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Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka



Book Review: Advertising and Promotion: An Integrated Marketing Communication Perspective, George E. Belch, Michael E. Belch, and Keyoor Purani (McGraw Hill Education (India) Private Limited, Special Indian Edition (2013) Pages: 1016).

WV De Silva*, MSH Rathnasiri and PLGSD Piumali

Department of Marketing Management, Faculty of Management Studies, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka, Belihuloya, Sri Lanka

Since ever marketing concepts have been born and introduced, marketing communication concepts and tools too receives enormous attraction from various scholars and writers. Thus, several numbers of books have been written and published in the domain of Marketing Communication. Picking up a proper combination of marketing communication tools always makes a huge impact on the positioning strategy of any brand. The proper integration of communication tools should generate synergistic effects on positioning the brand and deal with consumers' cognitive processes. Hence, a unique and an impressive way of presenting the marketing communication message is very much essential. Ways and means of creating such a powerful marketing communication strategy have been unveiled by authors in the book titled “Advertising and Promotion: An Integrated Marketing Communication Perspective.”

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E-mail Address:
vilasini17@mgt.sab.ac.lk

The book, which consists of 22 chapters and has been organized into seven parts/sections, is very insightful and logical. It describes the whole process of making a unique marketing communication strategy with illustrative contemporary real-world examples. The chapters of the book have been logically lined up, which supports the reader to grasp the proper knowledge of the IMC process from a holistic perspective. The author clearly elaborated on the interrelationships among all marketing processes and the IMC process and the intrarelations within the IMC process. While reviewing this study, the reviewers employed the academic approach used by Gamage (2021), Iddagoda and Dewasiri (2021) and Peiris et al. (2020).

Content

Part 1: Part 1 comprises chapters 1 and 2, which can be considered as the foundational opening to the book. It provides a sufficient introduction to integrated marketing communication and explains the role of IMC in the marketing process. This section focuses on the main components of the promotional mix and the need of blending those into a single promotional strategy. It highlights various analyses and steps to be taken before initiating the IMC process and how it should be linked to the positioning strategy.

Part 2: Part 2 has been devoted to discuss external organizations needed to activate the communication strategy and comprehend the association between the buyer decision-making process and the IMC process. An informative discussion on third-party involvement and their importance in the IMC process is provided. Ad agency's responsibility, types of Ad agencies, compensation of Ad agencies, and various third parties who supply other specialized promotional services are in the content of this section. This section describes various psychological status connected to a buyer's decision-making process and how a communication strategy can influence such psychological status.

Part 3: Part 3 details the communication process. Steps in the basic communication model, traditional response hierarchy models used to understand the audience responses, and contemporary communication models used to analyze the audience have been discussed well in this section. Source characteristics like credibility and attractiveness, message factors, and channel factors were elaborated.

Part 4: Part 4 discusses the concerns related to planning for IMC programs. Setting different types of objectives for the IMC programs, DAGAMAR assessment to set objectives, allocating budgets for the IMC programs, various approaches to allocate budgets, and problems in setting objectives and allocating budgets have been focused.

Part 5: Section 5 comprises the lengthiest and the most critical content of the book. Ten chapters were covered in section 5, which elaborates on every essential component of the marketing communication mix. It highlights the creative strategy development for the promotional campaign and its implementation and evaluation. It is followed by a discussion on the usage of various other communications tools like direct marketing, internet and interactive media, sales promotion, public relations, and corporate advertising. All terms related to media strategy planning have been added to section 5.

Part 6: Section 6 covers the monitoring, evaluation and control of IMC programs. Planning research work to evaluate the effectiveness of advertising, research methods to determine the advertising effects and techniques to measure the effectiveness of other promotional tools have been focused in section 6.

Part 7: International advertising and promotion, regulation of advertising and promotion, and evaluating the social, ethical and economic aspects of advertising and promotion are the key areas covered in section 7 of the book. Section 7 gives a meaningful and rich end to the book, which was not forgotten to add to enhance the quality of the book.

This masterpiece has shed light on teaching the integration approach of marketing communication far better than any other textbooks in the same domain. The author clearly specifies how integrated marketing communication deviates from traditional marketing communication. The essential concepts and theories underpinned consumer psychology and communication models have been lined up in the first row allowing the reader to grasp insights on the fundamentals of marketing communication. Thus, learners or practitioners can precisely familiarize themselves with concepts, fundamentals, theories, processes, and applications that underlie sophisticated integrated marketing communication components and the process.

The book chapters begin with intended learning objectives set for the chapter, which are achieved at the end of the chapter. A key feature of the book is each chapter begins with a real-world case study related to the content of the chapter, and it works as a stimulus to read and understand the inclusion more elaborately. Further, chapters comprise pertinent and contemporary real-world examples that illustrate practical applications of theories and concepts explained to the user very well. The book indeed can be endorsed as a textbook for undergraduate and postgraduate programs since its content has been presented comprehensively and logically. Moreover, this book is a noteworthy piece of work that can be recommended as a must-read for people interested in in-depth knowledge of essential concepts and theories in integrated marketing communication.

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