



## BOOK REVIEW

# ADVERTISING AND PROMOTIONS: AN IMC PERSPECTIVE

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Advertising and promotion are an integral part of our social and economic system. In our complex society, advertising has evolved into a vital communications system for both consumer and businesses.

Everyone in the modern world is influenced by some degree of advertising and other forms of promotion in their day to day lives. Organisations both public and private, national and international have learnt to communicate effectively and efficiently with their target audiences which is considered to be critical to their success. Advertising and other types of promotional messages are used not only to sell products and services but also to promote causes and deal with societal problems. Marketers are constantly searching for a new way to communicate with the changes coming from all the sides. Therefore, as the millennium progresses, we are experiencing perhaps the most dynamic and revolutionary changes of any era in the history of marketing as well as advertising and promotion. These changes are also being driven by advances in technology and development that has led to the rapid growth of communications through interactive media, particularly the internet. Hence in the current times an integrated approach is the need of the hour.

IMC is a concept of communications planning that recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of a variety of communication disciplines. The focus being to achieve maximum communication impact. It requires that firms develop a total marketing communication strategy that projects consistent, unified image to the market place. It also calls for a centralized messaging function so that everything a company says and does communicates a common theme and positioning.

This book titled "Advertising and Promotion" an IMC perspective authored by Kruti Shah and Allan D'Souza is the first edition and it tries to

take into account the needs of students, academicians and practitioners. The book begins by introducing the students to marketing communications and proceeds to describe the marketing communications environment. The book is aptly divided into six sections where in each section delves deep into various aspects related to the concept of integrated marketing communications related to the concept of integrated marketing communications and the major tools, techniques and media. Section 1 concentrates on the understanding integrated marketing communications. It enlightens the student regarding marketing and integrated communication mix. Chapter 1 discusses the functions and role of promotion mix in marketing and introduces the concept of IMC and its growing importance in today's context.

Chapter 2 reviews the marketing strategy and explains the factors effecting the strategy and competition, its objectives, strengths and weaknesses. It also discusses the important strategic decision of segmenting of market and selection of these segments to serve.

Section 2 focuses on the internal and external environment facing marketing communications specialists. Chapter 3 aims to cover the consumer behavior and their psychology i.e. how consumers think, feel, learn and select between different alternative as well as their decision making process helps managers in planning and adopting their communication strategies. Chapter 4 discusses the relevance of the communication response of consumers and the attitude formation through the information processing mechanism.

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Section 3 exposes students to the field of advertising and aims to prepare them in conceptualizing and executing creative advertising in various media. Chapter 5 discusses about the role of ad agencies and their structure, services and compensation. Chapter 6 delves into the importance of marketing research, its process and research instruments used to identify and solve problems. It also gives insights to the common problems encountered in research. Chapter 7 throws light on the concepts of advertising strategy. The strategy aims at solving the communication related problems and gives in details how the brand proposes to solve the problem. The varied strategies available are not mutually exclusive but depend on the need of the hour. The Chapter 8 throws lights on finding the big idea-how best can ideas be generated and how can the message be communicated in a way that has not been done or differentiated from its competitor. This is followed by the creative execution-bringing shape to the creative ideas. Here the agency understands the audience and tries to bring life to the idea. The execution can be in various forms of media-print, audio-visual and online. Each media differs on the basis of its characteristics. In the current age of IT, online media has also become a most sought after one.

The Section 4 deals with all other promotional tools which go hand in glove with advertising and whose importance cannot be overlooked upon. The chapter 14 deals with sales promotion with objectives of stimulating immediate sales. Companies today are allocating greater budgets to this activity as this aims to enhance the brand equity too. Chapter 15 & 16 deal with the other prominent tools like direct marketing wherein

immediate response is elicited while the public relations aims to synchronize with other forms of communications in order to garner the maximum mileage.

Section 5 titled media planning and strategy aims at understanding the intricacies of various media and brings forth the nuances of various media and the strengths and weaknesses of the same. Chapters 18-20 elaborates how the choice of right media enhances the brand image and how a wrong choice may spell disaster. Chapter 21 deals with developing of media plan. The planning process takes into cognizance how much to spend on the media, where to spend and when to spend it. In today's scenario with competition hottening up the corporates wish to spend the amount at right places and times, the media plan aims at this activity.

Section 6 covers the budgets, objectives and evaluation while Chapter 22 and 23 aim at measuring the effectiveness of various elements of integrated marketing communication program including methods for pre and post testing of advertising messages and campaigns. It also deals with setting communication objectives guiding budget settings and also serves as yardstick against which campaign results can be measured Chapter 24 deals with legal and ethical environments of promotion as advertising perse within these environments and the changing outlook of the society should also be taken care of while advertising.

All in all the book contains numerous examples, case histories to make it more application oriented. In addition the readings taken from leading business and advertising publications make the book more contemporary. The book includes summaries, The book provides students and practitioners the framework and knowledge to make more effective decisions and to communicate the excitement and creativity that characterizes this business.