

Integrated Marketing Communication
Prof. Vinay Sharma
Department of Management Studies
Indian Institute of Technology “ Roorkee

Lecture “ 27
IMC Planning-Part 1

Hello friends, welcome back to this sequence of discussions on Integrated Marketing Communication. Now we are moving towards this stage, wherein we would try to learn how to plan for effective integrated marketing communication? We have touched upon a few of the elements earlier also. For example, you would find that we would be mentioning budgeting here, which we have discussed earlier as well.

But, here, we will talk about all the components in integration. And this will give you a view of how agency marketers, and advertisers think about upcoming integrated marketing communication. How do they plan for it? They start looking for things from scratch every time they do it. But it is worth elaborating on and understanding because that saves lots of effort and finances.

I have mentioned the resources in the earlier discussions as well. So, let us go for integrated marketing communication with the planning perspective and try to understand how it goes?

See marketing communication is a conversation between a brand and its audience. And we are thinking about that communication to take place. And the performance and integration of all the promotional marketing communications activities into a program designed to achieve integrated goals is; what you call integrated marketing communication planning. Wherein integration of all the elements is the point of concern, effectiveness and efficiency come because of that.

This might sound familiar because we have been mentioning integration for some time. I have been talking about elements and modes for quite some time, and I would be talking about those modes as I have been telling you that those would come up separately as well. But here, we mentioned purpose as well. So, here, let us see when we put it on paper altogether how it appears?

Because that becomes a more extensive guideline for everyone involved, you would remember when we talked about advertising agencies. I happen to mention that hundreds of people get

involved in one integrated marketing communication reaching and materializing its effectiveness when it is structured and developed. And how those hundreds of people should be on the same plane?

That is where planning comes in because that plan becomes the guiding force for all the participants in the development and execution of that communication and even realizing the effectiveness of that communication, to the extent of when we are evaluating that and when we rethink our communication or rejuvenate our communication. So, in totality marketing communications plan is a document. This structured document summarizes the main issues and details of the activities related to IMC, including relevant background information and marketing communication decisions. And when I make decisions, who is going to do what? What kind of picture and music would come in? These are more significant decisions that anyways have to be taken. But then, to the extent of every single detail, wherein the sub-portions of the plan include the chapters or portions related to what would be the situation? Like when we would be doing a particular kind of an Act?

Or when would we be deciding upon the storyboard? Or when we would be choosing upon the media and so on. So, every single detail because we are never sure to what extent this will go on as far as the continuity of that communication goes that we talked about when we tried to analyze the aspects related to copy research.

We mentioned that we realize how we will retrieve the effects once it is released initially. And then will restructure if required or otherwise further Excel the frequency or reach or whichever way we want to look at it. So that is where the plan's precision and elements come in.

This is essentially a structure in front of you, wherein it can be considered a continuous cycle that includes situation analysis objectives that have to be there. Because otherwise, what we are going to fulfill is an integrated part. Budgeting would always be there because financial concerns are one of the key drivers in many cases.

And even for those who have accessibility to significant funds to support their integrated marketing communication program. But, still, that is a considerable concern. Then strategy to what extent will we drive it? To what time will we divert it? When will we stop for a while? When would we take it further, and how long actually? So, I will come back to that execution and evaluation. So, this is essentially the structure in front of you. And this is how the sequence should be.

So, look, you can look at these aspects as the chapters of that large document, or you may look at them as the sections of anything.

Before I go ahead, the most crucial element that one must understand is whether the plan should think aggressively, proactively, or from a different perspective. You see what because planning must have an orientation fine. There are objectives in situation analysis, but there is an element of proactiveness and aggression. We go by full force, or we look at the situation.

We keep observing the situation while going for this, and in a very continued subtle manner, we become a part of our customers' life through soft jingles. The products the customers purchase become a part of their life and the message itself. So, you see, there can be a philosophical aspect associated with when we think in terms of integrated marketing communication plan.

There has to be an element of orientation. What is our direction towards thinking in terms of IMC structuring it? What is the need at this particular moment? For example, many organizations have been serving people during this COVID period. They knew to what extent COVID might sustain itself and to what extent humanity would try to face it and then push it back.

Then the organizations started planning as far as their business plan goes. But here again, an IMC plan is required for this kind of a specific period because the particular orientation must change for a while. Many organizations had to rejuvenate or rethink their business program during this period. So, as the business plan changes or gets, the augmented IMC plan also does.

So, there is the element of need that we are talking about. Many occasions direct or redirect the lack of one particular kind of an IMC plan. Production capacity is also an important consideration. Are we there with full force, or are we there with some specific restraint as far as our supplies go? As I have mentioned already recently, we heard about some chips not being fully supplied and the automotive industry facing a crunch and hence the automotive industry.

We have talked about this. Integrated marketing communication is also affected, which is where the planning perspective comes in. Because the planning considers all these elements, not only while thinking in terms of a period but planning to create a scope for that if something unforeseen comes in, what will be done? How is it to be done?

For example, you have chosen a particular kind of time which you purchase from, let us say, mass media, television or let us tell you have planned for a specific period which you would be utilizing on the internet. And suddenly, something comes in where your production process gets affected. During that time, you want to reduce your message, so you must inform your media

partner or wherever you are purchasing that time to stop for a while.

But why would they lose their business? They won't, so that is a matter of consideration. So, would you like to change the orientation of your advertisements or messages at that particular time? Do you have that kind of a storyboard that is general, not oriented towards a specific type of sales if something of that sort happens? So that is where planning comes in.

Positioning all depends upon how strong you feel in terms of your positioning? How do you wish to pursue your positioning? If you are new, there would be a different kind of consideration. It will be a further consideration if you are still sustaining your levels. And we have mentioned and talked about positioning quite a while back and in elaborative terms also.

How much is the hurry? Do you want to capitalize upon Diwali? And did you plan last Diwali, or were you planning the previous month? Many organizations were designed in the COVID period for this 2021 coming Diwali, which is hardly 10 or 12 days from now because this is the 22nd of October I am talking to you.

So, many organizations were unsure if they would celebrate festivals with a similar kind of spirit as they were Pre-COVID. Because they were not confident almost one year back about the situation with us, and by God's grace, things are moving positively. Now things are under control with all the due efforts. We must all be thankful to the people who have been continuously fighting this virus for humankind- the scientists, the medical staff, and everyone associated with facilitating this precaution against COVID- vaccination drive all over the world so that the world can be the same as it was. So, thanks to them and their efforts, organizations have started thinking proactively. Now, this is a beautiful kind of thing because organizations are now thinking proactively.

So, whatever plan they might have made last year would not be practically workable for this coming Diwali in India. So, they either would be augmenting that plan, or they might be many of them might have postponed their planning up till recently, and they would have started picking up the schedule now if you are making a plan in September, October, November, or let us say by July.

If you, even if you are forcing that vaccination drive, would be enabling the situation in times to come, four months of planning would not help you purchase. That kind of a media space you would require for aggressively going for as far as your integrated marketing communication campaign goes. Now that is a big question, and compulsively you could not do that last year.

So that is where you see the capability of a plan comes into the picture, and that is what I meant

by saying how much hurry there is? What is your business plan in times to come? You have been building up inventory in due course of time because somehow you were retaining your workforce, you had to somehow, and you want to dilute that inventory right now.

So, integrated marketing communication is coming to your support, but you must have vehicles available. It would be best if you had modes available for that- you must have newspaper and internet space available. It is not that it has immense capacity plus. You are always worried about competition. What is it doing all around?

Probably they are also purchasing at the same time, place, and space. So that would be futile if you would fight together and the customer ends up with someone else. Recognition of the fact that what business we are into? That is again a vital thing, and I will be coming to such examples supporting this argument.

So remember that these are the considerations that evolve during a plan. And let us generate two or three scenarios in front of us that will facilitate our thought process. So, let us take examples of two automotive or two television manufacturers from different parts of the world.

I remember an organization from Europe that came to India with the joint venture arrangement, probably in 1996. A vast organization, an excellent company, with outstanding products. And, as I have been timing again telling you that I would not be focusing much on denouncing organizations for what they could not do but to raise an insight that things could have been better for them.

So that is why I am refraining from taking categorical names here. But there are many such instances in that organization. Despite having outstanding products, they came and had an equitable pricing strategy concerning the existing products during that time in the market. Now, this organization started focusing on particular kinds of media vehicles and modes.

During those days, the most prominent modes were television, newspaper, outdoor holdings, etc. And they created a particular kind of a plan they reached with their communication to the people but had innovative products, good products. But, somehow could not do well, and they went away. They were aggressive in terms of releasing their communication.

They had a significant frequency as well, but somehow the choice of carriers, media vehicles was not very specific or, let us say, organized. And that could not support the positioning they had in their minds. And you see, this example I am projecting in front of you reflects the philosophy, orientation, and the other elements we have just discussed.

Then, another organization that belongs to the Asian part of the world came in during a similar period. They went with the very low price televisions, and they thought that this low price would probably attract all the customers from whichever way. Because at that particular time, that price was never considered by Indian customers that low for television.

So, they realized that they would be selling a number. They were a vast manufacturer in terms of their manufacturing capacity and brought that television to India. And they realized that just introducing that price to the Indian customer would work. Somehow Indian customers did not think of television being so low priced and probably thought that television cannot be so low priced.

This confused the Indian customers and that organization did not work. These two examples simultaneously bring a scenario in front of us wherein one with an excellent product, appropriate pricing, and more or less an aggressive kind of media buying and integrated marketing communication. Also did not reach the minds of the customer.

On the other hand, an organization with low prices, with lots of possibility of selling many products based on their pricing, did not do well. Because they went for a different kind of planning somehow, these two kinds of examples put a scenario in our minds that somehow planning must be meticulous, planning must consider all the elements we are discussing.

And that chart, we have just seen situation analysis, budgeting, objectives, etc. And then we should come up because then there are several multinationals which came to India and they did very well. And I would name a few of LG and Samsung who did well and established a large market. So they are still doing well.

In many cases, several other companies have entered into several different categories of products, and they are doing very well. So that is where integrated marketing communication planning comes in after this slightly elaborative kind of context, which we have built around integrated marketing communication planning.

I would quickly reiterate what types of objectives we must focus on. So, one goal is to create or maintain brand awareness. For example, a coaching institution, you see, a coaching business in India is very, very big at this moment or for the past decade or so.

So several large coaching brands have come up, and in due course of time. You have seen online coaching brands in the past few years, and I have been talking about this. But several new

coaching institutions are coming up, and how are they creating awareness? What kind of modes are they using? To what extent are they using those modes? And how are they building up their awareness?

You would have universally noticed that most of them build up awareness based on the success parameters their students have gained during entrance examinations. For the past week, I have been watching full-page advertisements in newspapers with photographs of students who have cracked entrance exams recently. Congratulations to all of them.

So these coaching institutions are trying to capitalize upon that. So that is how they are trying to build awareness in terms of their achievements, and on the other side, they are developing the industry and new coaching institutions. They are putting up smaller advertisements beside them that they also exist, and someone says they have the faculty who used to work there.

So that is the kind of approach also people are bringing in. But, again, the point is this is just an example to tell you how they are developing brand awareness. We have seen several models in consumer products, one of my favorites, Patanjali. I will be talking about that later on as well. To change consumer beliefs or attitudes toward Food Products, for example, and again keeping my promise of refraining from taking peculiar names in terms of failures or, let us say problems.

But there have been incidents in India, and abroad wherein several food products somehow could not cross the parameters as decided by the authorities, in terms of the elements they should be having and not having whatsoever. And many times, when they come out of that situation. They try to rejuvenate the belief of people. Have they been able to do that slightly tricky?

So that is where integrated marketing communication planning comes in, and you would realize that if somehow it is meticulous. You see, it is like a puzzle sometimes that you must crack. But the answer to that puzzle is the plan you are creating, which is you are making cosmetics. Has it been a big issue that cosmetics are good for skin? And which are not the consumer is not aware of?

Which shampoo have you realized which benefits you after losing so much hair? I do not understand why I have not reached any conclusion, and more or less, I have stopped using shampoos. I apologize to the shampoo companies. I am not denouncing anything; they benefit people as well. But it is a puzzle to me.

But, if it is a puzzle to the integrated marketing communication organization, it is tricky. Shampoos are extensive selling products, and I have also been using so many. Probably that is the reason why it is the situation with me. So, now to influence purchase intent Tourism Package,

for example, where would people like to go? And why would they go somewhere?

They would go there because of the destination because of the place, but who is going to tell them? Are the operators responsible for this, or is someone else responsible? We have discussed the Incredible India campaign several times during this program and this course. For example, you have to develop a purchase intent for a book. It is a complicated kind of thing.

I have authored a couple of books, and motivating people to read those books is a tough deal for many publishers. They share this kind of anguish, and because there are budget constraints for the publishers, it is a difficult call. So, influencing purchase intent is one of the objectives to stimulate trial usage of the software package.

We have seen trial packages, anti-viruses, and consumer products in sachets. Sachets have become the mainstay, and it is a big story. You all know about it. If you are a marketing student, you have repeatedly mentioned sachets that change the market. I would not again waste your time on this. Still, you have several products initiated with a trial perspective and convert one-time users into repeat purchasers of consumer products.

Children who denounce ice creams very quickly. And young lot, they are more into condemning things. They are rejected by nature. I apologize to the younger lot if they are watching me; they are like that. And the restaurant, for example, every time a new restaurant opens up for the first months they are complete, for next month they are not, why?

Because of some elements which are there or not there and in both the cases, successful or not doing so, well, in integrated marketing communication plan, to encourage brand switching, there was a whole lot of a campaign from mobile communication companies to motivate people to switch over from their number with the same number to a different operator.

That was a whole lot of a period wherein I think it was two, three years continuously they focused only on one thing. Somehow subscribers should leave their existing operators and come to them. I do not know how many of you did that? But there was success gained by them. In online entertainment, many operators try to motivate you through several inputs by introducing newer types of clippings on your mobile phones.

So, I will stop the discussion here. I will come back to you with further input on the integrated marketing communication plan, and remember that this is one of the most important lessons we are going through. Because once you become efficient in drawing and structuring an integrated marketing communication plan that may directly help you in your professional lives with this assurance., I leave you with this thought and will return it to you in the next session. Thank you.

