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Integrated Marketing Communications and the Role of Public Relations

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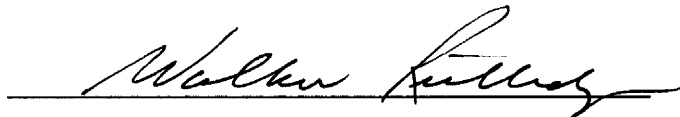
*Integrated Marketing Communications
and
The Role of Public Relations
A Senior Honors Thesis*

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approved by



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Abstract

Integrated Marketing Communications is new and exciting. It's what's happening with communications today. However, as some define IMC in current literature, it cannot be a substitute for public relations, advertising, and marketing. Other definitions, though, seem to be more inclusive of all three functions. IMC combines a number of communication methods, but it is often flawed in scope. Experts' definitions differ, and IMC won't succeed to its fullest potential until there is more agreement among communicators.

IMC is a whole new way of thinking, and may be more appropriately called *Integrated Communications*. It is a conglomeration of communication techniques and involves a receiver focus rather than a product focus. Organizations like Saturn, Hallmark, and Southwest Airlines provide examples of the possible success when using Integrated Marketing Communications.

IMC is already integrated into the industry, although its spread depends upon practitioners who understand the value of integrating responsibilities and eliminating professional boundaries.

Integrated Marketing Communications and The Role of Public Relations

With Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC), a central message is conveyed to every person in the target market at least once a day.

If our target market doesn't hear us on the radio in the morning, it will see our posters on the subways, busses, or billboards on the way to work. If not there, in some newspaper article over coffee. If we miss it then, through a mailing received at the office. If not during the work hours, then on a television interview or a TV ad at night. Or the market may hear our message during a community meeting, church service, or local event.

Naturally, we can't expect everyone in our target market to pick up the message in a day, but we try to provide as much varied exposure as possible -- everyone in our target market should hear that message in the first few days of a campaign.

As the campaign goes on, and people hear the message over and over, their understanding of it deepens. Good marketing communications provides layers of message -- the more a person thinks about a marketing piece, the more they should get out of it. And there are no exceptions to the rule (What Is Integrated Marketing? 3).

As one spokesperson said, IMC is a "new way of looking at the whole, where once we only saw parts such as advertising, public relations, sales promotion, purchasing, employee communications, and so forth. It's realigning communications to look at it the way the customer sees it - as a flow of information from indistinguishable sources" (Schultz xvii).

However, as some define IMC in current literature, it cannot be a substitute for public relations, advertising, and marketing. Other definitions, though, seem to be more inclusive of all functions. IMC is a conglomeration of communication methods, but is often flawed in scope. Experts' definitions differ, and IMC won't succeed to its fullest potential until there is more agreement among communicators.

Public relations, in particular, is much more than its limited role in IMC. As defined by Wilcox, Ault, and Agee, "public relations is the management of an organization's relationships with its various publics" (3). It is the "management function that identifies, establishes, and maintains mutually beneficial relationships...on whom success or failure depends" (Wilcox 5). While the "effective use of public relations tools in an integrated marketing program should not be underestimated, the specialty function of 'marketing communications' is not limited to public relations" (Wilcox 16). The major difference between the two is the outcome each seeks to achieve. IMC is ultimately concerned with sales and customers while the "mission of public relations is to build trust...and acceptance" (Wilcox 16) with all of its publics.

According to Schultz, "For IMC to really take hold, old assumptions must exit, assumptions about the role of advertising and sales promotion, about the organization of advertising and public relations departments, about agencies and what they do, about the media, and most of all, about accountability" (13). Integration is a whole new way of thinking, a sloughing off of the old. Much tearing down will have to happen with the 'new' integration because most businesses are still in their functional boxes "of convenience" (14).

IMC will "...define the audience as precisely as possible and, based on that definition, it will use every appropriate tool to convey a single message to that audience or market" ("What Is Integrated Marketing?" 2).

IMC Basics

A dramatic departure from traditional marketing is how IMC is described in "What is Integrated Marketing?" It says that integrated marketing is instinctive human communication. "Humans communicate specifically: we are conscious of whom we're talking to and how to best get our point across to that specific person. We use gestures, illustrative objects and references to enhance our explanation and make it more precise" (1). The IMC model begins with a look at the market. Research is done on the market's demographics and psychographics, and then a plan or strategy is created to reach the target market. The strategy answers the following questions: Who exactly are we trying to reach? What is our message? Where can we best reach those people? What is the best phrasing to use for our message? What tools should we use? ("What Is Integrated Marketing?" 4) The 'tools' are the pieces of communication that have been integrated, for example, advertising, media relations, marketing materials, publications, the net, and the web including web publishing.

The secret to great advertising is, according to the article, precise placement of the ads and minimization of costs. Additionally, working with the media "means matching our needs with its needs" (6). The traditional press releases are still used, but technology allows more sophisticated communication with the press. For example, fax/modem systems automatically deliver newsletters and press releases to reporters in many states. Publications are a

information in great depth while projecting an image consistent with the organization. The last tool according to the article is the most recent and the most automatic: the net and the web. This tool is developing daily, and it is not yet known where it'll end. A whole other world of communications opportunity is opened with the net.

In Carole M. Howard's "Five Principles of Integrated Marketing," she lists and describes the fundamentals of an integrated marketing program. Her experience is in the magazine industry and applies to any integrated marketing situation. Her first principle states, "When any good idea is brainstormed and adopted for *one* of your target audiences -- say, for example, advertisers -- we need to immediately think of how it also can be used to reach *other* priority audiences of the product or the company" (35). It is important to use resources as efficiently as possible. If a speaker comes for a certain meeting with a group of people, then why not ask that speaker to stay an extra hour or two to speak to another group? Therefore, a company can pay one speaker for two events, thus killing two birds with one stone.

"Think broadly when you're brainstorming media" (35) is Howard's second principle. There are the obvious, most often used, forms of media, like ads and news releases, but she encourages integrated marketers to think creatively. Executive interviews, reprints, special mailings, and TV appearances should also be considered. "Whatever gets your message to opinion leaders and potential customers and advertisers in the most cost-efficient way" (35) is what should be used. One should not get caught in the rut of doing the same old things.

whenever you create materials for one audience, consider their value for others as well" (35) is the third principle. Although this cost-effective hint seems obvious, Howard maintains that it is often overlooked. An example of this is to print the CEO's most current talk to an industry association in a booklet for selected clients. Or, if a new product wins an award, one should make copies of the award or article about the award for sales people to use when going on sales calls. This is a way of maximizing every hour and every dollar. Howard asserts that there are low-cost ways to "turn the volume up....Like a waterfall, the results of your efforts cascade down, spilling into other areas and providing side benefits to your company" (36).

The fourth principle, "the basic messages about your product or service should be consistent across all target audiences" (36), is the main idea of integration: one message, many audiences. A priority message and the key selling points should be decided on for each product and executed in all integrated marketing efforts. Howard suggests that a simple message is the best way to break through the clutter of competing messages.

The last principle is "to facilitate the sharing and exchange of information across functions that are essential to integrated marketing; your marketing and PR plans should be a regular item on editorial and business meeting agendas" (36). To illustrate this point and the broad picture of integration, Howard tells the following: "There's an old story about two brick layers. When asked what they were doing, one said, 'I'm laying bricks.' The other one had a broader view. He said, 'I'm building a cathedral.'" That's what integrated marketing is all about -- giving you the tools to "build a cathedral" (36).

terms used to describe integrated marketing communications in Thomas Duncan's "Client Perceptions of Integrated Marketing Communications." He reviews the definition of IMC as a concept and as a process and reports on the findings of a recent study done on attitudes toward and usage of IMC. The degree of integration within each dimension can greatly vary. Likewise, the definition of IMC can also vary between organizations and even between departments. Of the people surveyed in Duncan's study, 67 percent agreed on the American Association of Advertising Agencies' definition. It defines IMC as

...a concept of marketing communications planning that recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of a variety of communications disciplines, e.g., general advertising, direct response, sales promotion and public relations--and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency and maximum communications impact. (31)

"The theory of an IMC program," according to Thomas, "is that it has one basic communications strategy for each major target audience. This one strategy is then used as the basis for executing each communications function (advertising, PR, sales promotion, etc.) throughout a variety of communication channels" (31).

There are great pressures today to integrate communications. Some of these include agency mergers and acquisitions, the increasing sophistication of clients and retailers, global competition, the decreasing effectiveness of traditional media, and loss of credibility. So many things are changing with the communication environment that we need a new way to adapt to those changes. And because of the changing environment, "IMC is one of the easiest ways an organization can maximize its return on investment" (30). Some people think that integration is not a new concept. They argue that the separate departments have always

known what is going on with the others and have worked together to communicate a consistent message. Although integration may not be a totally new idea, there are some new changes taking place. It is now often part of the *strategic* plan to integrate communications departments into one. Some organizations still have separate departments but have a common executive to coordinate efforts. (31)

The basic concept of IMC is synergism, "meaning the individual efforts are mutually reinforcing," (32) and the result is much greater than the sum of each of the individual efforts. Sometimes even the individual efforts or messages are counterproductive. One message may contradict or take attention away from another. Thus, the value of both messages is decreased. Timing is essential in these coordinated situations. Another essential in IMC is getting the functional areas "strategically focused and organized to work together" (32). Talking about it is one thing, but putting it in place and producing great results is another. Lately, the idea has been discussed, but most clients still haven't been "convinced to place all their communications business under one agency's communication umbrella" (32). And right now, maybe they shouldn't. Clients should hold off until the agencies are willing to work under one umbrella.

Many IMC articles focus on the struggle over who will have domain. Each agency or functional unit "wants to retain [its] authority, budget, and turf" (32). Therefore, cooperation is greatly needed before integration can be successful. The results from the study show that overall, IMC is perceived as valuable and that client awareness of the concept is growing. IMC is already integrated into the industry although its spread depends on a consistent understanding and on the open acceptance of practitioners, especially with integration of

Benefits of IMC

"With some degree of proficiency, he or she [the corporate communications manager] must be able to create a home page and refine it virtually day-to-day, write an ad, design a brochure, place a story, write a speech, coordinate a conference or seminar, and plan and run a sales meeting. At the very least, he or she should understand the mechanisms of each of these disciplines" (1). In Michael Lissauer's "Integrated Marketing: A Must For The '90s," these are the qualities he thinks are necessary for complete integration, the same qualities necessary for public relations practitioners. He insists that one communication tool is not better than the next, one delivery system not superior to another. The difference is the manager's role. It is his or her responsibility to adopt the best from each function and "develop a well-balanced corporate communications package" (1).

In IMC, Lissauer maintains, "there is no room for error, no patience for miscommunication, no time for confusion" (1). An integrated campaign has to convey one message; for example, an advertising campaign cannot convey one message while the media report the opposite. This would cause lots of confusion in the marketplace. But, of course, corporations can make various points and explore many issues. He argues, "They can and they must, but these messages must be consistent; a common thread must tie them together. The corporation cannot send mixed signals" (1).

In today's business world, it is very important, according to Lissauer, that the manager be a "synthesizer" (1), not a delegator. He or she cannot hire separate firms and agencies to do the work unless there is an efficient communications coordinator to assure all messages are

consistent. The efficient manager must have diverse skills and synthesize an communication

"Public relations has much to contribute -- much of IMC is, in fact, based on public relations theories and practices -- but it also has much to gain from the evolving IMC thinking in terms of ways to expand its sphere of influence and develop more effective strategic planning, as well as more efficient execution of those plans" (44) according to "PR and IMC: The Benefits of Integration" by Sandra E. Moriarty. This article discusses what PR and IMC can learn from and contribute to each other. Moriarty feels that the debate that has been going on over the past five years about who should lead and who follows is counterproductive.

Different from previous observers, Moriarty describes the audiences as "stakeholders" (a term which includes more than consumers). The author states that the IMC message typology ("a model of the different types of messages communicated by an organization" (38)) should account for all types of messages sent by an organization at every point where a stakeholder comes in contact with the company. This is a result of public relations' contribution to IMC. It includes deliberate messages such as advertising, public relations, and sales promotion and those that just happen, for example, investigative reports, announcements by consumer advocate groups, product recalls, and disasters. Many of the unplanned contact points have more impact, yet are often overlooked.

Every type of IMC sends a message. Other types of messages that the article mentions as important are inferred messages and maintenance messages. Inferred messages "are the ones sent through the impressions the company or brand makes on people" (38). For example, the shareholders' experience with management along with the perception of that

receptionists and secretaries are maintenance messages. They "are communicated primarily through service -- how a company and its employees initiate and respond to customer contact" (39). So, with all of these types of messages, someone with a responsibility for monitoring all communication is needed.

As discussed earlier, Moriarty talks about the importance of synergy--strength in numbers. She asserts that "synergy means that various messages, if they are coordinated and consistent, add up to communication with more impact than any of the individual messages can create by themselves" (40). A consistent message is important for synergy. For example, the Coca-Cola 'Always' campaign provides a great example of a consistent voice. It is communication in which messages are targeted for different audiences but are held together by common threads. Different images and styles are used "...that appeal both to the MTV crowd, to their boomer parents and yuppie older siblings, as well as to their grandparents. With all that variety, all messages also contain the slogan 'Always Coca-Cola,' as well as...the red circle, the script, the bottle, and the distinctive jingle" (40). All of the communication components that Coca-Cola uses are saying the same thing, just in different ways. (40)

Interactivity is also important in portraying a common message. It is similar to dialogue and to building a relationship. For example, Saturn, in Spring Hill, Tennessee, has focused on interactivity and relationship-building among its stakeholders. They "...realized the need for a new form of stakeholder communication in the automotive industry" (41). Saturn buyers as well as employees, vendors, and neighbors who live in Spring Hill believe that they are a part of a family. "Drivers wave to one another on the highways and owners

'homecoming' was held in the Spring of 1994, with owners invited to bring their cars back to Spring Hill. Over 40,00 people attended. Also, databases and new media technologies are making it possible to create two-way communication relationships. Saturn's IMC program, which has won several PRSA Silver Anvil awards, is a model of sensitive communication that leads to relationship building.

Mission marketing is the last component of synergistic communication. A mission statement today can be much more than it used to be. It's not just a few fuzzy words that are framed on the wall of an organization, but it can truly be what the organization stands for. Moriarty affirms that "the idea is that the company stands for something far beyond its product and its financial success and that notion is embedded in all its communication" (41). The company markets what it stands for instead of its products. A mission statement creates more respect among stakeholders (employees, customers, shareholders) and this, in turn, encourages financial success. A mission statement starts with the owner, but a "carefully defined mission can transcend the owner and drive the corporate culture on the basis of its own power" (41). For example, Hallmark still has its quality focus and image even though it has grown far beyond a personal identification with the Hall family. Card purchasers and recipients are conditioned to look at the backs of cards to see if they are Hallmark cards. Furthermore, this company has used mass media advertising sparingly. They rely more on effective public relations and special events such as the Hallmark Hall of Fame.

An important point that the article raises that almost all others have overlooked is publics. Moriarty points out that "IMC planning also acknowledges a principle that public

target or stakeholder audience with whom it most communicate -- not just consumers -- and these audiences have different message needs" (42). To have a successful integrated marketing program, one must involve various publics. This may or may not actually happen with current integration, if one judges from the few times it is even mentioned in the literature of this study.

As IMC is forming, Moriarty contends, it is important to include the subtopics of public relations, such as public affairs and corporate, financial, media, and employee relations as well as marketing public relations. Even though the functions of PR, advertising, and marketing are merging, the small, yet still vital, subfunctions must not be overlooked. Furthermore, integration can't happen without two primary things: ending the turf war and developing cross-discipline management. Instead of battling about what function will manage the rest, people should look at management requirements. A generalist, someone without one specific specialty, is needed to control the separate functions and to bring them together. "In managing an integrated communication program, however, leadership is more important than expertise or specialist skills" (44).

Moriarty concludes, "For IMC...it is important to turn to public relations for a more global understanding of how impressions are created....The full breadth of public relations...is needed in integrated marketing communication programs. Public relations has much to contribute -- much of IMC is, in fact, based on public relation theories and practices" (44).

Southwest Airlines Co. is one example of a company that has successfully employed IMC. It used integrated techniques to introduce its low-fare, high-frequency service to the

in the U.S., and cooperation among the functions was one reason for Southwest's success. In Jennifer Lawrence's "Integrated mix makes expansion fly," she says part of the success stemmed "from the advertising people's understanding of PR....The ad people allow[ed] PR to set the stage and then the advertising kick[ed] in" (S-12). This kind of team effort helped Southwest maximize its resources.

Starting out, Southwest knew that the whole corporate philosophy had to be focused on East Coast travelers who weren't aware of its "low-fare, no-frills, high-frequency service" (S-10). The East Coast was a new market, and with their low-cost philosophy, Southwest required a small budget instead of a major advertising campaign. The research phase began about two months before the campaign was launched. Using IMC, the budget barrier was easier to overcome. Southwest then had to create awareness about the airline and its merits. They first began with public relations and then "integrated government relations, community affairs, service announcements, special events and advertising and promotion....By the time Southwest [came] into the market, the airline already [was] a part of the community" (S-10).

According to their director of marketing, Dave Ridley, they "try to fire all guns at once" (S-10). Southwest adopted a "Just Plane Smart" (S-10) theme and used it to publicize their airline at a news conference, to send a special promotion mailing to frequent travelers, and to link its efforts to a baseball theme and to a day at the zoo for elementary school students. Southwest relied on IMC and it worked; they set a company record for bookings--with 90,000 passengers purchasing tickets before the

to go. Because of the restrictions placed on hard liquor companies over the past years, they've had to find creative ways to market their companies and products, according to an article in O'Dwyer's PR Services Report, "Spirits marketers locked out of media rely on IMC to get buzz." Roy Bumstead, head of Dunwoodie Communications, notes that "PR people handling alcohol beverages have long used special events, cause-related marketing, sponsorships and other promotional activities....When these elements are successfully integrated they make strong impressions on consumers that...enhance that importance of PR in the marketing mix" (18).

Bumstead's secret recipe for a winning integrated campaign relies on a strong creative concept with appropriate executions for playing up a brand's characteristics. He thinks that not one agency should be responsible for bringing together all the functions of an integrated campaign. Instead, the PR pros should carefully choose, as Lissauer also said, which outside firms are hired to "drive the creative effort" (18). Together these agencies should be able to reach the most frequently sought target audience: 21-30-year-olds. This group is rarely at home and, therefore, beyond the reach or influence of traditional media. To reach this audience, Bumstead is planning a beach party for 200 consumers at a beach north of the Arctic Circle where the featured beverages will be served and alternative rock bands will entertain the guests. This campaign will also include "advertising to drive sales promotion effort in bars, restaurants and liquor stores, cause-related marketing tie-ins, and merchandising a line of clothing and commemorative CDs" (18). Bumstead adds, "Add an expert in the featured [topic] to serve as commentator. Invite the media to cover the event. Tie in with a

mail these people a newsletter filled with branded offers. Put all those elements together and suddenly you're in the IMC business" (18).

Not only can audiences be reached nation-wide, but IMC is now a global concept according to Don Schultz's article on Integrated Marketing. "IMC has become a global concept" reports on the results of a survey given to "...major national advertisers to learn how they saw the new discipline of IMC, what changes they expected, and how and under what conditions the concept could or might be implemented in their organizations" (6). The latest results come from India. The response rate in India was even as high as in the United States. And this means one thing: IMC truly has become a global concept. Although Indian marketers may not use the term, they are familiar with the IMC concept. Schultz explains, "Its acceptance is growing in all markets and among all marketers and advertisers....Marketing organizations and marketing managers around the world are becoming more and more alike" (6). To U.S. marketers this says they need to think beyond their own borders. Opportunities exist to integrate communications across nations, and the succeeders will take advantage of this. "Only those which offer the range of advertising, direct marketing, PR, and sales promotion may be considered 'full-service agencies'" (6).

In India, "...95% of those surveyed believe top management will fully support an integrated approach" (6). Additionally, they think marketers will be responsible for coordinating the integrated activities of various specialty groups. They are hesitant to rely on one agency, as Lissauer suggests, to integrate their programs. The study found that "...while there are major advantages to dealing with one agency for IMC programs, most Indian

multiple agencies are used" (6). Indian marketers plan to consolidate responsibilities and expand communications budgets because of integration. They are hopeful that this will reduce the cost of their brand marketing and increase their effectiveness.

Struggle Over Who Has Domain

Adrienne Ward Fawcett's "Marketers convinced: Its time has arrived" suggests that both ad agencies and marketers take responsibility for the integration function in IMC. In trying to define their roles, both are struggling to lead while they should be willing to team up with other agencies to provide true IMC services. Some see ad agencies as "architects" (S-1) of integrated programs, while others see them merely as teammates or specialists. In this article, IMC is defined as having no more specialization of roles. It offers lots and has one profit base instead of separate bases for the separate functions.

In a survey given by *Advertising Age* to advertisers and agency executives, it was found that both groups see IMC as important now and becoming increasingly important in the next five years. However, "nearly every question was met with contradictory responses from [ad] agencies and marketers, indicating agencies aren't grasping the reality of what advertisers want. And that spells trouble" (S-1). While agencies are now claiming to be able to provide integrated services, marketers are finding it hard to believe that any one agency can be specialists on everything.

The issue here is control. And everyone wants it. But according to Michael Krauss of OmniTech Consulting Group, conductors of the survey, the agencies that will lead in the 90's will be the ones which are flexible and nimble in their efforts to integrate. To serve the

need to team together on certain projects. However, as it stands now, "two-thirds of agency respondents said their shops were well structured to handle the various elements an integrated campaign requires. But less than half of marketers, and 39% of large marketers, agree" (S-2).

The industry is mixed, according to the survey, on how and if integration will change the way agencies do business. Most respondents "say that integrated marketing will be a major source of their competitive advantage in the future. But what exactly the agency's role will be has yet to be defined" (S-2). Sometimes different agencies are assigned to perform certain functions and are told how that function fits into the big picture. But when it comes down to doing the job, the agencies are limited to only caring about their own contribution and their bottom line. What integration is trying to do is evaluate an account "on total contribution to bottom line rather than each function being its own profit center. That means you don't care how you solve it--but what's the best way to solve it" (S-2). Krauss summarizes by saying that there is plenty of opportunity for agencies. He asserts that clients don't want agencies to just be specialists, but to be involved with integration. They just haven't decided how much.

If a person wants to see how IMC is done, she should just look at the retail industry. According to Jim Rowe's "Integrated marketing tips? Study retail trade," IMC is the "added value offer....[It is] advertising and promotional offers" (32) and every successful retailer has been doing it every day of their lives. Rowe believes that brand managers should study the behavior of retailers "because retailers are the kings of integrated marketing and advertising to bring bodies into their stores. A retailer...checks the cash register to see if his program worked

or not" (32).

It is not a matter of budget or costs of integrating because all brand managers should be spending their money only on integrated programs that generate awareness and image while also giving the trade and consumers a reason to buy. Rowe maintains that people are still advertising product benefit or image without promotion added because they don't see the benefit to their store or organization. But, he says that "everybody does that and the trade support still goes to the highest bidder" (32). Using an integrated program just gives consumers another reason to buy one's product or service. But will it always work? Of course not. The plan has to be right from the start to be successful. It can work wonders and at least will do better than straight product/image ads. And "both long-term brand franchise building and short-term volume are equally well served" (32).

Clients

"Consumers integrate your messages whether you like it or not....The messages cannot be kept separate" (52). This is the view in Scott Hume's "Integrated marketing: Who's in charge here?" Yes, integration is important, he says, but control is not. No matter who controls it, the receivers of the message will integrate it anyway.

In this article, as in the previous ones, integration remains the "consensus winner as the most important factor influencing how strategies will be set in the next three to five years" (3). Marketing leaders across the country rate IMC as more important than the traditional functions. And it is important to them what they can make happen. IMC is at the top of the list. The Executive Director of the Promotional Marketing Association on America reasons that "who controls implementation of integrated marketing is less important than that

it be done" (52). Early Light, president of Arcature Corp., a marketing consultancy, states that integration is the only choice for the future; debates over who will control the integration and over which function is the most useful one is silly. He thinks one needs them all to make money and to build long-term loyalty. Light says, "Daily deals, continuous short-term price promotions, signal to the consumer that brands are neither fairly priced nor worth the original price....That is mismarketing, not trust marketing" (52).

Integrated marketing should be initiated by the client because it includes more forms of communication than advertising alone. Agencies can coordinate the effort, but clients should lead a multi-faceted approach to marketing according to "Integrated marketing: a client task..." by Gary Moss. Writing from an advertising perspective, Moss says that even though some, but not all, agencies have come around to offering integrated services, the clients have to run the show. They (clients) have to "coach the team in this game with all new rules" (19), and Moss lists several reasons why:

1. Definition. With the new age of integration comes new meanings for terms. When clients speak of wanting communications, they could mean anything. So, if the clients lead in integration of marketing communications, meanings are less likely to be misinterpreted between the clients and the agencies.
2. Profit Margin. Moss states that IMC is a "financial disincentive" (19) for agencies which rely on media commissions for revenue. "As mass communications splits into smaller, more targeted pieces, agencies are finding they are not as proficient in buying small media....Therefore, there's the natural tendency to overlook smaller, more targeted media as a

3. Consumer knowledge. Clients used to rely on agencies to provide all needed consumer information. Now, clients have their own consumer databases, which provide extensive demographic and psychographic information. Clients are now able to understand and know their customers and can feel more confident in determining how and where to best talk to them.

4. Respect/expertise. Those working in advertising agencies sometimes see others in different communication fields and the tools they use as second-class. So, if those in the communications field don't respect each other, then how can clients respect what the agencies recommend and prepare?

5. What's in it for me? Moss claims that there is no financial incentive for the client company to put all of its eggs in one basket. Agencies usually try to convince clients to hire them for all communications needs, but Moss insists that clients are capable of integrating communications themselves.

6. Short-term vs. Long-term. Agencies try to argue that because integrated marketing communications is a long-term process, the agencies should be in charge of overseeing it. They allege that clients have a natural short-term outlook and wouldn't do the best job in integration. Moss asserts that what the agencies don't understand is that it's not an either/or proposition; "There is no long-term if you can't win in the short-term. And what is the point of the short-term if you don't have a long-term proprietary brand position?" (19).

Agencies that don't see what true integrated marketing communications is may find their clients taking more and more control. And not by choice, but by default. Observes

mass, "True integrated communications is bringing to bear all forms of media, coordinated and leveraged against the consumer [still limited to the consumer] to create a new, persuasive, larger whole (I call this TPP--Total Persuasion Process)" (19).

Public Relations

Public Relations is the most difficult function to involve in IMC, but it is necessary and surely can be done. E. W. Brody states that the debate over the dissolution of boundaries is a "counter-productive" (20) exercise. In his article "PR Is to Experience What Marketing Is to Expectations," he maintains that PR and publicity will always have a place in integrated communications. Even though the boundaries are changing or maybe even disappearing, PR practitioners should not be concerned with turf wars.

Rare indeed is the practitioner who can honestly claim never to have invaded the turf of another discipline. Public relations practitioners require no great urging to write and place an occasional advertisement. Advertising agencies almost invariably will prepare and distribute news releases. Integrated marketing communications is a long-standing reality deserving of special attention today only because it has been seized upon as a tool of internecine turf warfare. (22)

According to Brody, there are a few facts which integrated marketing communicators and PR practitioners need to consider. The changing role of mass media is one to be recognized no matter if one is referring to PR practitioners, marketers, or advertisers. Brody declares that no single medium rationally can be said to command mass attention in today's environment. Others are figuring out what PR has always known: the market is fragmented and will further fragment. There are progressively more media available, but fewer mass audiences. Therefore, specialized publications and channels have largely replaced mass appeal forms of communication. Now, narrower audiences are targeted.

Additionally, Brody talks about new electronic media that are emerging, for example, CompuServe, Prodigy, and America OnLine. Collectively they command an audience of five million. The time audiences devote to these media is growing at amazing rates and is taking time away from other traditional forms of media. Low tech and no tech media also distract from mass media. Videotaped and audiotaped messages joined with "point of purchase" devices in addition to discounts printed out by cash registers attract only certain types of audiences.

Perhaps one of the most important forms of communication that could render mass communication obsolete is personal, one-on-one communication. Brody points out that "Computer databases are used to track customers individually, monitor their purchasing patterns, and generate personalized messages for distribution by mail or fax" (21). These systems can keep organizations in close contact with customers, shareholders, or stakeholders. Moreover, interactive systems are helping organizations to develop and nourish lasting relationships with all audiences, for example, with the use of voice mail, fax-on-demand, and interoffice electronic mail. Consequently, those who continue to apply traditional mass communication techniques to change human behavior will be "applying not only the weakest of available tools but one that continues to decline in influence" (21).

Public relations practitioners must be concerned not with expectations as they have in the past, but with experiences. People's experiences create their attitudes and behaviors, and "experiences are shaped by the environments organizations create for customers" (21). Organizations must ask themselves: Do our personnel help or hinder our publics? Are return and service policies rational? Are clerks knowledgeable, friendly, and helpful? Is the

environment clean and neat or cluttered and dirty? Does the organization meet the promises made in the news release? If the organization creates a pleasing environment, people will have good experiences and, in turn, develop a positive relationship with the organization. These are the behaviors that determine whether public relations succeeds or fails, whether the organization succeeds or fails. (22)

In "Integrated Marketing: A Must For The '90s," Michael Lissauer affirms that no function is superior to another. He thinks that "How creative and innovative practitioners are in using public relations, advertising, direct marketing, collateral materials and the Internet will have repercussions in boardrooms across the nation" (1). With all of the changes taking place in the communications world, those who succeed will be the ones who can break through the clutter and not be concerned with which function is the leader. "There is no room of error, no patience for miscommunication, no time for confusion. A multi-disciplinary integrated marketing communications effort is fundamental" (1), Lissauer argues.

A consistent message is essential. An advertising campaign cannot convey one message while the media report the opposite. Each function serves a significant purpose in the overall communications package, and some do so in a more interactive manner than ever before. "Imagine the confusion in the marketplace" (1) if the corporate brochure or annual report told a different story than the direct marketing campaign or corporate-sponsored event. This is not to say that an organization cannot make several points or explore a variety of issues. "They can and they must" (1), states Lissauer. But there must be a consistent chord that runs through all the messages. Although the idea of sending a consistent message may seem obvious, mixed signals can be and are sent.

Even with all of the hype of integration, those still linger who are on the side of separation. According to Shandwick Chairman Peter Gummer, "Eight out of ten client companies like their PR services separate from advertising" (26). "Gummer: clients want to buy PR and advertising services separately" states that most want their advertising and PR functions managed in different parts of the client organizations. Advertising and PR are too different and should be used in different ways, the article asserts. "Advertising is essentially a very blunt instrument intruding in our lives. The more money you spend, the more likely it is that you are going to get a message across" (26). PR is different. It works more as a two-way communication and is not as dependant on money. PR is "...sensitive to local cultural differences," says the article. Moreover, PR is not global as the other functions are. It must not be done on a "cookie cutter basis" (26) with no individuality in each market. While it is transferable to many markets and cultures, PR practitioners must be aware of the many changes between cultures.

PR should also be apart from other functions because it is "...far more than marketing. It is also involved in finance, personnel, the company secretary's department, development of law, philanthropy, etc." (26). PR, like blood circulating through the body, is essential to every part of the organization. Gummer says that although some focus is being put on the global market, the U.S. is the key. "But half of the marketing directors of the same companies said they would reduce marketing budgets outside with U.S. over the next five years and a third said they would give no discretionary money to any marketing activity outside the U.S." (26).

Dr. Don Schultz, Professor of Advertising and IMC at Northwestern University, and his associates have pioneered the country's first graduate program in Integrated Marketing Communications. He is also president of his own marketing firm, Agora, Inc., located in Evanston, Illinois. He has consulted, lectured, and held seminars on marketing, marketing communications, advertising, sales promotion, direct marketing, and creative strategy in the United States, Europe, South America, and Asia. In an interview with Dr. Schultz, he said IMC is not a threat to PR because "the same traditional PR techniques are used but applied in different ways" (15 February 1996). In IMC a small number of people, integrated marketers, prepare and plan the overall strategies. Then the specialists in the functions work for them. Schultz believes IMC includes all facets of all communications functions including employee and community relations. "The Integrated Marketing Communicators plan and do the strategy, and then the specialists carry out the functions. It doesn't leave anything out....What we're doing [with IMC] is what we've always wanted to do with communications" (15 February 1996). We're taking concepts that have always been around and applying them in new ways. We are able to "capture large amounts of data by using the technology the way we've always wanted to" (15 February 1996).

When asked about which term, Integrated Marketing Communications or Integrated Communications, should be used, he said, "We need some new terminology to replace both of these...and to replace marketing, PR, advertising, and corporate communications" (15 February 1996). All of these have the same goals; just different tools are used to achieve the outcome. He remarked that neither IMC or IC are appropriate, but they help Chief Financial Officers

understand what is being done with communication. "Today, most organizations are controlled not by PR people, communication people, or marketing people, but by financial people. They want to know about how much return we get for our investment" (15 February 1996). CFOs want to present communicators with a certain amount of money and then ask what is going to be done with that money; they want to know the direct results. The problem, according to Schultz, is measurement: "We have to figure out how we measure or justify the entire communications package" (15 February 1996).

There will always be a need for specialized skills, argued Schultz. IMC isn't a threat to the different functions. And the integration function can work either way--clients should be responsible for integrating the function, and agencies should provide it. The organizational environment determines which choice is the best one. In the past, "people tended to go to the expertise first, whether the expertise was right or wrong. Step back and see the strategic communication problem and see what you need to solve it" (15 February 1996).

In a presentation given during a luncheon with advertising and public relations students, Schultz described IMC as being a closed-loop system. It involves aligning the entire organization internally and externally. He looks at IMC as a process, not functions; he categorizes things according to how they relate, not how they're different. This is way to build channel support: more channels and distribution centers are popping up.

To have a successful, closed-loop IMC system, the following steps must be included:

1. Behavioral database: An electronic, available database should be created over time. Information about publics' behavior/interaction with the organization and about people as individuals is included.

2. Integrated Marketing Process: Customers are segmented and identified according to importance and value; all customers are not created equally. This is the process by which the integrated marketer looks for the best customers. However, Schultz doesn't look beyond the customer in this step.

3. Integrated Marketing Delivery Process: In IMC delivery, the communicator brings everything together. In delivery, attitudes matter, but behavior plus attitudes count. Do customers need a message or an incentive? Schultz said to start with the customer and see how he is exposed to messages. Then Brand Networks, Brand Contacts, and Brand Behavior are the outlets used to reach customers: *Brand networking* is building a relationship between brands and people's lives. It creates brand knowledge that people store over time. *Brand contacts* are how communicators come in contact with organizations, people, and brands; they create and reinforce brand perceptions, and contacts and experiences accumulate over time. *Brand Behavior* is not how people feel but what people actually do.

4. ROI: Return on investment: How are investments related to returns? Returns on IMC activities are measured by looking at customers and returns as assets of the company. For example, one could look at how much a customer spent/was worth to the company the previous year and then be willing to spend only that much on her the following year. That amount should be budgeted, but no more.

5. Budgeting and allocation: This is separating business building from brand building by turning marketing and communications into variable costs. It is investing, not spending; returns, not expenses.

Schultz believes IMC can succeed. He says, "It is and will be a dramatic change in technology, but we must be willing to adopt and adapt. We're not talking about how to put public relations with advertising, but how to integrate the entire organization for a seamless integrated/aligned system" (15 February 1996).

Concurring with Schultz is Dr. Douglas Ann Newsom, Chair of the Department of Journalism at Texas Christian University and the first PR practitioner elected president of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. In a recent interview, she clarified that using *IMC* is incorrect and clearly not descriptive of the functions. "By the term alone," Newsom said, "PR people get turned off. It ought to be called Integrated Communication, not IMC. The 'marketing' part should be left out" (22 February 1996). To the public, the term 'marketing' means "we don't care about you" (22 February 1996); we're just trying to sell a product. In IC, "every piece should be consistent. There should be an internal style book from which every press release, every speech gets its guidelines" (22 February 1996). She said integration means all communication reinforces a central theme and should flow from the organization's mission statement; when people get messages that are not constant, a fragmentation of business results. "People think we're lying when they get different messages," remarked Newsom. "It causes public discontent with big business" (22 February 1996).

The most important idea to remember with integration is that the message must be centralized. When asked where she saw agencies heading, Newsom said, "They will need a total re-thinking. To stay competitive, they must offer full-service based on strategic planning for a total communications package" (22 February 1996). Full-service is Newsom's solution

to the current agency problems: organizations can't buy services from different agencies because it doesn't result in one central message. However, organizations are going to lots of agencies because they're not getting what they need by just hiring one.

Conclusion

Integrated Marketing Communications is new, it's growing, and it's changing, and, as a result, no one really understands it. There is no single, clear definition with broad acceptance. This causes turf battles and conflict between public relations, advertising, and marketing. However, as shown in the current literature of the field, public relation's role holds as much weight as the others. Integration means just that: nothing is lost. All of the functions come together.

This study addresses the basics of IMC and shows that when PR, advertising, and marketing work together, they can benefit the entire organization. Power struggles are useless because it doesn't matter who integrates the communication so long as a consistent message is conveyed. None of the functions can be eliminated or the package won't be as effective.

A major problem and source of conflict over the new trend is its title. *Integrated Marketing Communications* isn't as representative as it should be. And to those who aren't marketers, this title is threatening. By simply calling the trend *Integrated Communications*, all functions are represented equally, and the conglomeration is better described. While all definitions and perspectives listed in the study have common threads, integration won't be fully accepted until everyone is in relative agreement.

Barriers exist that prevent IMC from being used. Up to this point, IMC is described as a solution to all communication and marketing problems. But if IMC is the end-all

concept, why hasn't acceptance been as rapid as one would hope? Why hasn't every organization embraced the approach? Don Schultz provides some reasons in his book Integrated Marketing Communications; Putting It Together & Making It Work. Schultz says that in general people are resistant to change. While marketers, PR practitioners, and advertisers label themselves as creative and forward-thinking, the truth is that they are stuck in their ways. They find plans and strategies that are successful and stick closely to them on subsequent projects. Next, organizations have traditionally planned from the inside out. "In other words, the planning is done on the basis of financial analysis with sales, marketing, and even profit goals we set with an inside view" (159). Companies manufacture a product, compute the amount of sales needed to make their profit goal, and go out and find ways to find customers who will buy the product to help reach those goals. Schultz proposes an "Outside-In" (160) approach. An organization should look at the customer and the wants and needs, match a product or service to fulfill those needs and wants, and find a way to get the message to the customer about the product or service offered. To change the organization's approach, the structure must change. While this is a major undertaking, it is imperative. Communications must become a high priority; horizontal structures are needed to replace tall, vertical structures; and functional specialists must branch out and learn more about the other fields. All advertisers, PR practitioners, and marketers will have to become integration-focused.

A look to the future shows people in the field asking, "What happened to the orderly world of the Four P's?" (12). With integrated marketing communications, they've turned into the Four Cs.

Forget product. Study Consumer wants and needs. You can no longer sell whatever you can make. You can only sell what someone specifically wants to buy. The feeling frenzy was over; the fish were out of school. Now marketers had to learn to lure them one by one, with something each customer particularly wanted.

Forget Price. Understand the consumer's Cost to satisfy that want or need. Marketers need to understand that to many 'New Age' consumers, price is almost irrelevant; dollars are only one part of the cost....

Forget Place. Think convenience to buy. People don't have to go anywhere anymore, in this era of catalogs, credit cards, and 800 numbers.....They [marketers] need to learn how each segment of the market prefers to buy, and then how to be there.

Finally, Forget Promotion. The word in the '90s is Communication. The motto of the age of the manufacturer -- *caveat emptor*, let the buyer beware -- is replaced by *cave emptorum*, beware of the buyer. (13)

Schultz maintains that this 'Four C' program "...must be orchestrated so that a clear, concise relationship is built with each individual stakeholder. Communication is too important to put in the hands of unskilled managers..., for it is the very future of the organization" (179).

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