

Chapter 16

Marketing and Mobile: Increasing Integration

Kenneth E. Harvey
KIMEP University, Kazakhstan

Yulia An
The Ilmenau University of Technology, Germany

ABSTRACT

Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) was gaining popularity even before the World Wide Web. But with the explosion of online marketing, it is nearly impossible to avoid integration. This chapter will explore how digital and mobile marketing are dictating such changes in marketing. An overview of modern mobile marketing practices and trends builds upon a comparison of the traditional marketing mix (4 Ps) with a more consumer-oriented concept of 4 Cs. As products are being replaced with consumers, promotion with communication, place with convenience, and price with cost, the rise of mobile devices and the mobile Internet brings up a multitude of new concepts into traditional marketing theory and practice. Supplemented with best industry examples, the review of emerging mobile marketing concepts moves from broad online strategies, like inbound marketing, to very mobile-specific trends, like the Internet of Things.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, marketing, advertising, branding, public relations, direct sales, packaging, point of purchase, sales promotions, special events, direct response and social media have all become intertwined by the increasingly popular strategic approach of “integrated marketing communications” (IMC). In many organizations now one unit encompasses all of these activities. The theoretical and pragmatic basis for this approach is that all of these activities in an organization can and should help overcome common challenges, influence the same target audiences, pursue the same goals and objectives, and coordinate their strategies and tactics.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-2599-8.ch016

One influence in popularizing IMC was the development of technologies that could facilitate such integration and coordination of marketing activities. Inexpensive personal computers and communication software, as well as, powerful databases to help segment and track prospective consumers' purchasing habits, media preferences, demographics, psychographics, etc., all provided impetus for the adoption of the IMC approach.

The Internet and digital communications have provided further impetus for this integration. Consider, for example, one of the strongest trends in digital marketing – those activities we call content marketing or inbound marketing. These activities include social media interaction; webinars and other virtual activities, viral videos, blogs, white papers and ebooks. In the old days these might have been assigned to the PR department primarily based on the fact that they are free promotional activities – free in the sense that these are not paid advertising. No one outside the organization itself need be paid a significant amount for the organization to offer these free products or services to their target audience. The organization's own staff can develop the website where free offers will be hosted and where social media contacts will be referred. If any advertising is purchased, it is primarily to help build the database of interested individuals, who, by the very nature of the free offers, also represent potential customers and social opinion leaders.

Such free offers, however, clearly have other marketing purposes. Webinars, blogs and ebooks can help the organization achieve thought leadership and credibility. In other words, they help build the brand. Participants are typically required to provide the organization with their name, company and contact information in order to receive such free offers. This information goes into a database to support other forms of marketing. At first it may just be to alert the prospect to more free offers. Then if the participant returns for future freebies, the landing page on the website is likely to ask if a representative from the organization can call them to discuss how else the organization can assist. This may provide the bulk of the contacts for the direct sales group. And within the webinar or ebook, there should be included some advertising content. While the organization may not have to pay for the content, by its very nature it is advertising. During the last 10-15 minutes of a webinar, for example, the host is typically presenting a “commercial” for the organization's paid products and services, and within the ebook there will be printed “advertisements” to entice the reader to purchase paid products and services. So, who should be in charge of content marketing? It almost demands an integrated approach to be successful.

Nonetheless, marketing includes far more activities than advertising, branding and PR. These are strong elements of marketing, but certainly not all. Of the so-called 4 Ps of traditional marketing, only one is promotion. The 4 Ps are:

1. **Product:** Determining the goods and services to be offered.
2. **Promotion:** Carrying out marketing communication to attract prospective customers.
3. **Place:** Establishing where and how to make the product available for purchase.
4. **Price:** Setting the price point at which the products can bring the organization the greatest profits.

Digital communications in general and mobile technologies specifically have led to new products, new methods of promotion, new virtual “places” where customers can make their purchases, and new pricing considerations. However, the impact of digital communications and mobile technologies on marketing has gone even beyond that and dramatically reinforced the stature of newer forms of marketing strategy that already started appearing in mid-1980s, yet often had been met as just other managerial

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