

The Communications Process Model and the New Communication Channels (Marketing Assignment)

Introduction

This paper seeks to explain why it is important for marketers to understand each of the elements in the Communications Process Model (CPM), and to detail the new communications channels that have emerged over the last decade and their impact on the use of the promotion mix. The communication process involves a sender and a receiver between whom a message is sent and received respectively. This is a general process that applies to any form of message, mode of communication and any type of senders and receivers. Our concern is with using the communication process in an effective way suitable for transmitting marketing messages used for advertising purposes. This is also known as the Advertising Communication Model.

The Communications Process Model (CPM)

The CPM involves six basic steps, three for each of the two parties i.e. marketer and marketed. The marketer initiates the process by having the idea in his or her mind, which then gets encoded and transmitted. The marketed as the receiver of the communication, then receives the idea, decodes the message and interprets the idea. This basic model is the same in whichever marketing context it is applied. For example, the marketing manager may have an idea or instruction which will then be encoded into a suitable form for marketing or perhaps given over to an advertising agency for the purpose. An appropriate media mix will then be used to create the advertising campaign to deliver the message to the target audience. Marketers seek to make the communication process as effective as possible so that the intended message gets across and the likelihood of the expected response is maximised. Moreover, this often has to be done in competition with messages from other similar marketers each vying for the same potential customers' attention and positive response. In today's world, this ability to 'cut through the clutter' is a real issue.

Importance of the CPM Model for Marketing

In the context of marketing, an understanding of the importance of the elements involved in the CPM is essential as well as how to make it efficient and effective. The reason is that marketing is itself a communication process, and the success of this process directly determines the success of the marketing campaign. The results either way then translate into success or failure for the organisation as a whole. The model allows a breakdown of the whole process so that each element or stage can be analysed in order to improve the process by identifying any weaknesses or obstacles. Organising a systematic procedure for the marketing communication is an effective planning methodology, so it also helps in making the right decisions in respect of budgeting, selecting the target audience, engaging in suitable research, and so on.

Marketing communications entails "the pushing forward of products or services and the turning of the consumer towards the product or service" (Blois, 2001). Meeting these two elements bring the chance of a sale, which is the purpose of the communication. Marketing communication is thus one important element of the marketing mix. As such, it should meet the overall organisational and marketing objectives, be properly organised and support other elements of the

marketing mix. The CPM model simply provides the theoretical framework for understanding and analysing the marketing communication.

The New Communication Channels (CC)

Besides the message itself, the medium of communication is also a very important part of the communication process. An appropriate communication channel can determine the success or otherwise of the marketing communication. Examples of communication channels are billboards, brochures, emails (both textual and video), face-to-face meeting, the Internet, letters, mobile telephones, satellite television, telephone conversations, videoconferencing, and VoIP. Of these, email messaging, Internet marketing, mobile messaging, satellite/cable television, videoconferencing, and VoIP have emerged relatively recently. Another possible emerging channel is 'social media' i.e. social networking sites on which many companies have created their own profiles to raise brand awareness and market their products or services in a more personal manner.

Media richness theory (Lengel and Daft, 1988) ranks communication channels based on their richness on a continuum. The richer channels utilise several cues simultaneously, such as feedback and non-verbal cues, and establish a personal focus (Harris, 2001, p. 313). Although text based emails are not considered rich, they are widely used nowadays. Vemail (video email) messages are richer in comparison to standard emails but file size issues do not allow this medium to be widespread at present. As there is no interactivity, vemails are suitable for sending marketing messages that do not require feedback. Videoconferencing is even richer because it allows interactivity but this is more suited to business meetings than marketing messages not least because of the expense. If social media proves to be a successful platform for marketing communications, as a communication channel it would have the richness of allowing two/multi-way communication,

Impact of the New CC on the Promotion Mix

Kotler (2003) pointed out that "modern marketing requires more than the development of a good and useful product, which is attractively priced and made accessible to its target customers (the three 'Ps' of product, price, and place). It also requires that marketers communicate information about their products and services (the fourth 'P' of promotion)." (Kimmel, 2005, p. 1)

Therefore, as far as the 'promotional mix' of marketing is concerned, the new communication channels offer much greater options for marketers in getting their messages across than ever before whilst at the same time, consumers are also becoming more 'fragmented' than they ever used to be. Hence, the need for more personalised targeting and marketing. The impact for marketers and the whole process of marketing has been a shift in "communication efforts from an emphasis on traditional broadcasting media (as part of a market aggregation strategy aimed at reaching as many potential audience members as possible) to a more 'narrowcasting' approach for reaching specific, carefully delineated target audiences (consistent with market segmentation strategies). (Kimmel, 2005, p. 2).

Conclusion

The CPM is a simple and universal model of communication that can also be applied to the marketing communication process. Doing so is an aid to understanding and analysing marketing so as to improve marketing communication. Over the past several new communication channels have become available as a result of developments in technology. As the public is becoming increasingly technology savvy, so marketing communicators are using more personalised and interactive marketing communication strategies.

References

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