

COSC5112

Learning Unit 2: The integration of communication in organisations



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4 sessions; 11 LUO's; Test, Assignment and Exam; Angelopulo & Barker 2013: 40-72

#1 DEFINING COMMUNICATION INTEGRATION

- *ANGELOPULO & BARKER 2013: 40-41 -

Communication integration is the cross-functional (1) process (1) of creating and nourishing strategically determined relationships (1) with stakeholders (1) by controlling or influencing all messages to these groups (1) and engaging in purposeful dialogue (1) with them.

E.g. Placing an advertisement to sell a new product to a specific prospective consumer; or a Public Relations Practitioner issuing a statement to minimise the negative publicity created by a recent fire at their production plant. (2)

Integrative communication functions are those organisational activities which result in cohesion (1) and unity (1).



INTEGRATION OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Organisational activities are created from a customer-oriented perspective (i.e. communication as an organisational activity is integrated into corporate strategy), also referred to as *market- or customer orientation*.

Communication integration is the process of thinking and organising in which the objectives and outcomes of a market orientation can be realised. Thus, communication becomes everyone's responsibility – from top- to bottom management; CEO to secretary or operations worker.



#2 REASONS TO THINK ABOUT COMMUNICATION

INTEGRATIVELY (NB!)

- ANGELOPULO & BARKER 2013: 43-44 -

Three (3) reasons:

- (1) **External market trends** – one cannot just sell products anymore; personal service is becoming very important to establish competitive advantage;
- (2) **Trends within organisations** – new technologies and other trends have changed the way people communicate with one another and must be integrated into the business model to ensure its effective use
- (3) **Societies' demands for organisational integrity** – perceptions of stakeholders need to be managed through different communication tools.



#3 FIVE (5) KEY PRINCIPLES OF THE INTEGRATION OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION

- ANGELOPULO & BARKER 2013: 44-53 -

Principles of integration of organisational communication refer to how we now view organisational communication; its importance and how we can use organisational communication.

*Refer to notes given in class

The five (5) principles of organisational communication integration are.

- i. Market orientation
- ii. Aligning messages from all sources
- iii. Implementation throughout the organisation
- iv. Making integration a strategic imperative
- v. Recognising integration of communication's limitations and avoid its pitfalls

#4 ALIGNMENT OF MESSAGES FROM ALL SOURCES

- ANGELOPULO & BARKER 2013: 45 -

The opinions of an organisation's customers are formed from the following types of messages:

- 1) **Planned messages** – the marketing communication mix, including advertising, public relations, direct selling and sales promotions. Least believable
- 2) **Product messages** – messages about the organisation's product(s)...how people feel about it, its ownership and use
- 3) **Service messages** – the experience of dealing with the organisation (i.e. the service received from staff)
- 4) **Unplanned messages** – messages that are not controlled by the organisation; word-of-mouth, rumours, etc. Most believable

These messages need to be aligned – i.e. it needs to communicate the same thing.



#5 FIVE (5) THINGS (JUNCTURES/ LOCATIONS) THAT DETERMINE THE INTEGRATION OF COMMUNICATION IN AN ORGANISATION – I.E. WHERE INTEGRATION OF COMMUNICATION OCCUR **NB!**

- ANGELOPULO & BARKER 2013: 46-48 -

- i. **Translating the organisation's mission into strategy** – this is where strategic decisions are made and is influenced by an organisation's dominant decision makers (e.g. the CEO). Decision makers need to understand the organisation's mission and vision, customer needs, and the company's capabilities;
- ii. **Implementing strategy** – this occurs at management level as well, where managers translate and implement strategy into specific objectives for each department of the organisation (to support its products and services);



- iii. **Planning and executing external communication** – communication experts or specialists use public relations, direct marketing and sales promotions;
- iv. **Delivering service** – The organisation delivers its products and services to the customer(s); and
- v. **Forming customer expectations of the organisation and its products or services** – Communication needs to be integrated at this juncture as this is where the customer(s) form their expectations of the organisation, its products and services.



FOUR (4) SOURCES OF CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS

- **Customer's personal wants and needs**
- **Actual and perceived experiences**
- **Unsolicited communication from sources other than the organisation and its agents**
- **The organisation's image**
- **The organisation's planned communication**



Remember to refer to the sources of **customer expectations** (which also includes unsolicited brand messages, brand reputation, etc.)

Possible question:

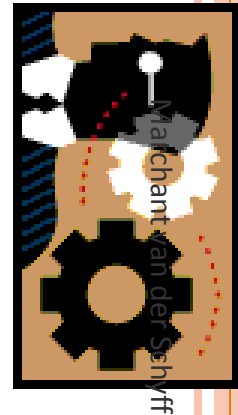
*“One of the five junctures or locations of intervention in ensuring communication integration is the customer’s expectations of the organisation and its products and services. These expectations originate from a number of sources. **Name four (4) more sources of customer expectations.**”*



#6 TEN (10) STRATEGIES THAT MAY BE USED TO INTEGRATE COMMUNICATION IN AN ORGANISATION

- ANGELOPULO & BARKER 2013: 49-50 -

1. **Create and nourish relationships** rather than just make transactions: it costs a lot more to get new customers, than to just satisfy your existing ones;
2. **Focus on all stakeholders** rather than simply customers or shareholders: to establish longevity of the brand, include all stakeholders (including employees and the media) in your stratagem;
3. **Maintain strategic consistency** rather than independent brand messages: a 'big idea' should drive all communication messages;
4. **Generate purposeful interactivity**, rather than merely a mass media monologue: build in feedback channels to involve the consumer's input in decision making processes (e.g. blogs, response to letters of complaint, etc.)



5. **Market the corporate mission rather than simply product claims:** Every organisational activity (e.g. CSI projects, a new product, etc.) needs to contribute to the mission (reason for the organisation's existence);
6. **Use zero-based planning rather than adjust previous plans:** always start from 'scratch'; conduct a SWOT analysis and then implement the communication campaign;
7. **Use cross-functional rather than departmental planning and monitoring:** sharing information across all organisational departments can lead to a more holistic communication campaign;
8. **Create core competencies rather than merely communication specialisation and expertise:** it is more successful to train managers and other relevant employees in how to utilise communication methods...than to only employ experts (they can always be outsourced);
9. **Use an integrated agency rather than a traditional agency:** where agencies are used to execute the communication function, select an agency that are versed in all areas of communication (including advertising, public relations, etc.); and
10. **Build and manage databases to retain customers rather than simply acquire new customers:** In Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) this is referred to as Managing Consumer Databases (MCD) through getting their information (e.g. birthdays, purchasing behaviour, etc.) and corresponding with current customers to improve the relationship between company and customer. Remember, it costs more to find new customers than to keep you current ones happy.



#7 CONCERNS/ CONSIDERATIONS IN THE INTEGRATION OF COMMUNICATION IN AN ORGANISATION

- ANGELOPULO & BARKER 2013: 50-53 -

- a) The absence of communication – often organisations avoid communication, because they feel it is unnecessary or has no benefit;
- b) The time perspective of various types of communication – sometimes short-term campaigns clash with long-term campaign...which may confuse stakeholders;
- c) The impact of unplanned communication – unforeseen messages may affect an organisation positively or negatively...that is why they should be planned for; and
- d) Corporate identity 😊



LIST THREE (3) OF THE OTHER LIMITATIONS OF THE INTEGRATION OF COMMUNICATION:





#8 CORPORATE IDENTITY

- ANGELOPULO & BARKER 2013: 56 -

Corporate identity is the self-presentation of an organisation (1) through behaviour (1), communication (1) and symbols (1). It includes the visual aspects an organisation uses to differentiate it from other organisations (1).

It may include corporate branding (1), company branding (1), endorsed branding (1) and exceptional endorsed branding (1). It also involves house colours (1), logos (1), typography used (1), company name (1), etc.

Go to www.virgin.com and describe Virgin's corporate identity.



CORPORATE IDENTITY

Group exercise:

You have just started your own Corporate Communications Agency dealing with image management and community relations of some SME's.

Consider your corporate identity by:

- Defining what corporate identity is;
- Explaining the benefits of a corporate identity; and
- What do you want your corporate identity to convey about your agency.



#9 & #10 HOW CORPORATE IDENTITY IS APPLIED:

- ANGELOPULO & BARKER 2013: 56-57 -

- In order for a company to differentiate itself (its subsidiaries, products and services);
- To generate a collective feeling of belonging among employees;
- To act as a guarantor of consistent quality; and
- To contribute to the loyalty of customers and other stakeholders.

THREE (3) APPROACHES TO THE APPLICATION AND INTEGRATION OF CORPORATE IDENTITY

1. Uniformity model: The whole organisation, its subsidiaries and its brands have one identity – e.g. Virgin Records, -Active, -Credit Card. Pick-n-Pay (PnP Clothing, Pnp Liquor) etc.
2. Endorsement model: Subsidiaries have their own identity, but the parent organisation's identity is in the background - e.g. the Unilever brands. Coca Cola (Fanta, Sprite, TAB, Cream Soda)
3. Variety model: Subsidiaries have their own identities with no reference to their parent companies – e.g. Edcon's subsidiary Jet; boardmans'. Facebook (WhatsApp, Instagram).

#11 FOUR (4) METHODS FOR MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICATION INTEGRATION

* - ANGELOPULO & BARKER 2013: 53-56 -

The integration of communication needs to be orchestrated/ managed to be as effective as possible.

Van Riel (1999) describe four (4) methods, namely:

- (1) Rules/ directives – to standardise communication practice;
- (2) Sequencing – communication is done following specific procedures and the input of independent contributors...thus, communication is a process that is made up of independent stages;
- (3) Routines – those implicit communication practices that have become self-evident in an organisation – e.g. have an informal meeting before a pitch; and
- (4) Group-problem solving – groups dealing with problems arising from the integration of communication, or if the process of integration becomes complex.

