Ps need attention when serving customers and understand that marketing promotion tactics are not always exclusively the answer to clients' marketing problems.

The McDonald's Corporation represents an example where marketing promotion (which includes advertising) was not the answer to its marketing problem. In 2003, McDonald's was facing a crippling decline in revenue growth and profit for the first time in four decades. Top executives were called together with the creative managers of 10 global advertising agencies, and the group was charged with creating some new advertising ideas. "A great brand like McDonald's deserves great advertising," said McDonald's global chief marketing officer. "If you come with a great idea, you'll have the chance to see it adopted globally."[i] This quote makes clear that executives at McDonald's saw the company's problem as primarily involving advertising.

Several marketing experts strongly took issue with that supposition, saying that McDonald's had to reassess its whole business model and positioning, that the company's problem was not anchored in its advertising, and better advertising was not the solution. Its problem was its product, a product that faced considerable consumer dissatisfaction. In other words, the problem was not with the *promotion* P but with the *product* P, not with the sizzle but with the steak (or hamburger).

If you were the media salesperson calling on McDonald's, or on any client experiencing a similar marketing problem, you should be knowledgeable enough about the 5Ps and the marketing mix so you could advise your customers that advertising cannot increase the customer's bottom line if the product itself is the problem. You have made this point carefully and diplomatically, of course. To reiterate, resist the natural urge to go immediately tactical with your own advertising ideas for a client when the problem lies with one of the remaining 4Ps of the marketing mix.

Throughout this chapter, we use the IMC acronym, which stands for Integrated Marketing Communications. IMC is a customer-focused, data-driven, and technology-facilitated marketing communication process easily integrated into the AESKOPP sales system, and IMC provides a universal framework for coaching, planning, and evaluating sales thinking and action.

Also, for efficiency's sake, the word *product* is used broadly in this chapter, referring to a service, an idea, a destination an institution, an organization, an individual (such as a politician running for office) or anything else that can, generally speaking, be marketed. [ii]

Integrated Marketing Communication Planning Model

In today's business-to-business (B2B) or business-to-customer (B2C) marketplace, it is important to use integrated marketing communications (IMC) strategies to manage profitable relationships. Relationship management involves knowing your customers and your customers' consumers. Exhibit 15.1 shows an IMC planning model, which synthesizes the Northwestern University IMC model and marketing author M. Joseph Sirgy's systems approach. It provides a template for you to plan, audit, and monitor a client's marketing communications mix and encourages relationship building up and down the marketing chain.

Each of the seven parts of the IMC planning model in Exhibit 15.1 is discussed below.

Table 15.1

Integrated Marketing Communications Planning Model

DATABASE	Purchase History Demographics Psychographics Category Network
SEGMENTATION/ CLASSIFICATION/ POSITIONING	•Differentiation or positioning by: •Product •Price •Service •Place •Promotion •Low Price •Cost Leadership •Focus Related/ Segmentation by: •Customer benefit/problem •Use or application •User or customer image •B2C •B2B
CONTACT MANAGEMENT	Manage all information-bearing experiences a customer or prospect has with the brand, the product category, or the market that relates to the marketer's product or service.
STRATEGIES, OBJECTIVES AND TACTICS	See Exhibit 15.2 for a systems approach to analyzing marketing strategies and corresponding objectives. See Exhibit 15.3 for applicable marketing communication tactics and their relative effectiveness in achieving steps in the selling process.
MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS MIX (5Ps)	Product Promotion Place/Distribution Price Post-Purchase Service

MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS TACTICS	Mass Media Advertising	Direct Marketing	Sales Promotion
	Public Relations	Event Marketing	Internet
	Word-of-mouth (WOM)	Personal Selling	Others
MONITORING & CONTROL	Evaluated from the viewpoint of the media representative, any negative deviations from performance objectives require reassessment and adjustment.		

Sources: Adapted from Don E. Schultz, Stanley I. Tannenbaum, and Robert F. Lauterborn. 1995. *The New Marketing Paradigm.* Lincolnwood, IL: NTC Books; M. Joseph Sirgy. 1998. *Integrated Marketing Communications: A Systems Approach.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Database

The key insight into the database is: Information is power and the database empowers you as a media salesperson. IMC planning begins with research. In order to develop and strengthen a relationship with your customers, you must first collect data on your customers' consumers. Data are collected in at least four areas: purchase behavior, demographic, psychographic, and category/brand networking, with purchase behavior considered the most useful. This is because conventional wisdom and practice indicate that the best predictor of a future purchase is a past purchase, both of which are quantifiable.

It has always been relatively easy to capture purchase information in business-to-business markets, but now it is nearly as easy in such business-to-customer markets as groceries where mass produced goods are scanned to keep track of purchases made by a large numbers of individual buyers over a long period of time. Demographic, psychographic, and brand/category data are, in turn, collected to better inform the purchase behavior data.

A database is designed to meet the media client's marketing requirements. There is not one type of database that fits all, but, generally, databases fall into one of three overlapping categories.[iii]

1. Historical Data Management System. This involves passive data collection, usually including name, address, lead/sales activity, and promotion effort information. These data are used to develop lead and direct marketing lists. This is the simplest database form, and one not very useful by itself to a media salesperson.

2. Marketing Intelligence Database. This data gathering system builds on the historical system by adding purchase data information that allows the marketer to make detailed marketing decisions about future customer purchasing behavior. A media salesperson could productively use this type of database, but the next type may be superior.

3. Integrated Business Resource. This type of database drives your customer's business. All customer information sources and functions are integrated, and every aspect of the business is involved. This type of database provides your customers with valuable information about their business and drives brand value by helping customers manage relationships, including consumer relationships.

Technology has made database management possible, but there are still a variety of means for managing a database that range from low-tech to high-tech. On a small scale, a business card file of historical data is a good start for a database, but should probably be enhanced with additional behavioral information. The larger the list is, the more likely the need for technology to track the information.

Whatever system you use, a database helps you divide your customers' customers into meaningful segments and gives you specific information about who to target in order to achieve a profitable return-on-investment (ROI) for your customers' marketing efforts.

Segmentation

The key insight into segmentation is: It is more important to reach the people who count than to count the people you reach. Using meaningful information from the database, you can identify profitable segments through return-on-investment (ROI), lifetime-customer-value (LCV), or other purchase behavior analyses. Segments can be identified by using various positioning factors or by using any number of business-to-consumer and business-to-business variables, but the most meaningful segments are derived from purchasing behavior data. Important information about buyers might include quantities purchased, price sensitivity, seller loyalty, amount of service required, and of course, susceptibility to advertising, and promotional messages. Using these data, consumers might, for instance, be grouped into such descriptive buying segments as: Programmed Buyer, Relationship Buyer, Bargain Hunter, and The Chiseler.

Of course, you would have to have a critical mass in any one of these segments, but an ROI analysis, for instance, could reveal the most profitable segments. For example, your behavioral analysis might find that The Chiseler segment is very large, but that the buyers in that segment are so price conscious it is not a profitable segment to market to; that it would cost more in advertising and promotion efforts to attract customers in this segment than you could recoup in sales.

You could discover and test any number of purchase behavior segments using an integrated database system. Purchase or buyer behavior segments could be further delineated by customer demographic, psychographic, and category/networking data.

Contact Management

The key insight into contact management is: Every contact a consumer has with your customer's product is an important information-bearing experience. The database also is important in this part of the IMC planning process. You identify all the contacts—also called "moments-of-truth" – the consumer has with the product. This gives you a good indication about how to customize messages for each of the consumer segments.

For instance, if you have a customer who is recruiting students to its college, contacts – "moments-of-truth" or information bearing experiences – might include parents, peers, and school counselors, all of whom may advise or inform a student's choice. Messages to each of these contacts or segments from your college customer would have a one-look-and-feel component – superb education, fun, great professors –but each message would also be customized to satisfy the specific informational needs of each segment. For example, the students get party information, the parents get safety and financial assistance information, and the school counselors get congratulations for directing the students to the college.

Each time you make contact with your customer or your customers' consumers using the mix of the 5Ps and marketing communications tactics, it is a moment of truth, and you either put money in the brand-equity bank, or you withdraw it, and your relationship (balance) with your customer and your customers' consumers is positively or negatively affected. Inherent in managing contacts is the timing and orchestration of the customized messages you send to each segment. In our college example, orchestration would involve determining which messages to send, to which segments, using what timing, and in what order.

Strategies, Objectives, and Tactics

The key insight into this step is: Do not play Alice in Wonderland. If a company does not know where it is going and does not have the knowledge to achieve its marketing communications objectives, it is Alice. You may remember in the story that Alice comes to a fork in the road and asks the Cheshire cat which path she should take. The cat asks Alice where she wants to go, and Alice responds she does not know. With a smile, the cat advises her that it makes no difference which path she takes.

Do not be Alice. Before going tactical with marketing-communications, a company needs to know where it is headed and what it wants to accomplish. Remember the McDonald's example at the opening of this chapter. What are your customers' marketing and marketing communications goals and objectives, and what marketing communications mix involving all of the 5Ps might be employed strategically to achieve them?

In many cases, your clients may not know where they want to go but also may not know where they are. Suppose you ask a frozen yogurt shop, "Who is your target audience?" The customer replies, "Everyone." Clearly, the shop does not know where it is or who its customers are. Suppose you ask, "How is your frozen yogurt different from any other frozen yogurt?" The shop owner replies, "Frozen yogurt is frozen yogurt." Again, the client has not identified a niche, positioning, or unique selling proposition.

Marketing Strategies, Objectives, and Tactics

Exhibit 15.2 provides a marketing compass to guide a company to Alice's tea party and the best mix of marketing strategies, objectives, and tactics to use. The model shows that marketing planning involves selecting among three primary strategies: differentiation, cost leadership, and focus.

Concentrating on a unique and valued one of the 5Ps is referred to as positioning. The differentiation or positioning strategy involves a synergy of the 5P marketing mix (product, price, place, promotion, and post-purchase service), but with emphasis on a single P. Exhibit 15.2 shows several possible positioning variables for each of the 5Ps.

Exhibit 15.2: Marketing Strategies and Corresponding Objectives

MARKETING STRATEGIES

Differentiation (Positioning)		Cost Leadership	Focus Related (Segmentation)
•**Product**	•**Promotion**	•**Low Price**	•**Position by**

•Class
•Attribute
•Intangibles
•Competitors
•Country of Origin

•Celebrity spokesperson
•Lifestyle/ Personality

•Place
•Distributor
-Tie-ins
-Location
-Service

•Price
•Relative price

•Post Purchase Service
•Toll free # or Web contact center
•Seamless & uniform customer interaction
•Customize services & communicate

•Conduct pricing research
•Set price to value level
•Communicate to target consumer

•Customer benefit or problem
•User or customer image
•Use or application

•B2C Segmentation
•Demographics
•Psychographics
•Sociocultural
•Motivational
•Consumption

•B2B
•End use
•Customer size
•Geographic
•Motivational
•Consumption
•Channel Type

MARKETING OBJECTIVES

Brand Awareness	Brand Learning/Association	Brand Trial/Purchase	Repeat Purchase	Brand Attitude

Source: Adapted from M. Joseph Sirgy. 1998. *Integrated Marketing Communications: A Systems Approach.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Utilizing a cost leadership strategy involves designing an entire marketing campaign around the single element of price in the marketing mix. Exhibit 15.2 shows that if a marketer contemplates positioning by low price, it must conduct price research.

The focus strategy is used when a marketer wants to segment by customer benefit or problem, by user or customer image, or by product use or application.

Which of the three strategies a marketer uses depends on the marketer’s overall business goals and objectives, the nature of the product, and which combination of the 5Ps in the marketing mix are of primary concern.

Marketing Communications Strategies, Objectives and Tactics

After determining a marketing strategy, objectives, and tactics, a marketer can use the system of analysis in Exhibit 15.3 to determine the best marketing-communications tactical mix to achieve the highest return-on-investment from its advertising and promotion efforts.

Exhibit 15.3: Marketing Communications Strategies, Objectives and Corresponding Tactics

Marketing Communications Strategies and Objectives

Brand Awareness	Brand Learning/Association	Brand Trial /Purchase/ Repeat Purchase	Brand Attitude
Generate maximum awareness & learning	Generate maximum awareness & positive attitude (liking)	Induce trial purchase & learning from product use (1st timers) & reinforce learning (Repeat users)	Induce trial purchase & brand liking from product use (1st timers) & reinforce positive attitude (Repeat users)

Marketing Communications Tactical Mix

•Advertising (mostly print) •Reseller support (training, trade shows) •Public relations (press releases & publicity) •WOM (stimulate WOM through advertising & sampling referral system)	•Advertising (mostly broadcast) •Reseller support (cooperative advertising) •Public relations (press conference, corporate ads & event sponsorship •WOM communication (stimulate WOM through advertising)	•Advertising (mostly print & interactive) •Direct marketing (direct mail, newsletter, direct response advertising) •Sales promotion (coupons, sampling, refunds & rebates, bonus packs, & price-off deals)	•Ad (outdoor & specialty) •Direct marketing (catalogs, direct response advertising, telemarketing, & direct selling) •Sales promotion (premiums & contests, sweepstakes) •Reseller support (contests & incentives, POP & personal selling) •Public relations (corporate ads, event sponsor-ship, product placement in movies & TV)

Source: Adapted from M. Joseph Sirgy. 1998. *Integrated Marketing Communications: A Systems Approach.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

There are four marketing communications strategies: informative (thinker), affective (feeler), habit formation (doer), and self-satisfaction (reactor). These are borrowed from the ubiquitous Foote-Cone-Belding (FCB) advertising planning model. The informative (thinker) strategy is used when a marketer wants to educate and inform a customer about important costs or benefits and generate maximum awareness and learning. Print and Interactive are good media for this strategy. The affective (feeler) strategy is used when a marketer wants to generate maximum awareness and a positive attitude or liking toward a branded product. Television and radio are excellent media for this strategy. The habit formation (doer) strategy is used to induce product trials and learning-from-use for first-time buyers, and to reinforce learning for repeat buyers. Sampling promotions are good for this strategy. The self-satisfaction (reactor) strategy is used to reinforce positive attitudes of repeat users. Television, radio, print, Interactive, and outdoor are all good media for this strategy.

The strategic mix of advertising, reseller support, public relations, word of mouth (WOM), direct marketing, point of purchase, sales promotion, and the other marketing communications tactics appropriate for each of the four marketing communications strategies are also shown in Exhibit 15.3.

Not discussed above is a marketer's overall business strategy. It is assumed in using the above marketing and marketing communications models that a marketer's goal is to grow its business and that marketing and marketing-communications can facilitate that goal. If a marketer's overall business goal is to harvest or divest, marketing functions are probably not involved. The objective of a harvest or divest business strategy is usually to maximize profits while minimizing costs. Marketing represents a business expense and takes resources away from this objective. It is important that you clearly identify your customers' overall business goals before you make marketing and marketing communications recommendations for them.

The 5Ps of The Marketing Communications Mix

The key insight into this step in the marketing communications process is: If you change one, you change them all. If you have ever broken a rack of pool balls, you know you cannot move one ball without moving all the others. The same holds true for the marketing mix. Granted, each marketing-communications tool and tactic in the mix has intrinsic value, but the each of these values in the marketing mix change when one changes.

The use-ratio of the 5 Ps, including marketing-communications tactics, known as the marketing mix, varies for each organization. For example, Mrs. Field's, the cookie maker, emphasizes place (distribution) and product in its mix, with very little attention given to promotion or pricing. If you changed the Mrs. Field's use-ratio, you would change the communication value of the entire marketing mix. Mrs. Field's locates its stores in high traffic locations and blows the exhaust of its cookie-cooking ovens into the mall or street to tempt customers. The 5P marketing mix of Mrs. Field's is first and foremost place (location, location, location), then product and, finally, price, with little or no attention given to post-purchase service.

Change that mix and you change everything. For instance, the marketing mix for a typical bank is quite different. A bank also emphasizes location or place, but gives primary consideration to its service, product, pricing, and promotion. Change the bank's use-ratio to match the Mrs. Field's mix where distribution is emphasized over the other 4Ps, and you may have a run on the bank. Marketers should experiment with the marketing-communications mix to observe which use-ratio of tactics works best and produces a result greater than the sum of the individual parts.

As was made clear in the McDonald's case at the beginning of this chapter, it is important to remember that all Ps in the marketing-communications process communicate, not just the marketing promotion tactics. The following explains this assertion more fully.

Product Communicates

Product Lifecycle Model. The product lifecycle (PLC) model is grounded in what is called hierarchy-of-effects theory, in that the PLC principle suggests that every product, service or idea, goes through a series of steps or phases from birth to death, the first being an *introduction* phase. If it survives *introduction*, the product goes through a *growth* phase where different marketing-communications strategies and tactics are implemented. Eventually, the product will *mature* to where still other strategies are required in order to maintain competitiveness. Most products eventually die, but the majority also experiences a *decline* phase, where still other unique strategies apply.[v]

The typical lifecycle of a product and the strategies relevant to each phase in the lifecycle are shown below. You should note how critical mass media advertising and promotion are in each of the product lifecycle phases.

When a product is first introduced, heavy advertising and promotion efforts are required to keep the product before the public. If a product is successful, then competitors become an issue in the growth phase, and again advertising and promotion are required to differentiate the product from its competition.

Tide detergent, for instance, was introduced in 1948. Since that time it has been marketed as a "new and improved" product every few years in order to elongate its lifecycle. So just as in the *introduction* phase, Tide's advertising and promotion reintroduces the "new" Tide product to the marketplace in the *maturity* phase. Only during a product's *decline* phase is advertising less critical. During this last phase, marketers milk the cash cow by cutting expenses related to advertising and promotion. This is done to maintain some profit margin while product demand dwindles.

The Diffusion of Innovation Model. Another marketing model related to how product communicates is Rogers's diffusion of innovation model. Sometimes called the adoption model, this model helps marketers strategize with regard to how consumers adopt new products over a period time.[vi] In Rogers's model, only a small segment (2.5 percent) of a target population, labeled *innovators*, is willing to try radically new products. A slightly larger group (13.5 percent), the *early adopters*, lets the innovators experiment for a period of time before they adopt a product, while a two-thirds majority, the *early majority* and the *late majority* of the population (68 percent), represent a critical mass of potential consumers after a product has developed and been branded. Finally, a smaller group (16 percent) of *laggards* is the last segment to adopt a new – maybe at this point old – product.

A database should contain consumer information indicating where in the diffusion of innovation model consumers reside, helping marketers customize messages targeted at the most profitable segments, keeping in mind that the return-on-investment from the people in the *innovator* and *early adopters* segments may be less than the marketing-communication expenditures used to attract them. Marketers may nevertheless have to market to these segments, initially by charging higher prices and selling at a loss, in hopes of creating loyal customers when people in these segments move to the *majority* stages of adoption.

To better achieve success, several other general principles are important when introducing a new product or marketing an existing one.

- Heavy and effective advertising and promotion are critical for new brands.

- Besides promoting the brand, effective advertising is also important to promote the distribution method.

- Effective advertising increases the likelihood of success threefold.

- New products deliver incremental volume for both the manufacturer and the retailer, so the likelihood of co-op advertising and promotion is strong.

- Long-term support is essential: think "*introductory*" for at least two years.

- All products decline, plan for it.

Price Communicates

As discussed earlier, price in the communications mix has more duties than simply generating revenue for a marketer. It also communicates. Listed below are some major pricing strategies and how they are likely to be impacted by marketing-communications tactics such as mass media advertising. Salespeople should be knowledgeable of these strategies in order to advise clients and provide solutions to them.

Pricing Strategies

Skimming. Skim the cream from the consumers who can afford a higher price. Lower the price over time. A skimming strategy will utilize targeted advertising and promotion to reach consumers with high incomes.

Prestige. "You get what you pay for." Set price high to communicate higher quality. Though prestige pricing is not usually advertised, make sure all the other variables of the marketing mix are consistent with a prestige approach. On occasion, prestige pricing is advertised to screen nonqualified consumers and to add to the value of the product.

Loss leader. Keep margins low on an item to pull customers into the store. The loss leader approach requires heavy advertising and is commonly used in the retail business. It is important to integrate in-store signage wherever the loss leader approach is used.

Full-line pricing. Keep margins low on a brand products in order to sell the rest of the line.

Volume pricing. Keep prices low to generate more dollar volume rather than dollar margin.

Off-pricing. Communicate the previous price to show savings of the new price.

Odd-pricing. Odd numbers communicate a more real or precise price, lending

price some credibility. Volume pricing, off-pricing, and odd-pricing also require advertising support.
Penetration. Cover the market with price oriented product and blitzing promotion. Penetration pricing requires an advertising blitz. It is commonly used with roadblock or other means of obtaining rapid reach. A roadblock is the purchase of all of available advertising on a particular time period, such as at an 11:00 P.M. break on a local television station, thus blocking out competitive advertising and potentially reaching everyone watching TV at that time.
Competitive pricing. Set prices to match or surpass competition.
Customary pricing. Priced based on custom, or what it has always cost.

Some marketers may fall into a category of regulated pricing, that is, they do not have control over what the price should be. State colleges and universities are examples: they advertise many of their educational programs and degrees but do not have control of tuition. It is important in to ensure that the pricing strategy is consistent with all other variables of the marketing mix. For example as indicated above, if a pricing strategy is prestige, then promotional material must look and feel prestigious. It makes common sense for all variables of the marketing mix to be consistent all of the time.

Place Communicates

At first glance, distribution methods may not appear to be associated with advertising and promotion, but it makes sense to consider the marketing-communications tactics that can be used at all levels in the distribution process. Simply speaking, distribution means to get the product or service from the marketing organization to the consumer in the B2B and B2C distribution chain.

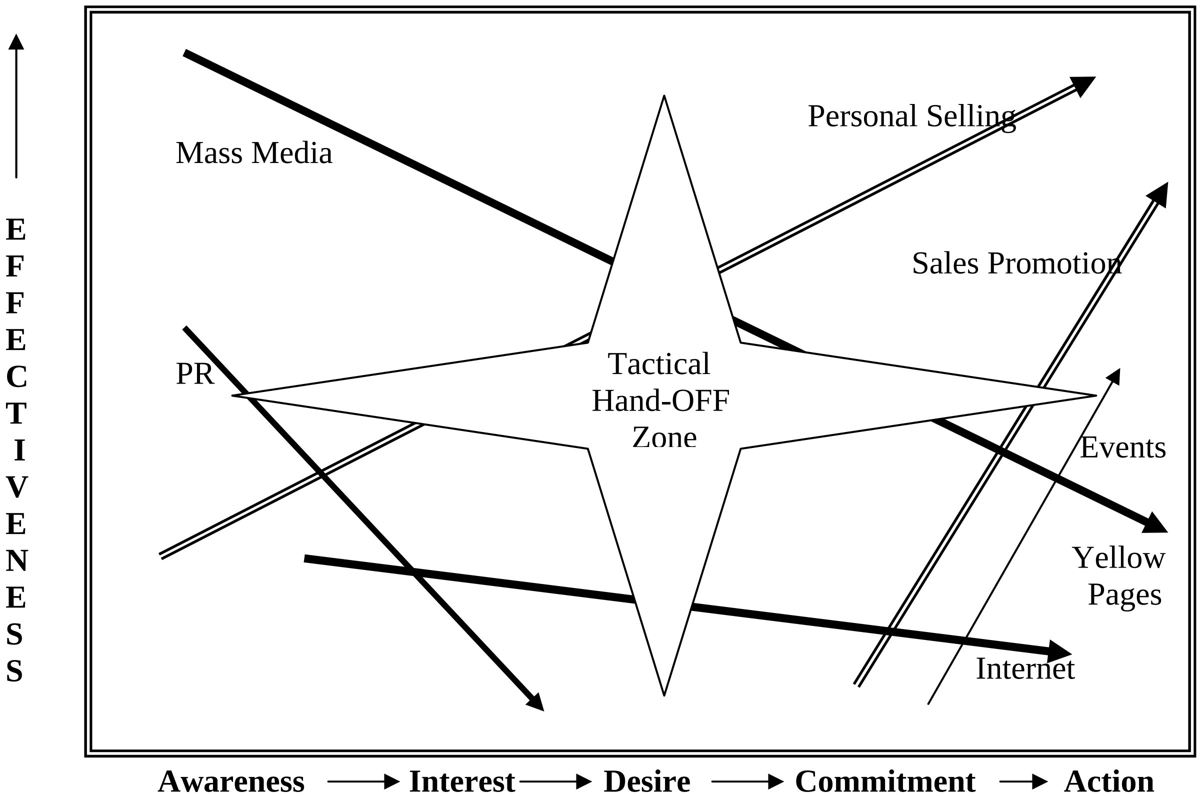
Marketers may be any one of the businesses in the distribution chain – manufacturer, agent, wholesaler, or retailer. Each distribution channel has different needs, different relationships with its suppliers and clients, and different laws and rules governing its part in the distribution process. But each channel partner may be inclined to support advertising and promotion to meet its unique needs. All channel members communicate, not just the retailer. Place communicates and is fertile ground for strategic marketing-communications employment.

For some media such as newspapers and television, it is important to keep in mind that circulation or signal propagation may reach geographic areas that extend beyond a customer's travel range. However, businesses can increase their draw from distant areas if the customers are loyal or are destination purchasers. This is especially true for higher priced items such as automobiles, furniture, and appliances.

Marketing Promotion Communicates

And, of course, marketing promotion communicates. The possible mix of marketing-communications tactics is very broad. However, it is important to know the strengths and weaknesses of each tactic and how each is useful and effective depending on a marketer's goals and objectives. Exhibit 15.4 shows how marketers can employ marketing-communications tactics to move a buyer through the five mental steps in the buying process beginning with *Awareness*, followed by progressively more personal tactics to move the buyer through the last several steps, *Interest*, *Desire*, and *Commitment* to *Action*. This model is known by the AIDCA acronym.

Exhibit 15.4: A.I.D.C.A: Applicable Marketing Communications Tactics and Their Relative Effectiveness in Achieving Steps in the Selling Process



You can see in the AIDCA model that mass media tactics, with their potentially higher reach, are effective at creating *Awareness* and less effective in creating *Action* (purchase), where more personal tactics are usually needed. On the other hand, note that personal selling, with its fewer contacts and limited reach, is considerably less effective in creating *Awareness,* but more effective in creating *Action*. Several of the other marketing communications tactics and their relative effectiveness at each step are also shown in Exhibit 15.4. Note that PR helps to create *Awarenes*s but is of little effectiveness as you move toward the *Action* end of the five mental-step process. Likewise, sales promotion has little effect on the *Awareness* end of the process but is helpful in creating *Action.*

Continuing, while mass media tactics involve sellers who are looking for buyers, the *Yellow Pages* or, often, Google involve buyers who are looking for sellers. (When was the last time you browsed the *Yellow Pages* with no product in mind?) As such, mass media advertising and promotion are used to create *Awareness*, and the *Yellow*

Pages are used to produce behavior more on the *Action* end of the continuum. The effectiveness of event marketing at any AIDCA step depends on the size and purpose of the event.

An important point to be gleaned from Exhibit 15.4 is that there is a "Tactical Hand-Off Zone" in the AIDCA model. Because no marketing-communications tactic is totally effective at every mental-step in the buying process, an integrated mix of tactics must be employed. As such, as a media salesperson you might recommend using mass media tactics to create *Awareness* at the beginning of a schedule or campaign and then recommend handing off the responsibility of creating *Action* (purchase) to more personal tactics, such as sales promotion or personal selling.

A salesperson's knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of each marketing communications tool and tactic and its strategic mix is put to a test in the "Tactical Hand-Off Zone." Some basic knowledge of the effectiveness of each medium, not only the one(s) you sell, will go a long way in helping you develop a relationship with your clients and create brand value for your client's product.

Listed below are some common marketing strategies that affect the marketing-communications tactical mix.

Seasonality. Seasonal products affect advertising and promotion placement. Though seasonality is often obvious, such as skis going on sale for winter, there are some products and services for which seasonality is less apparent. Exactly how far in advance of the buying season media should be placed is product specific and often debatable. Working with your client, you will know when this strategy is applicable. The best way to find out seasonality is to ask your client during the Discovery Questions.

Competitive Strategies. Some advertisers often run campaigns head-to-head with competitors. Others choose to fight the competition and "hit them where they ain't" by using media in which competitors do not advertise.

Market Share. To grow market share, you can either steal from the competition or stimulate the entire market to buy more of what you are selling. However, stimulating the entire market may benefit competition as well and can be quite costly. To steal from the competition requires targeted advertising and an effective message.

Geographic Targeting. Marketing that requires geographic targeting, whether national, regional, local, has a direct effect on which marketing communications tactics a marketer will use. For instance, if a marketer is targeting a small geographic area, possibly a zip code, it might not use mass media. On the other hand, it is important to realize that today's population is extremely mobile. A small advertiser might well benefit from mass media placement with extensive reach simply because consumers can buy online.

Product strategies. When introducing a new product or innovating an existing product, advertising and promotion support is required. Salespeople should watch for new product introductions or innovations that are candidates for their medium.

Branding Strategies. There are two major strategies for branding: the so-called Ford and General Motors approaches. The Ford approach suggests naming every product line after the Ford brand – Ford Explorer, Ford Mustang, and Ford Focus. General Motors's products utilize the secondary umbrella, such as Chevrolet Impala or Pontiac Grand Prix, and generally ignore the General Motors brand.

Rule of thumb: If the sub-brand benefits from the umbrella brand, use it –Fox News or Sara Lee pastries, for example. When the umbrella brand is not a match, do not use it – Sara Lee luggage is not a match. In either event, marketers must determine the assistance advertising and promotion can provide branding and recognize the importance of the mass media in the branding effort, especially if the product is new.

Packaging Strategies. New labels, a new functional design, a more convenient pouring spout, for example, all require mass media assistance to inform the consumer of package changes.

Sales Promotion Support. As a media salesperson, you recognize already that the more a potential customer knows about your product, the better your chance of making a sale. You can also use mass media advertising and sales promotion tactics to inform clients about your product.

Event marketing. Events are designed to meet specific needs of targeted consumers and have the capability of demonstrating products and developing brand loyalty. Advertising and promotion support can drive a lot of traffic to an event.

Merchandising. Integration with in-store signage and point-of-purchase (POP) displays can improve turnover rate and retail sales. It is important for salespeople to work backwards, that is, to go into the store to check out merchandising and then attempt to sell mass media advertising and promotion support to their clients. Many studies have shown advertising increases turnover rate for retailers, and the higher the turnover the better the ROI for retail space.

Public Relations and Publicity. Many marketers depend on public relations and publicity to promote their products. However, advertising and promotion can go a long way to leverage the effect of PR and publicity efforts. Since marketers tend to provide public relations just prior to breaking a mass media campaign, public relations can be an indication of a pending advertising expenditure.

Market research. Many marketers engage in market research prior to initiating a major campaign. It may be wise to provide assistance, perhaps even free public service announcements for the research, so you keep a foot in the door for the campaign roll-out based on the research.

Common sense and good IMC practice dictate that all 5Ps in the marketing-communications mix communicate and that they must be integrated. The products marketers develop communicates (its color, size, sound – listen to a Harley or a Coke), smell (Mrs. Field's), and function (Nothing runs like a Deere), all communicate. The price you charge communicates – higher price is usually associated with higher quality; lower price with lesser quality and prestige. The place where a marketers distribute its product communicates – Nordstrom's versus Wall-Mart versus the Internet. Certainly, a marketer's post-purchase service communicates and either creates a loyal customer and repeat business or drives customers to the competition. And, of course, marketing promotion communicates – mass media advertising, PR, personal selling, sales promotion, events, the Internet, word of mouth, matchbook covers, whatever, all communicate and have relative strengths, weaknesses and levels of effectiveness when integrated.

Monitoring and Control

The key insight here is that monitoring and control are not actually steps in the marketing-communication planning process. Monitoring and control are ongoing, carried on from start to finish of a marketing effort to assess whether the marketing-communications plan is meeting a marketer's performance objectives.

Negative deviations from stated corporate, marketing, and marketing-communications performance objectives require ongoing reassessment to discover weaknesses and failures in the plan as it is executed. This allows marketers to make adjustments at any point in the execution of the plan.

Failure to meet objectives at any level – corporate, marketing or marketing-communications – does not necessarily mean a marketing plan is a poor one. In reassessing the plan, marketers may discover the objectives were not realistic, the budget was too small to accomplish stated objectives, or the time allotted to achieve the objectives was too short. With close monitoring and control, timely and salient adjustments can seamlessly be made to the errant objectives, and the execution of the plan can continue uninterrupted.[vii]

Test Yourself

1. What are the 5Ps in the marketing-communication mix?
2. Identify and briefly explain each of the seven steps of the IMC planning model?
3. List and briefly explain each of the three marketing planning strategies.
4. List and briefly delineate the four marketing-communications strategies.
5. Discuss the concept of the Tactical Hand-Off Zone in the AIDCA model.

Project

As a media salesperson, assume you have a hybrid car dealer as a client. What useful purchase behavior and other data would you collect on your client's customers? Using that data, identify and describe four meaningful buyer behavior segments. Next, suggest and support the best pricing strategy your hybrid car dealer client could use to sell product to people in each of the four segments. Finally, identify the key insight to understanding each segment and write a one-sentence, customized message targeted to each of the segments.

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Endnotes

[i] Stuart Elliott. February 4, 2003. "McDonald's stung by a loss, summons a high-level meeting to rework its marketing," *New York Times*, Internet Business/Financial Desk: NYTDirect@nytimes.com.

[ii] James G. Hutton, and Francis J. Mulhern. 2002. *Marketing Communications: Integrated Theory, Strategy and Tactics*. Hackensack, NJ, Pentagram, p. 4.

[iv]Rob Jackson and Paul Wang, P. 1994. *Strategic Database Marketing*. Lincolnwood, IL: NTC Books, p 27

[v]Gary Armstrong and Philip Kotler. 2003. *Marketing*, 6th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, p. 337.

[vi]Everett M. Rogers. 1962, 1971, 1983. *Diffusion of Innovations*, 4th ed. New York: Simon & Schuster.

[vii]M. Joseph Sirgy. 1998. *Integrated Marketing Communications: A Systems Approach.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.