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# Marketing Communication: Creation of Effective Strategy

Case: ebazaar.fi

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**ABSTRACT**

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The objective of this thesis was to analyse the existing theories and reveal the fact to create an effective marketing communication strategy. Effective marketing communication is the key strategy to achieve the objectives of a marketing campaign. Marketing communication engages the consumers and distributors to pursue services or products and create a unique position in their minds. Effectual marketing communication can change consumer behaviour. Every entity has to communicate with stakeholders; an entity can be big or small, profitable, non-profitable, government, business, educational.

The author uses the theories, findings and research done by experts of related studies. The qualitative research method was used to collect data.

The author uses the ebazaar.fi as a case company to demonstrate the creation of a marketing communication strategy. Because of limited data, it was impossible to prepare the complete strategy, but this paper covers all the critical theories and fulfils this research's aim. This thesis paper refers to a templet to set effective marketing communication strategies and provide a sound understanding of practical and theoretical issues involved in Marketing Communications to readers.

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Keywords                      Marketing Communication, Strategy

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## **1 Introduction**

In the world, a significant number of companies are competing in different sectors. Every year a massive amount of money is spent on marketing. Companies are working hard to create a unique brand image and attract customers. Marketing communication plays a vital role in making the customer aware of a company as marketing communication is the part of marketing. Marketing communication work as is the vehicle to deliver the messages from the company to the customers. Companies design their marketing communication plan and content according to their context. Marketing communication directly impacts the mind of customers and the target audience to make decisions. In the same way as effective marketing communication can have a positive impact on customers, the wrong marketing communication can give a negative image of the company to it'customers.

The thesis aims to demonstrate the process to create an effective marketing communication plan. A marketing communication plan contains several stages—marketing experts create different marketing communication planning frameworks (MCPF) to make the plan. The author adopted the most appropriate MCPF to demonstrate that the marketing communication plan could be used in every business sector. The theories and stages of a marketing communication plan were explained in the thesis, and a practical marketing communication plan prepared at last for a case company.

Ebazaar.fi was used as a case company. Synergy Scandic Oy decided to expand its operation in the e-commerce platform. A marketing communication plan was prepared for the case company. The company did not prepare any marketing communication plan for Ebazaar.fi, The author prepared the plan for the company based on the information provided by the company.

## **2 Research Methodology**

Research is crucial for a thesis. Research methodology is divided into two methods: quantitative research and qualitative research. It is essential to understand the research methodology approaches to select the right method for the research in question. The author used the qualitative research methodology to collect data for the study.

### **2.1 Qualitative research**

The information and data collected in qualitative research are primarily nonquantitative data. This data consists of interviews, documents, videos, photographs, materials from the internet and other visual materials. Qualitative research is conducted within different fields such as social work, education, studies, business and other related fields. (Saldana 2011 ,3-5)

### **2.2 Quantitative research**

Quantitative research expresses the analysis in the exact numerical format and with the statistical value. The quantitative research method also considers the same manner to collect data, but the most numerical value is taken rather than theoretical data and words. (R. Murray 2003, 1-3)

### **2.3 Data collection**

To collect data for the study qualitative research method was used. The background information for the theory part was gathered from books of different authors, and online materials were also used. In the empirical part, the company's data was collected through interviews and competitors' data from the companies' websites and other internet sources.

### **3 Marketing**

Attracting customers is becoming even more challenging because of the competitive market. In solution to the competition to encourage customers to purchase a particular product or service from a particular organisation is to build an effective marketing strategy.

The business has several functions to deal with the customer, but marketing is more effective than any other function and appropriate activity to influence them. Marketing has not reflected only selling and advertising; it is an even more excellent concept to connect with customers. It increases the value of a business, product, service to the customer to develop a relationship and then obtain the return. Marketing is crucial not only for a big company, even for non-profit organisations. Even marketing is everywhere to reach a potential customer. It becomes possible because marketing is not restricted to the traditional shape anymore. The concept of mass marketing boosts the effectiveness of marketing. Marketing is not only focused on delivering information; it also counting customer needs. By the recognition of customer needs, it is more straightforward for the promotional planning campaign. It is a process to build values to make a strong connection with the customer. As stated by Peter Drucker, sell to the customer even though they do not need it is the objective of marketing. (Kotler, Armstrong 2010, 26-29)

Chartered Institute of Management (2015) defines "Marketing is the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements profitably." American Marketing Association (2013) defines "Marketing is the activity, set of institution and processes for creating communication, delivering and exchanging offerings that have value for the customer, clients, partners, and society at large."

CIM identified marketing as a process of management to fulfil customer needs but with the revenue purpose. On the other hand, AMA recognised marketing as an activity and process to communicate and add value for stakeholders. Both agreed



that marketing is a process to connect with customers. The marketing concept is changing day by day now to gain customer trust is become an important aspect. (Baines, Fill & Kelly 2011)

Marketing has changed over the years. Marketing progressed from commodity focus to social focus, each time marketing expanding its concept. Marketing is divided into three consciousness. Each consciousness has a different phenomenon. The concept of consciousness one is a market transaction; It involves buyer and seller trading goods for money.

On the other hand, consciousness two focused on value rather than money. Government services paid for tax, and trusts paid for donations, but both must do some marketing to raise the tax and donation. Consciousness tree is not only focused on a group of the customer; it covers all the audiences. It also defines the marketing based on the transaction but not only money. It concerns the creation of transactions, value, facility. The fundamental concern of marketing is producing desired responses in free individuals by the judicious creation and offering of values. (Kotler, Philip 1998, 48-50)

### **3.1 Marketing Mix**

Implementing a marketing plan need to use various tools. Organisations develop strategies and tactics to meet customed desires in the highly competitive market to differentiate the brand by developing marketing mix by combining key elements integration, coordination, and communication. (Beamish, Ashford 93-94)

In 1948 the term "marketing mix" was introduced in an article "The Concept of Marketing Mix" by Neil H. Borden, Harvard Business School. The marketing mix is also referred to as the 4 PS model as it contains the four groups of variables Product, Price, Place and Promotion. This four are the tools that increase the significant action of marketing and reach the target of selling. (Kubicki, Milano 2014)

Organisations use the marketing mix to impact the focus group; this is the compose of convenient and strategical marketing tools. Marketing mix content every function of marketing that used to make an effect on market needs, and this divided in for groups that are called 4 PS. These 4 PS is as follows. (See Figure)

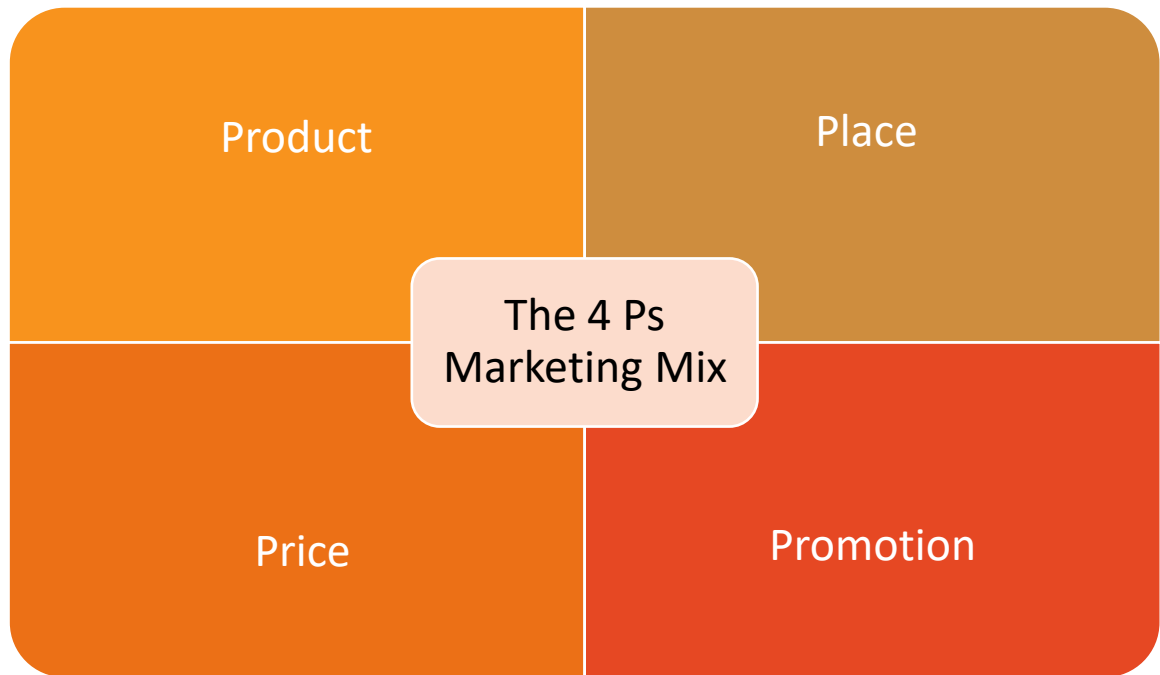


Figure 1: The 4 Ps of the marketing mix ( Kotler 2010)

1. Product: It contains the design, label, packaging, category and features of the goods and services exchange to the targeted market. It is also called Product Mix.
2. Price: The sum of money customers going to charge in the exchange of goods and services. It contains activities to compete with the market by offering credit options, discounts and exchange deals.
3. Place: It includes the process to reach the product to the potential buyers. It demonstrated the activities of sales place, distributors, negotiation price place, service location and warehouse.

4. Promotion: It means informing customers about the product, communicating with them, and influencing them to buy a product or service, advertising, and creating brand awareness.

All the marketing mix components must be considered to create a successful marketing campaign. Marketing mix achieves the goals set by companies marketing programmer by adding value to customer relationship with the company. (Armstrong, Kotler & Michael 2018)

## 4 Marketing Communication

Marketing Communication is a convenient phrase that consists of the process to communicate with the target customer. Marketing communication combines a set of the element as follows.

- Advertising
- Personal selling
- Sales Promotion
- Direct marketing
- Public relation
- Sponsorship

Marketing communication itself is one of the marketing mix elements, which is promotion; communication influences the competition of the target market. A blend of these elements to communicate with consumers by understanding the pros and cons is marketing communication. American Marketing Association defines marketing communication to achieve specific goals using advertisement, personal selling, sales promotion, and public relations techniques. (Steve Bird, Brian Connett 2004)

Marketing communication describes based on the orientations of communication. Orientations developed to set communication blueprint are as follows.

- Information and promotion- Customers are encouraged to buy the product by informing them about the product using mass media communication.
- Process and imagery- Variety of implements are used to impact customer insight in several phases of the buying process by using images and touching messages.

- Integration- Communication tools used efficiently and effectively to position brand in customer mind.
- Relational- Communication styled and designed base on the need of different customer groups.
- Experience- Exceptionally needs to develop exclusive customer experience by using integrational and relational communication elements.

Marketing communications is a process by which organisations and audiences try to connect. Participants seek to develop and present messages through insight into an audience's chosen communications environments before evaluating and responding. By conveying relevant and significant messages, participants are inspired to offer personal perspective, psychological and behavioural responses. Marketing Communication is a complicated process used to engage the audience and achieve the objectives of DRIP. (Fill, Turnbull 2016, 19-21)

#### **4.1 Role of Marketing Communication**

Marketing communication used different types of media according to the context to achieve the marketing objectives. In this process, the company sent the messages to engage the audience with the marketing campaign and provoke them to purchase. In this process, marketing communication does some tasks, and these tasks are known as DRIP elements of marketing communication.

DRIP elements of marketing communication contain four essential tasks:

- Inform: Marketing communication aware the audience and potential customers by providing information of an organisation and their offers.
- Persuade: Marketing communication persuades current and potential customers to make purchases or inquire further to engage in an exchange relationship.

- Reinforce: Marketing communication works to remind the customers of the past transaction benefits to make post-purchase.
- Differentiate: Marketing communication create a brand image within the audience to make a different position of the brand to separate the products from the competitor's product. (Weitz, Wensley 2002,) (Dahlen, Lange & Smith 2009,) (Fill, Turnbull 2016, 16-18)

#### **4.2 Creative Message**

Organisations transmit their feature of products and information through marketing communication. It creates a positive or negative perception in the mind of the audience. The message sent by the company and received by the audience can contain noise in it. To create a positive impact on the audience and engage them with the brand, it is essential to create creative messages depending on the context. Messages are designed to fulfil audience expectations and emphasise the core message. (Chaturvedi 2011, 11-14 ; Sadri, Flammia, 2011, 122-124 ; Fill, 2016)

#### **4.3 Models of communication**

Communication experts developed sophisticated models of communication. The most used model in marketing communication is following:

The linear model of communication: This is a one-way communication model. The sender encodes the message and transmits the message through the media, and the receiver decodes the message. The linear model of communication can consist of noise that distracts the receiver from understanding the message.

Influencer model of communication: In this model, messages flowed from source to targeted audiences through the media channel. Opinion leaders and opinion formers also influence target audiences. This model is also called the two-step model.

Interactional model of communication: This model of communication is the mix of other models of communication. This model uses all the media channels and

sources to interact with the target audience. The target audience received the message and information from mass media, personal sources, electronic sources, opinion leaders, opinion formers, and other audiences. (Keillor 2007, 130-131; Fill,2016)

#### **4.3.1 Word of mouth**

Word of mouth is the most powerful marketing communication tool to influence customers. It significantly impacts the customer since the message is delivered by the company and the customers. Word of mouth works based on the relationship between customer and company based on the previous transaction. It is more beneficial for launching new products or services. The other existing customer directly influences potential customers. Word of mouth can also negatively impact brand image if the previous experience of an existing customer is not satisfying. (Baines et al. 2008, 389)

Word of mouth is not the model of communication. But it is integrated with the model of communications, As the impact of word of mouth is stronger than planned marketing communication. Before the integration into the model of communication, it was known that word of mouth was influenced by the media and key opinion leaders. Organisations influenced the sources of word of mouth communication. K. Rama Mohan Rao (2004) stated that word of mouth plays a vital role to influence the consumer and organisations need to identify and influence the sources and opinion leaders to exert their influence on the consumer to create demand. In the three-way word of mouth take place and these are (i) customers contact sources, (ii) sources contact customers and (iii) customers and sources have indirect contact. Sources for collecting information by word of mouth are employees, co-customers, experienced customers, experts, opinion leaders and general public discussions. (Rao 2009, 115, 219)

## 5 Planning effective marketing Communication

The primary purpose of marketing communication is to achieve the goals of the marketing plan. Marketing communication develops and conveys the message to the audiences to influence them to make decisions and create a brand image. Effective marketing communication has to be planned carefully without noise. Different marketing experts use different marketing communication planning frameworks (MCPF). It is crucial to use the most suitable marketing communication planning framework according to the marketing objectives. MCPF gives the proper visual sequence of tasks to execute the plan successfully. The marketing communication planning framework is the following figure.

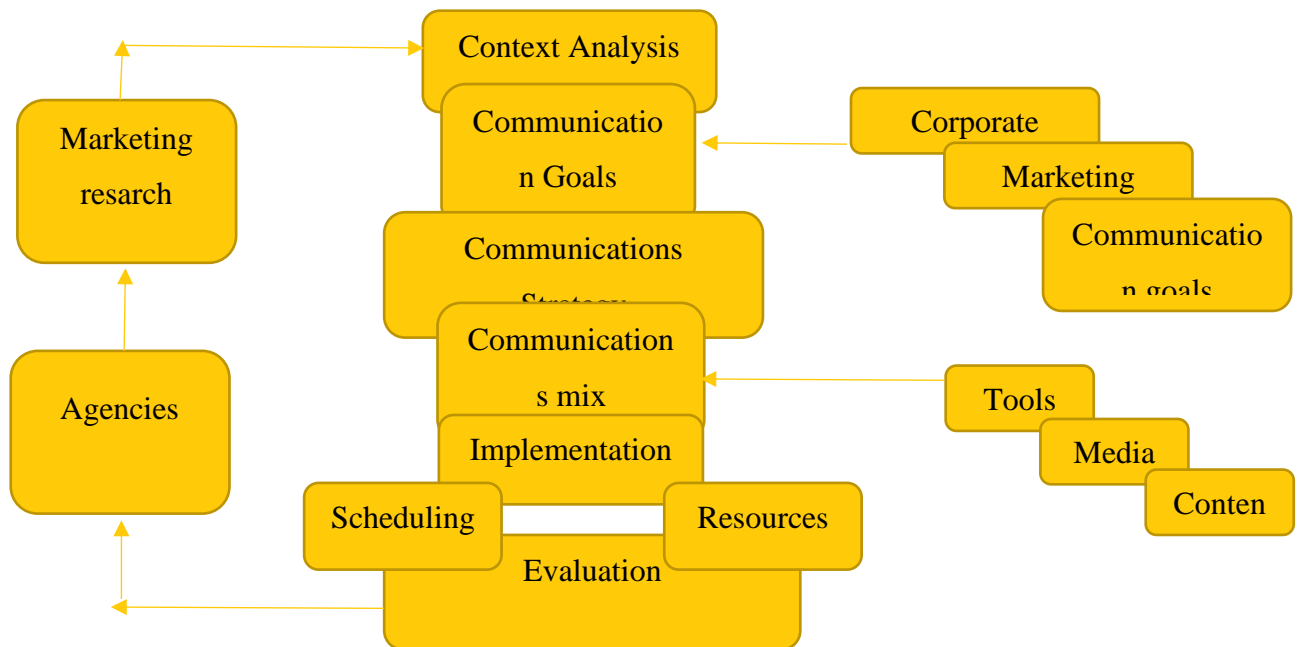


Figure 2: A marketing communication planning framework (Fill 2016)



## 5.1 Context analysis

Context analysis is the initial stage of marketing communication. Analysing the context is essential to understand the current situation to plan an effective marketing communication plan. Information of targeted audience perception of past and present gathered to analysis from different sources. Knowing the audience opinion, feelings and beliefs about the brand and past marketing campaign is the most important aspect for future planning. Context analysis is not only customer analysis; it also covers companies internal factors, competitors, and external environment. (Masterman, Wood 2005, 8)

Understanding context help to develop strategies and create creative messages by consisting of customer relevancy and effective media use. Context analysis is used to find useful marketing communication drivers that can audiences to archive organisations long-term marketing communication objectives. Context analyses create the ground for the communications plan. It connects the objectives of the marketing plan with marketing communication. The main four elements of contexts analysis, according to Chris Fill are,

The customer Context: This is based on customer perception Characteristics of a segmented customer and their current view and belief and attitude to the brand and organisation and media usages to convey the message.

The Business Context: In this phase, the organisation's current Corporate and marketing strategy and plans, Brand/organisation value and Competitor situation are Analysed.

The Internal Context: Organisations must analyse internal factors like financial limitations, Organisation uniqueness, available marketing expertise, agency availability and suitability, Cultural values and beliefs of the organisation.

The External Context: This analysis section contains stakeholders interests other than customers like government and legal authority. The current political, social, economic and technological situation is also considered to analyse. (Fill 2016, 172-173)

Context element	Dimensions
The customer context	Segment characteristics  Levels of awareness, perception and attitudes towards the brand/ organisation Levels of involvement and types of perceived risk DMU characteristics and issues Media usage
The business context	Corporate and marketing strategy and plans Brand/organisation analysis Competitor analysis
The internal context	Financial constraints Organisation identity Culture, values and beliefs Marketing expertise Agency availability and suitability
The external context	Who are the key stakeholders, and why are they important? What are their communications needs? Social, political, economic and technological restraints and opportunities

Table 1: The main elements of the context analysis Customer Segmentation ( Fill 2016)

## 5.2 Communication Objectives (goals and Positioning)

It is essential to set objectives to develop a marketing communication plan. Objectives laid the area and help directly to make strategic decisions, define measurement and control procedures, and suggest budget requirements. Objectives deliver a shared vision for the system to everyone involved in the design and implementation of the system. Context analysis research is used to identify appropriate goals, use opportunities and strengths, and avoid or overcome threats and weaknesses. (Masterman 2005, 8,36-38)

There are different views on what marketing communications are trying to achieve as conflicting views; some practitioners and researchers have differentiated their views on constructing appropriate objectives. First, much effort has been put into deciding which marketing communication and marketing activities to carry out. Second, how should the company measure the success of the campaign? Finally, what is the best way to determine the level to invest across the centre? Marketing Communication objective in the planning process is essential for several reasons. First, they balance the plan and remove the inevitable focus on sales. Second, it highlights placement issues; third, it highlights the necessary balance in the ad mix, fourth, it gives campaign time; and finally, it gives an accurate way to measure marketing communications specific. (Fill 2009, 311,325)

### **5.2.1 Corporate objectives**

Organisations corporate objectives in the perspective of marketing communication led from a business plan based on marketing efforts that describe the organisation's mission or goals it wants to achieve. These objectives are set by top management, and these are the ultimate goals that have to reach through efforts of other functions. Corporate objectives are usually content, financial terms and relate to return on investment, return-on-capital and profit. (Westwood 2002, 20)

The business starts with some resource and use them to achieve something. This something in monetary value can describe as profit. Profit is the most significant benchmark to measure the image, value and position of a successful business. (McDonald 2007, 277)

### **5.2.2 Marketing goals**

Marketing objectives are derived from the marketing plan and focus on results. These can generally be considered sales-related goals such as measuring market share, sales revenue, volume, revenue and profitability (Fill,2016, 174).

Marketing objectives and corporate objectives sound similar, but Marketing

objectives might not be confused with corporate objectives. Marketing objectives are set to gain corporate objectives. The marketing objective is intended to increase the sell of an existing product in an existing market, existing product in a new market, or introduce a new product in an existing market, a new product in a new market. Increasing public awareness of a product or service, increasing brand awareness could also be the objective of marketing. (Stone 2001, 15-16)

### **5.2.3 Communication goals**

Marketing Communication Objectives are the several goals that have to achieve during a predetermined time frame. As marketing communication is planned to achieve some specific objectives, it has to design formally and systematically (A. Shimp 2010, 156-157). These objectives arise from the interpretation of the current environment, In which a company operates and the context of the future in the sense of where the brand is supposed to be in the future at some point. These objectives are viewed as levels of understanding, interpretation, knowledge, skill, attitudes towards the brand and general degree of preference. The selection of Marcom goals depends on the activities that they need to perform.

Marketing Communication Objectives are created based on corporate objectives that need to achieve through its marketing efforts. Ludi Koekemoer (2004) & Terence A. Shimp (2010) listed the following objectives that marketing communication can set:

- introduction of new brands
- Increase in Sales
- Increase product or service awareness
- Create Brand awareness
- Create, enhance and maintain the corporate image
- Increase customer loyalty
- Create demand

- Create desire
- To influence customer preference

### **5.3 Marketing Communication Strategy**

Marketing communication strategy defines the approaches adopted to communicate with audiences. Most companies are more focused on developing individual strategies advertising strategy, brand strategy, and message strategy, but Marketing communication goals are achieved by designing the right communication strategy. Marketing Communication strategy is thought to use the communication mix. However, as marketing communication is an audience-oriented activity, it should be driven by the nature of the audience, not by marketing tools or media.

Marketing communication tools and resources used to support and design marketing communication strategy. Audience oriented strategy needs to consider audiences preferences to form the strategy. Necessary data about audiences' needs and preferences are gathered and analysed in the step of context analysis. This data is used to choose the right strategy according to the situation from three mainly used audience-oriented marketing communication strategies, and these three strategies are:

**Pull Strategy:** In this strategy organisation directly communicated with targeted audiences to influence them to purchase products or services. Pull strategy is also called suction strategy as advertising creates customer demand. Personal selling activities are less emphasised. Pull strategy is designed to convey the message that positioned the brand in the audience's mind by increasing awareness, changing the attitude, and changing consumer behaviour. This strategy pulls customers towards the retailer to make purchase decisions. Pull strategy influence both audiences, consumers and business customers. Business

customers usually buy the product from dealers and distributors, but both customers can buy the product or service through direct marketing channels.

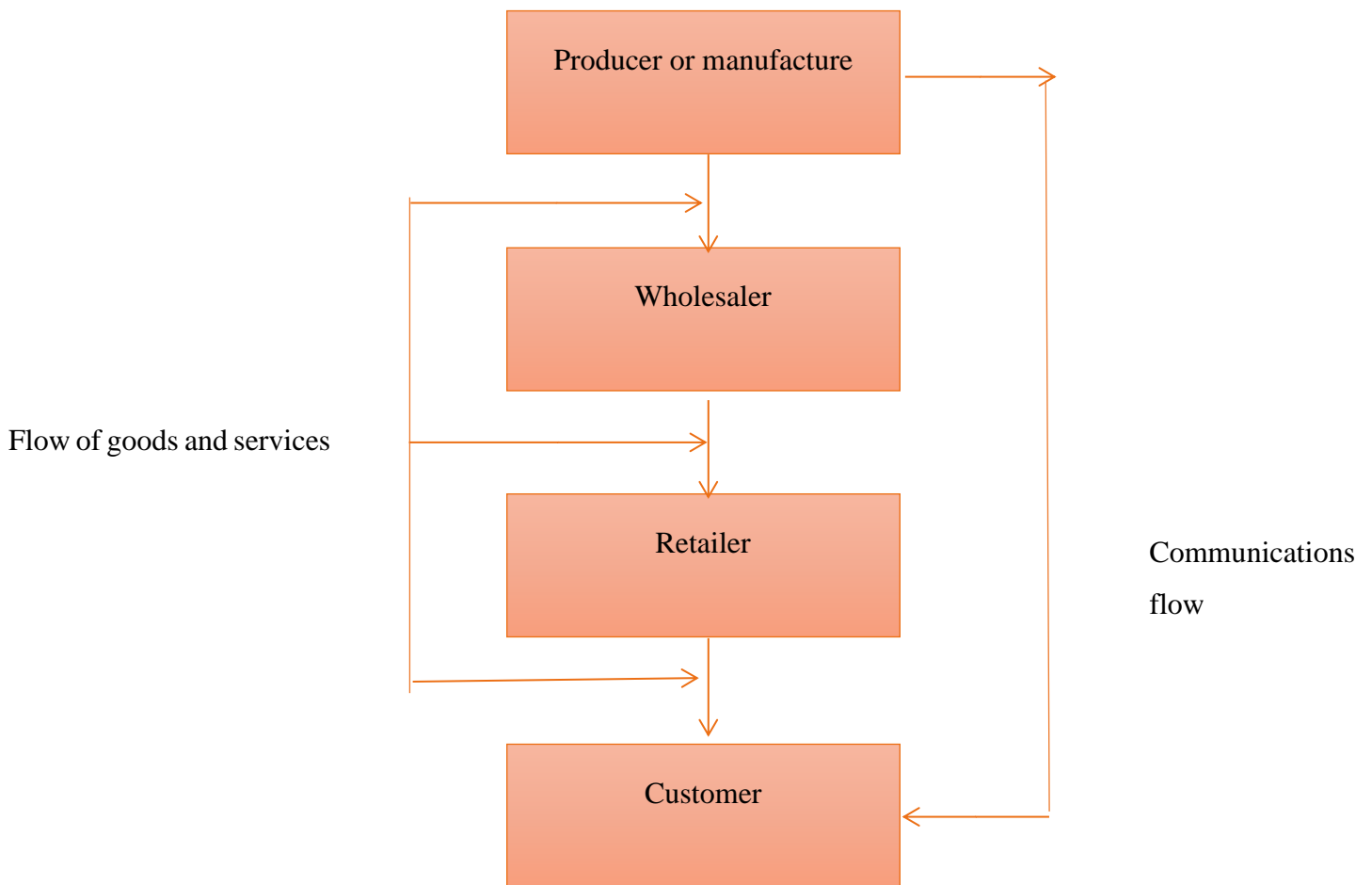


Figure 3: The direction of a marketing communication pull strategy (Fill 2016)

**Push Strategy:** In Push strategy, information flows from organisation to trade channels. The organisation communicates with wholesalers, distributors and retailers to influence them to buy products and increase stock. The previous strategy was to target consumers to purchase products to create a stable and reliable relationship between the B2B customers. They do not consume the goods, but they are motivated to sell the goods to the consumers. Personal selling is a high emphasis on this strategy. Sales assistants in all the trade channels sell the product to the customers and describe the feature of the product. Products are pushed through the trade channels to the consumer.

Quality of product, the profit margin for middle man, and good intensive for the salesperson are essential factors for the push strategy.

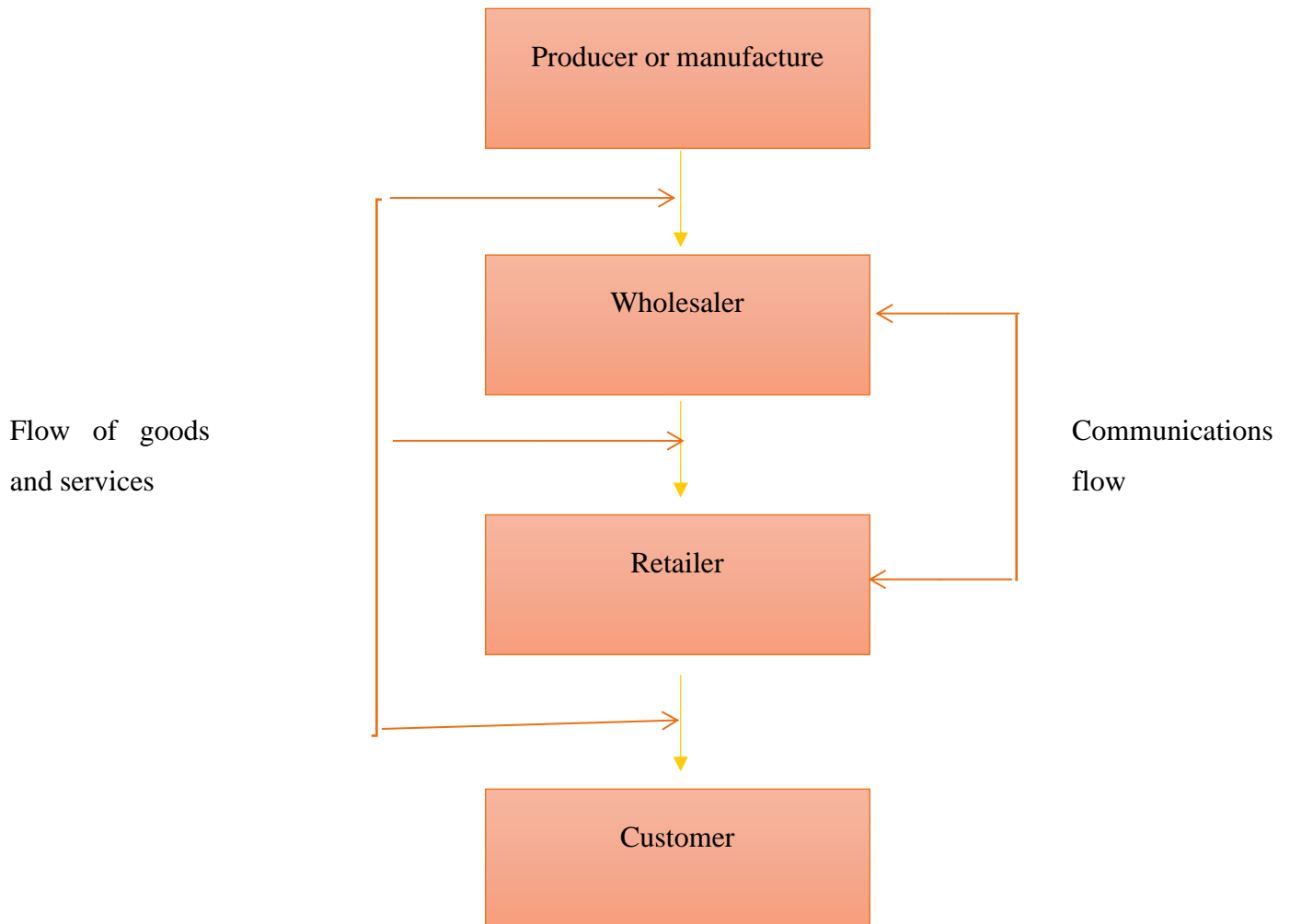


Figure 4: The direction of a marketing communication push strategy ( Fill 2016)

Profile Strategy: This is the mixer of pull and push strategy. It is more than an individual strategy. In profile strategy, consumers and trade channels do not only count as factors. Other stakeholders like employees, financial institutions, regulators and the local community also influence the organisation's activity. This

strategy refers to corporate communication. Suppose an organisation have a good understanding of their employees and the local community and successfully positioned great brand reputation in front of other stakeholders. In that case, it will attract consumers to the brand. Profile strategy creates the corporate image, positioned the brand and creates a good relationship between the stakeholders.

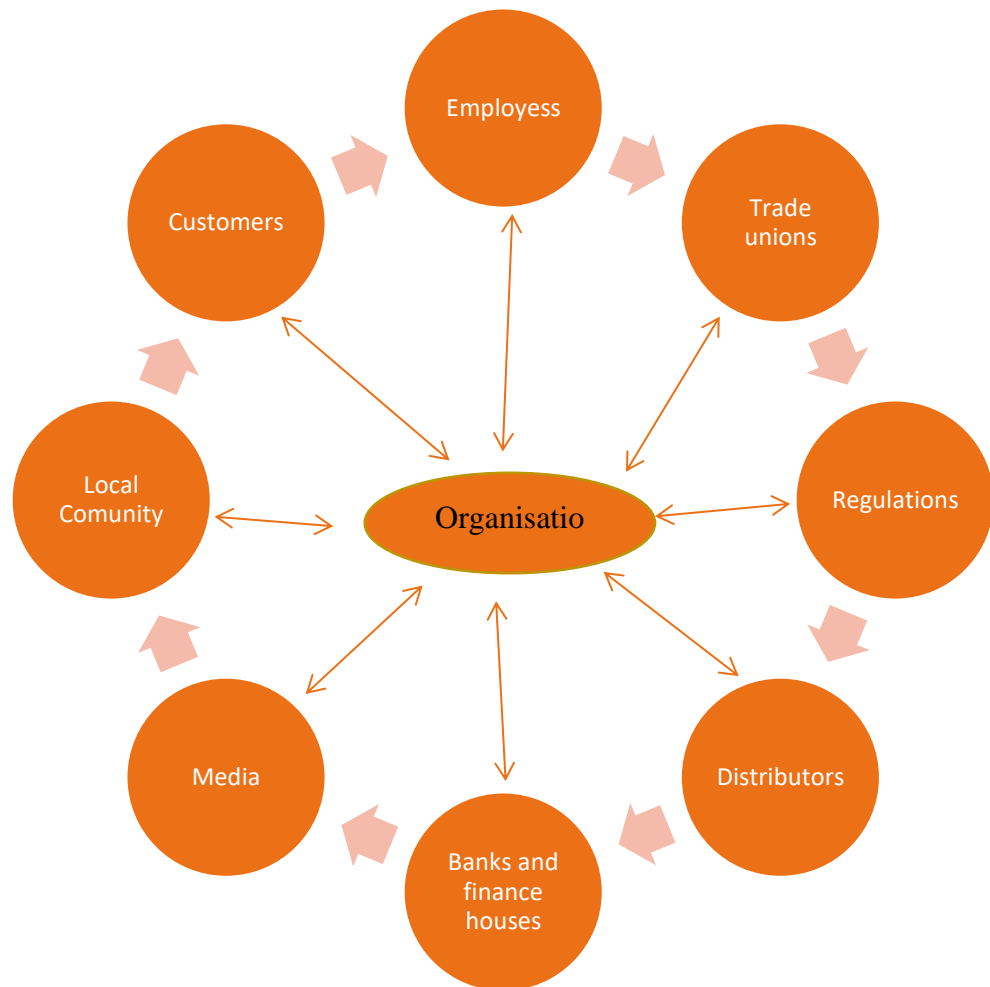


Figure 5: The direction of a marketing communication Profile strategy ( Fill 2011)

These are the 3p's of marketing communication strategy. Pull and push strategy defines the direction of information flow to influence the consumers to purchase. Profile strategy creates the brand image. ( Chris Fill 2005,2006, 2016)



Strategy	Target Audience	Message Focus	Communication Goals
<b>Pull</b>	Consumer End-user b2b customer	Product/services	Purchase
<b>Push</b>	Channel intermediaries	Product/services	Developing relationships and distribution network
<b>Profile</b>	All relevant stakeholders	The organisation	Building reputation

Table 2: Marketing communication strategy options

#### 5.4 Marcom Mix

Create a successful marketing communication depends on its goals and objectives. Different tools are used to communicate with the target audience. These tools are used and combine if need based upon the degree of intensity required to interact with the target audience by the organisation. Combination of advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, public relation and direct marketing tools called marketing communication Mix. Promoting in newspaper, magazine and tv has become old. Audiences are now exploring other media, doing activities, exploring brands by participating in events and communities. Marketers now need to integrate media, content and message with the core marketing mix for effective marketing communication. Because of increasing awareness, customer perception is changing. Now the marketer has to design their communication method following the expectation of the audience. Elements of marketing communication are briefly described as follows. (Fill 2016. ; Steve Bird 2004, 11)

### **5.4.1 Advertising**

Advertising is a widely used and paid form of communication. Different kinds of media are used for advertising, and it is a non-personal form of communication. Advertising is designed to persuade the audience to take action. It is a significant way to establish communication with the consumers. An advertiser has to choose the most effective media to advertise according to communication goals and attract the target audience. The widely used advertising forms include:

- Newspaper
- Television
- Radio
- E-mail
- Websites

Advertisement variously benefits the organisation. It helps to create the brand image, introduce new products and services, and reach a large number of audiences. It not only helps sellers but also keeps the audience up to date with information, saves their time from gathering information about the product from outside, and helps to make a purchase decision.

The advertisement also has some cons besides the benefit, and this is:

- No personal interaction with the Audiences
- Paid form of communication and costly
- The high degree of wastage because of mass communication
- Less chance to receive feedback

Organisations control over the advertising is substantial. The main task of advertising is to create awareness and position the brand by enabling audiences appropriate and related information.

### **5.4.2 Sales Promotion**

Sales promotion creates additional values as an inducement to the customer to make immediate sales. This inducement offers not only to customers but also to agents, distributors and members of the salesforce. Sales promotion encourages

the audiences to purchase the product/service, which is also the key task of sales promotion. Sales promotion primarily includes:

- Free samples
- Coupons
- Discounts
- Contests
- Rebates

Characteristics of sales promotion includes:

- Non-personal
- Paid but less costly than the advertisement
- Targets small group of audiences
- Short term gain

#### **5.4.3 Personal Selling**

Personal selling of marketing communication tools creates direct communication with the audiences without any intermediary. Personal selling is the only tool within communication tools that gives a chance to the salesperson to communicate with the customers face to face. As there are no intermediaries, this is a less costly promotional method. Because of face to face conversation with the customer, feedback also comes instantly. Personal selling might convey both positive and negative messages.

#### **5.4.4 Public Relation**

Public relation is also a vital section of communication tools. Organisations can not underestimate the effectiveness of public relations because it is more powerful than paid advertising. It is used to shape the attitude and opinion of customers and stakeholders held by the organisation. According to Grunig and Hunt (1984), sales promotion is the management of communication within the organisation and the public. This tool increase brand value and interest within stakeholder. Stakeholder audiences of public relation tool include:

Employees: They are a significant part of the stakeholder group. Employees are the leading influencer that influences external stakeholder. Public relation also refers to internal communication.

Financial group: Organisations share their current information about the organisation and operating market with financial investors to maintain good relations with investors to use investor relation benefits.

Customer: Organisation shares the information through media to the customer to change attitudes, perceptions and images of the brand in the mind of customers.

Organisations and other communities: Organisations share their strategic intention and ways with other organisations so they both can achieve their goals and objectives. This other organisation includes government and local authorities and suppliers.

#### **5.4.5 Direct Marketing**

Direct marketing is another tool of marketing communication like others. It is a more effective communication tool because it also supports other marketing tools. The primary purpose of this tool is to achieve marketing objectives. Direct marketing drives the audience mind as it is a one to one communication tool. Direct marketing is the direct communication between customers and sellers. Direct marketing Deliver messages directly to the audiences according to their favourite media. (Mullin 2002, 1-16)

Direct marketing is used to create personal and intermediary accessible communication with the potential customer and stakeholders. Direct marketing seeks to build a relationship and builds a strong personal relationship with audiences. Different kind of online and offline communication method is used to do direct marketing. Methods used to do direct marketing includes:

- Direct mail

- Telemarketing
- Door to Door marketing
- Phone call
- Text message
- E-mail
- Radio and television
- Online display ads
- Promotional letters
- Fliers
- Database marketing
- Social media marketing

Direct marketing is a personalised and interactive marketing tool. It builds a long time relationship with customers. However, the response rate is low and the chance of getting feedback is low.( Fill 2016, 450-459, 2005, 23-24 ; Stone 2001, 90-94)(Murthy 2009, 22-23)

## **5.5 Content**

They coordinated communication mix contents message that will be delivered to audiences. The message is a symbolic expression of what the organisation wants to achieve. Messages work as a hook that attracts customers to a particular brand. Setting the right message for audiences is a tough challenge. Messages are delivered to the audiences using different media or channels.

Messages must have to able to satisfy the needs of audiences. Many advertisers use the same kind of message for advertising; this is called copycat messaging. Advertisers have to use creativity to form messages. Message can contain humour, music, fear, shock, animation, fantasy and surrealism. Advertisers prepare messages according to the culture, acceptance and perception of audiences. Creative messages always become the key factor in attracting the attention of audiences and getting a competitive advantage. (Ogden, Rarick 2010, 73-74) (Fill 2016 , 549-571)

## 5.6 Media

Media is the third element of the marketing communication mix. Media convey the messages to the audiences. It is important to use media for any strategy from the push, pull, and profile used for marketing communication. Media is the vehicle that delivers messages from organisations to audiences.

Once upon a time, newspaper, radio, television and film were just referred to as media for communication, but today the concept has changed. Development in technology brings new media vehicles for marketing communication. Media owners are now offering a different forms of media tools for advertising.

Chris fill (2016) describes three ways to classify media; this media are classified by:

- **Source (POEM):** The source's media classification believes that media can be Paid, owned and earned. It is not necessary to use paid media type for marketing communication. An organisation can use their assets to deliver the message to the audience. Paid media refers to the organisation's media to convey the message to audiences and its costs. Earned media refers to the unpaid comments organisation earn. Earned media can be online and offline comments, in the news, face to face communication and comments word of mouth communication. Earned media can convey both positive and negative comments for the organisation.
- **Form ( Physicality/ Location):** There is various type of media used to carry the organisation's message such as Television, Newspaper, Billboard, Internet. These media are divided into six main classes, and this class includes broadcast media, print media, out of home media, interactive media, in-store media and other linear media.
- **Functionality ( linear/interactive):** These classification media are categories into two segments based on their function. One is linear media, and another one is interactive Media. Linear media is categorised mainly based on mass-media theory, including print media, broadcast

media, outdoor media, cinema, and ambient. On the other hand, interactive media reflects the use of the internet, mobile and database technology in marketing communication. (Fill 2013, 590-605 ; Kayode 2014, 139-163)

## **5.7 Resources of Marketing Communication**

Resources are an essential part of the marketing communication plan.

Successfully implementing a marketing communication plan needs financial and human resources. Resources used to achieve the desired brand position and objectives of marketing communication. Budgeting is necessary to cover internal and third-party costs that will incur the implementation of the promotional plan.

### **5.7.1 Human Resources**

It is essential to choose the right human resource for the right job. Human resources are the professionals who are directly or indirectly engaged with marketing communication activities. They work to implement the plan and archive the objectives of the marketing communication plan. Skilled and capable staff appointed in various stages of the marketing communication process. Depending on the capability of companies, they have enough or a shortage of qualified and utilised people.

It is imperative to appoint experienced and trained staff in such projects to handle any critical situation and deal with various issues and challenges. The human resource management department recruits employees based on the structure and culture of an organisation. It is necessary to give the staff essential training to ensure that staff have the required knowledge, especially in face-to-face contact with customers. Organisations might also hire skilled staff from agencies.

### 5.7.2 Financial Resources

The financial resource is one of the important elements of the marketing communication plan. Finance is called the lifeblood of a business. Business activities can not run smoothly without sufficient financial resources. The organisation uses various media types such as radio, television, newspaper, poster, and the internet for marketing communication. The company needs to have enough financial resources to make payments of costs incurred for marketing communication activity as different media carry different costs.

Most organisations use third parties to convey the message to the customers that's why organisations need long-term financial plans or budgeting. Budgeting is the most critical decision in a marketing communication plan, as promotion is typically costly. The organisation prepares budgets to predetermine the spending of money on promotion. If the organisation spends less, sales volume will not achieve a potential level, and spending too much might cut the profit. All the marketing communication elements are taken into account to make a balanced budget for marketing communication. Managers evaluate the different situations to set an appropriate budget. According to PR Smith, Ze Zook (2011) and Terence A. Shimp (2007), a set of outlines for the most common forms of budgeting is given below:

- Organisations identify the overall objectives, break them into specific tasks, and calculate the budget according to the objective and task.
- Modelling involves using various econometric and simulation techniques to determine how various budget levels may affect performance.
- Profit optimisation- it attempts to find the optimum marketing spend that would generate the most profit. It ensures that the marginal revenue derived from each marketing communications activity exceeds the marginal cost.



- Percentage of sales method- It is used to set a budget. Historical data of sales and advertising costs are used to forecast the sales level and set the budget.
- Competitive parity analyses- Analyses the competitors marketing communication spends and spends the same amount as that competitor.
- Affordability method: Organisation allocate the financial resource to advertising that remains that left after all costs.
- Payback period- Organisations make the budget based on the payback period. The payback period is the time need to recover the cost of marketing communication.
- ROI- Calculates the return on investment in percentage for financial directors to take financial decisions.

Organisations use several budgeting approaches rather than this. Organisations developed optimum profit models to identify the optimum spend. Organisations also allocate the budget for online or offline marketing based on consumer engagement between these two media. ( PR Smith 2011, 226-228 ; Shimp 2007, 156-164; Smith, Taylor 2004, 33-34; Yeshin, 1998, 84,106; Hill, Terry O'Sulliva & Catherine O'Sullivan 2003, 315)

## **5.8 Scheduling and Implementation**

The marketing communication activities are arranged according to the objectives and the strategy. Various communication tools are connected to communication goals to a big level, so scheduling is vital to attain the favoured result. The most useful planning tool is the Gantt chart. Gantt chart presents a clear schedule for each activity.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	€
Advertising	X								
Social Media		X							
Website			X						
Sales Promotion				X					
Direct marketing					X				
Publicity (and public relation)						X			
Sponsorship							X		
Exhibition								X	
Packaging	X								
Point-of-sale and merchandising									
Internet	X								
Word of mouth	X								

Table 3: Gantt chart with tactical timings of different communication tools (developed based on: Smith 2011, 239)

Scheduling and following it strictly is a necessary part of an effective communication plan. Scheduling requires detailed plans of communication tools and tactics.

Strategies and planned marketing communication tools are implemented according to the scheduled time. Implementing marketing communication strategies required qualified professionals, equipment and agencies to achieve

the objectives within scheduled time and budget. ( Fill 2009, 313-Fill 1999, 631-Smith 2011, 238)

## **5.9 Evaluation and Control**

After the communication tactics have been implemented, they ought to check. The most vital measurement is to figure out just how the objectives are achieved. Companies evaluate and review their activities' performance. It is necessary to review the overall effect and result of a project on the target audience as a part of the interactions procedure. The results might be of terrific support to the management to find out and much better recognise the effects of its interactions.

Through the procedure of evaluation and analysis, a company has the opportunity to learn and create. The evaluation results can be used for the following plan and enable the company to supply higher consumer contentment degrees.

It is essential to keep in mind that the marketing communications project must be examined versus collecting set goals. Benefits in evaluating the advertising and marketing interactions project are defined as adheres to:

1. Enhanced decision-making based upon the best-offered info that can afford.
2. Danger decrease based on obtaining a much better understanding of the market and the intended campaign.
3. Boosted campaign based upon examining as numerous elements as feasible of the advertising communications plan.
4. Price savings based on improvements in efficiency and also efficiency.
5. Collected wisdom based upon the concept that was discovering one project might be of excellent aid with an additional.

Based on the evolution result, marketing experts control the planned activities. Clear marketing communication objectives are used as a standard to measure advertising and marketing communication performance and control the intended campaigns. Marketing professionals can contrast tasks based upon their objective, either online or offline. Surveys were carried out to measure brand recognition, customer engagement, and sales rise, determined by sales evaluation, number of feedback, and surveys. Return on investment and expense per consumer is determined to evaluate the productivity of the advertising interaction campaign. It could not expect that all facets of any campaign can evaluate as well as determined. Money, time and even political problems inside the firm can be a restraint of the examination process. Additionally, none of the examination procedures that are currently readily available can consider the best procedures. (Smith 2011, 240, Pickton & Broderick 2001, 365-66 - Bingham et al 2005, 319-20, Fill 2005, Baines et al. 2008, 524)

### 5.10 Feedback

Feedback is the final step of the marketing communication plan. The audience or customers response received against the message delivered throughout the campaign is called feedback. Feedback is essential for a successful promotional campaign. Feedback also refers to the reaction of message receivers.

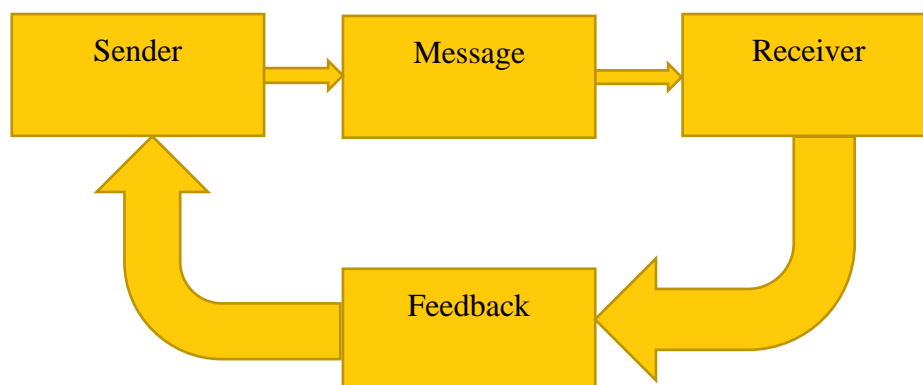


Figure 6: Marketing Communication feedback (PR Smith 1999, 27)

Feedback indicates the success or failure of a communication campaign. Audiences can decode the campaign's message incorrectly, which affects the outcome of the campaign. Feedback ensures the two-way flow of communication from sender to receiver and receiver to sender. Feedback works as a bug finder in the communication plan and ensures the marketer that the audience receives the message. A suitable feedback system has to develop to stop wasting resources on a failed campaign.

Feedback system provides the following benefits to the marketers and company:

- Audiences receive the chance to ask more about the message
- Messages are modified to avoid miscommunication.
- Feedback creates a two-way communication opportunity between marketers and the audience.
- Identify the level of understanding of the audience regarding the message.
- Feedback guarantees an uninterrupted marketing communication process.

Collecting feedback through personal selling and direct marketing is much easier than any other form of communication. The salesperson or marketer directly connects with the audience, transmits the message, and instantly receives feedback. On the other hand, collecting feedback through mass media is tricky. There is a higher possibility to have noise in the message and misunderstand it. (Pr Smith 1999, 26-27; Fill 2005, 41; L Smit 2007,6)

## **6 Case Ebazzar.FI: Effective marketing communication Planning**

Marketing communication is planned Synergy Scandic Oy to launch their new e-commerce service ebazzar.fi in Pietarsaari and Kokkola. The company have their existing physical store in Pietarsaari. This plan is not precise. The marketing communication planning framework introduced before is used to form the plan.

### **6.1 Context Analysis**

Based on previous theory, context analysis is divided into four parts; Customer context, business context, internal context and external context. Customer context includes customer segmentation; the business context includes competitor analysis; internal context organisation analysis and external context include Social, political, economic and technological restraints and opportunities.

#### Organisation analysis

Synergy Scandic Oy is the parental company of E-bazaar outlet and ebazaar.fi. E-bazaar is the main selling point of Synergy Scandic Oy. E-bazaar is an ethnic grocery store. They start their journey in 2014 as a limited liability company and start their operation in Helsinki and Pietarsaari, but they are currently operating in Pietarsaari only.

#### Product analysis

E-Bazaar offers a variety of products from Africa, Asia and the Mideast. They also sell products from Europe. E-bazaar sells a wide variety of frozen and fresh products. Most of them are not available in local marketplaces. E-Bazaar sales frozen meat, sweet water fish, fresh Asian and African vegetables, spices, drinks, kitchen accessories, health products, rice, snacks, icecream, as well as lots of products from outside of Europe and also European products from Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey, Sweden and Netherland. E-Bazaar also sells products from North American and South American countries. Most of the customers of E-Bazaar are immigrants who live in Pietarsaari, Oravice, Kronoby and Kokkola.

#### Financial analysis

Publicly available financial information of E-Bazaar shows the increase in turnover. The company made a turnover of Euro 86000 in 2016, Euro 118000 in 2017, Euro 116000 in 2018, Euro 193000 in 2019 and Euro 342000 in 2020. Annual turnover slightly declined in 2018, but past four years, from 2017 to 2020, E-Bazaar increases the annual turnover by almost four times. ( Finder 2021)

#### Marketing and strategy analysis

E-Bazaar is financially healthy. They grew during the worst year 2020 also. Most of the small companies shut down during this pandemic. E-Bazaar not only survived but also increased its sales during the pandemic. The core element of E-Bazaar's strategy is continuous development in strategy, development of the product, loyal customer, dependable worker, good customer service and local strong ethnic brand.

#### Competitor analysis

Competition in this kind of business is high in Finland as the entry barrier is low. It is an easy process to start a new business online in Finland by paying only 65 euros. E-Bazaar.fi has an advantage that most competitors run their business in big cities like Helsinki, Turku and Tampere. E-Bazaar still has strong competitors in the Ostrobothnia. The following figure of strategic group analysis will help to understand current competition:

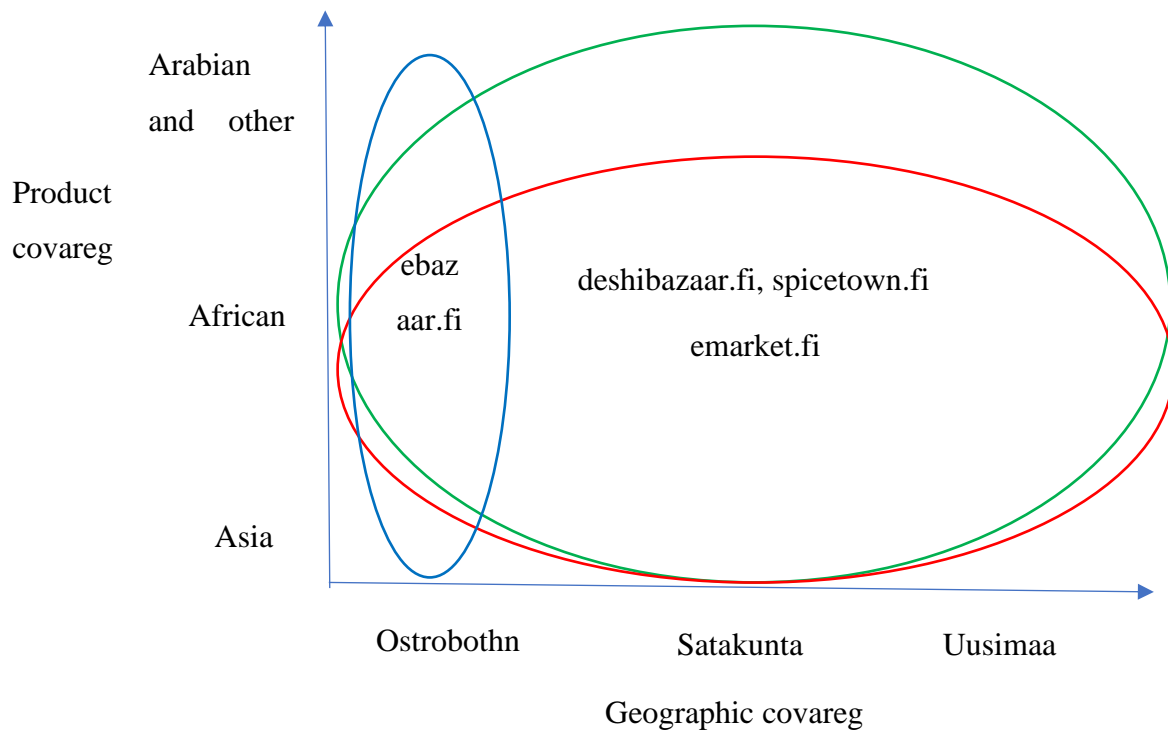


Figure 7: Strategic Group Analysis ( Adapted and modified from Macintosh, R. and MacLean, D. 2014)

Emarket.fi operates its operation from vaasa. Emarket sells products all over Finland and delivers by post office and matkahulto. Market.fi is the subsidiary of MST Solutions. It is running its operations in Vaasa since 2014. They primarily sell Asian and African grocery products, including fresh and frozen products.

Deshibazaar.fi operates from Helsinki. They sell Asian products, and most of their products are from Bangladesh, India and Pakistan. They delivered their products to the customer via United Parcel Service. They also deliver products all over Finland.



Spicetown.fi is the online shopping window of Spicetown Oy. They sell Asian and African products. They deliver products in Finland and Baltic countries. In the year 2019, they had a 3.6 million euro turnover.

#### Customer Segment analysis

E-Bazaar is making most of the transactions with immigrants. They will sell the same products on an e-commerce platform. The customer market of E-Bazaar is segmented by demographic and geographic segmentation. This marketing communication plan is mainly directed to the current and potential immigrant customers in Ostrobothnia, Central Ostrobothnia and South Ostrobothnia. In the Ostrobothnia, Central Ostrobothnia and South Ostrobothnia population of foreigners are 19,047 according to the year 2019. (kotouttaminen.fi)

#### **6.2 Marketing Communication Objectives**

This marketing communication plan is dedicated to launching ebazaar.fi and redirects customers to this e-commerce platform. The main objectives of marketing communication for ebazaar.fi are:

- Introduce existing customers with ebazaar.fi
- Give required information to the customers
- Expand geographic market
- Increase new customers from long distance
- Increase revenue by selling products online

#### **6.3 Marketing Communication Strategy**

Pull strategy is the most suitable strategy for this business. Pull strategy transmit the information through the advertisement, and the goal of pull strategy is to influence the customers to buy the product. Using different electronic media

ebazaar.fi will do advertising, and it is more appropriate to use electronic media to advertise an e-commerce site.

Communications mix: Advertising, Sales Promotion and Social Media

Advertising is the best tool to introduce new products and brands.

Advertisements convey the message to the customers. Ebazaar.fi will also use this tool to introduce them to the customers. The message is not decided yet, and also the message will be developed by the company.

Sales promotion is to attract customers to make the purchase. In the existing market with existing competitors, sales promotion is an excellent tool to bring customers to the ebazaar.fi. Customers want a good product in less price.

Ebazaar.fi can create new customers and attract existing customers from the competitor. It is hard to create sales promotions without the knowledge of products purchased price, so ebazaar.fi will allocate the sale promotion.

Social media can be used as a media channel to transmit the advertisement to the customers. As target customers of ebazaar.fi will buy the products from the e-commerce platform, so they use the internet and might use different social media like Facebook and Instagram. Most of the existing customers of Ebazaar outlet use social media. They follow the Facebook page and Instagram profile of Ebazaar Outlet for the latest information. ebazaar.fi can use paid advertising option on Facebook and Instagram for advertisement.

#### **6.4 Scheduling and resources**

The detailed schedule can not be defined in this study, but briefly, the company decided to start the operation of ebazaar.fi in late January 2022. They already started to develop an e-commerce site. The author proposed schedule for a year of the implementation of marketing communication tools is shown in the Gantt chart (Table 4).

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Website	×											
Advertising	×	×		×		×		×		×		×
Sale Promotions	×	×		×		×						×
Social Media	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
Word of Mouth	×											
Direct marketing	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×

Table 4: Gantt chart with tactical timings of different marketing communication tools for e-bazaar.fi

Advertisement, Sale promotion, social media advertisement and influencing, influencing by word of mouth and direct marketing will be started by the launching of the e-commerce site. Direct marketing and influencing the consumer by social media will continue as a process all around the year. The company can put advertisement and sale promotions on several occasions to remind, reinforce and bring the customers to the e-commerce platform again.

The company have experienced employees to execute the plan. Budget and financial resources are not disclosed in the study. Financial decisions are left for the company.

### 6.5 Evaluation and control

Companies have to plan the evaluation and control phase carefully. The company can evaluate the communication plan by using financial data and feedback. The company will make changes if need. The primary company can track the

communication objectives to accomplish to evaluate the marketing communication plan. The company can set their evaluation and controlling method after they make a final marketing communication plan.

## **7 CONCLUSION**

The main purpose of the study was to describe the strategy used to create an effective marketing communication plan in detail that other students, researchers, and entrepreneurs can use. However, marketing communication is an integral part of marketing.

Marketing communication is the only way to interact with the customers and target audience. Marketing communication is an integral part of marketing. Every company, small or big, use marketing communication just the plan are different according to the target audience. Marketing communication contains many stages in its planning process. The marketing communication planning framework used in this study is the widely used and practical framework.

After getting to know the case company is going to expand the business in e-commerce platform author decided to demonstrate the plan by developing the marketing communication plan for the company.

It is not possible to create a marketing communication plan with limited information. The company provide limited information because of privacy. Nevertheless, this information is enough to create and demonstrate the reader's marketing communication plan as per the author's intention.

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