

# Research on the Construction of the Integrated Marketing Communications Based on the Brand Value

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**Abstract**—When the product homogeneity is increasingly serious and consumer spending habits have been changing constantly today, the brand has become the main source of enterprise competitive advantage, and integrated marketing communications based on the brand value will bring more lasting development for the enterprise. In this article, the authors explore the IMC theory system based on brand value and the operation level by putting forward the core and ultimate value of IMC. Then point out the challenge for the implementation of IMC based on brand value in China. Moreover, the authors propose the method of constructing the IMC with Chinese characteristics.

**Keywords**—IMC; brand value; Chinese characteristics

## I THE CORE AND ULTIMATE VALUE OF INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

### A. The Core of IMC

The concept of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) was originated from the "Communication Synergy" concept in the 1980s, the corporate communication on the synergy effect further developed the concept of IMC. In the early 1990s, the father of the theory of IMC, professor T. E. Schultz, first put forward the Integrated Marketing Communications concept, and considered the IMC as a new way of marketing communications, recombination of transmission elements such as employee communication, advertising, public relations, marketing, et.al.. From the definition of IMC by professor T.E. Schultz, the core of IMC is that change the traditional marketing theory framework, focus on consumer's need and demand, integrate various marketing communication channels, form of interactive two-way communication to customers, deliver consistent, effective information, so as to establish a long-lasting integration relationship between brands and consumers, accumulate enterprise brand assets and create enterprise core competitiveness. That means that IMC information can be more consistent, and help to build brand equity, create more sales. It is forcing manager to think of every kind of way of contact between consumers and companies, the way of spreading their positioning, the relative importance of each kind of medium, as well as a matter of time. IMC can improve

the company in the proper time, proper place to pass appropriate information to the appropriate consumers.

- Core purpose is to establish customer relationship. In the 21st century, market needs a new method for consolidation and integration, this method will appear new changes: from "marketing and information dissemination personnel delivering information to customers and potential customers" to the "customers and potential customers to make marketing and information dissemination personnel know their needs, desires, and hopes", marketing personnel collect the information and meet the needs of the consumers. Under the condition of new technology support, put more emphasis on IMC to collect consumer information, establish database of consumers, use quantitative analysis means to analyze consumer demand, and put the existing and potential customers in the center of the unprecedented, which aim to establish long-term, sustained and two-way relationship with customers. Obviously, the highest level of IMC is not just about the effect of spreading and promotion, but to establish customer relationship as the core objectives.
- Integrating communication way. Professor Schultz, the father of IMC, in his book "global integrated marketing communications", wrote that in the era of information explosion, the mass of information receiving mode is: 99% forgotten and filtering, can only 1% remembered. Therefore, enterprises need to integrate a variety of transmission method, one by one in the public mind "fragmented" 1% will eventually add up to 99% of the enterprises wanting to form in your mind. Marketing communication includes eight kinds of main mode of transmission: advertising, sales promotion, public relations and publicity, events and experience, direct marketing, interactive marketing, word-of-mouth marketing and personal selling, which have their own advantages. Integrated marketing communications identify and evaluate the strategic role of comprehensive value added of transmission ways based on company product characteristics and consumer demands, then integrate the advantages of

each mode of transmission, convey a consistent message to the existing customers and potential customers and establish a brand image through the role of the integration mode of transmission.

- The consistency of information dissemination. The spread of IMC conveys to the consumer in a unified information, which can make the information more consistent, namely "speak with one voice" (with one voice to say). Integrated marketing communications from existing and potential customers make its aim at: all enterprise information communication system will be an aggregate brand point contacted by all consumer contact, and the efficiency of the information dissemination will come from all the synergy brought by the consistency of the contact way. The IMC is not only based on the organization sending or conveying something to existing customers and potential customers, transmission also occurs in the brand contact, that is to say, the IMC ultimately make contact with existing customers and potential customers in the market and form the unique brand image through the consistency and validity of information communication. So focus on information dissemination, find the contact point of consumer, build a foundation for establishing a brand relationship.

#### *B. the Ultimate Value of IMC – Brand value*

Ultimate value pursuit is to create brand image and brand equity. Brand has increasingly become one of the most valuable assets controlled by an organization. Professor Schultz, related the brand into integrated marketing communications research system, and thought that brand equity is the ultimate value pursuit of IMC. Also integrated marketing communications strategy methods create the core competitive advantage for enterprises, so that enterprises create brand image and accumulate the brand assets in the fierce competition environment, which own the attraction to existing customers and potential customers, so as to achieve the vertical integration of brand and the consumer relationship. In addition, professor Schultz, in dialogue with famous brand strategy expert Li Guangdou, shows the ultimate aim of the spread should be to accumulate the brand assets, not only limited to the short-term profits. Marketing is a marketing tool, which can be imitated, learned and copied and brand is the enterprises' core competitiveness, which is unique and not copied. The purpose of Transmission is long-term accumulation of brand assets rather than just short-term profits, it should be the essence of integrated brand communication and brand management of the whole. That is to say, "integrated marketing communications" is essentially "integrated brand marketing", enterprises should take advantage of communication resources as support for the long-term competitive advantage of brand, assist the brand establishment to maintain a long-term relationship between customers, establish the brand loyalty of consumer and accumulate brand assets.

## II THE IMC BASED ON BRAND VALUE

Enterprise brand value is realized through brand media. Traditional brand communication spreads in a single way to

deliver brand information to the consumer, but now emerging media, such as internet and mobile phones, spreads the "information" which covers the vast majority of media information, so that the world is entering an era of information explosion, a revolutionary change on brand dissemination, a formation of a new pattern of diversified media, which make brand spreading more efficient, broader, richer, and better in the new environment. At the same time, brand communication puts forward higher requirements using diverse media in the aspects of integration and coordination. Under the perspective of integrated marketing communications, brand communication system is not merely to the outside, but interactive. They are no longer controlled by marketers or information dissemination, but controlled by consumers. Obviously, the 21st century marketing needs a new method for consolidation and integration.

Brand media can find a new point of view and direction under the guidance of integrated marketing communications. The ultimate value of integrated marketing communications is pointed to the brand value, and there is only the brand value that can associate many of the contents covering all aspects of marketing communication in reality. It is necessary to research brand communication through the integrated marketing model: first of all, brand value conforms to the connotation of integrated marketing communications which view consumers as the center. Integrated marketing communications theory stress that all activities should start from the demands of customers', at the same time, the enterprise also must perceive consumers not only existing but also potential customers to the most important position to realize the brand value. Second, brand value puts emphasis on brand information consistency like connotation of integrated marketing communications. Integrated marketing communications promote brand information consistency "in the same voice to say", which advocate a points of contact with the audience through comprehensive, spread the consistency of information, strengthen the brand dissemination way, and also keep the consistency of the dissemination of information and interactive in the process of brand communication, thus brand image will be clarified. Finally, the ultimate goal of integrated marketing communications and brand marketing is to maximize the brand value. The combination of these two approaches sets up brand image, accumulate brand assets and bring long-term profits for enterprises more easily. Transmission is the purpose of long-term accumulation of brand assets rather than just short-term profits, it should also be the essence of integrated marketing communications and brand management of the whole. That is to say, "integrated marketing communications" is essentially "integrated brand marketing", enterprises should use transmission resources as supporting for the long-term competitive advantage of brand, assist the brand establishment and maintain long-term relationships between consumers, set up the brand loyalty of consumer, and accumulate brand assets.

## III THE CHALLENGE OF IMC BASED ON THE BRAND VALUE IN CHINA

The future of IMC is a good thing, but in a dynamic marketing environment which consumer demand increasingly diversified, differentiated and personalized, Chinese

enterprises in constructing and implementing integrated marketing communications face significant challenges.

- Challenge 1: branding IMC. The integration of Chinese enterprises in the brand communications should pay attention to accumulate the brand assets, now in the era of media and information explosion, the enterprise brand construction need to a revolutionary change. Consumer demand is increasingly diversified, differentiated and personalized, and at the same time also appear diversified, differentiated and personalized emerging media. Nowadays, media has to focus on from mass age to personalized communication era, and brand communication's efficiency becomes faster, the scope larger, content more and results better. At the same time, the diverse medium of brand communication in the integration and coordination aspects put forward higher requirements. Therefore, it will is an important part of the challenge about how to use integrated marketing communications strategy, implement a system of brand communication strategy ,have the best brand communication effect and the accumulation of enterprise brand assets, but ,overcoming this challenge will bring a great brand assets.
- Challenge 2: Long-term brand value. The integration of Chinese enterprises in the brand spread has far more attention of the sales over emphasis on brand building. If there is no a good brand, and blindly on promotion can only be temporary profit, but guaranteed no long-term interests. On the contrary, if a good brand, and there must be a good sales. In the competitive domestic market, there are a lot of enterprises more difficult to achieve their goals in the long run, and easy to be hit by a slightly unpleasant communication effect and transform the core value of brand under the impact of the market, and then brand positioning fuzzy, finally deviate from the brand construction for a long time.
- Challenge 3: global IMC. With the development of globalization, the globalization of IMC has also be unstoppable. Professor Schultz believes that we have to analyze the integration of marketing from the perspective of globalization, from the domestic, national and international level of marketing and transmission process and scheme to globalization of marketing communication, that is to say, focus on consumers, take full advantage of globalization marketing communications with emerging technology. Chines enterprises must adapt to the trend of The Times in order to be in an impregnable position in the market, constantly create and improve a complete set of software system about the global IMC to lay a solid foundation.
- Challenge 4: The Construction on brand image of Chinese enterprises Brand image is the brand that manifest the social public characteristics of enterprises and the external characteristics of the brand in the market, reflect the essence and strength of the brand. It embodies the public especially consumers' cognition

and evaluation of the brand. Once you get the public's approval, can build a relationship with the public, a kind of friendly feeling which has been produced to the brand. An enterprise, always tries to set up a clear, healthy, good image in all consumers' mind; only mold good image, can better create brand value. In today's China emerge a batch of famous brand such as Haier, Lenovo and Li Ning, they rely on the good brand image to win the favor of consumers and loyalty. And most of the Chinese enterprises have not strong brand differentiation consciousness, still stay in the specific products and specific service level, without using of integrated marketing communications approach to the construction of brand image and establishing a unique brand image.

#### IV MEASURES ABOUT CONSTRUCTING THE IMC BASED ON BRAND VALUE WITH CHINESE CHARACTERISTIC

Build and implement IMC is facing a challenge, which in turn brings opportunities for the development of Chinese enterprises. Make full use of the development opportunity brought by IMC inevitably requires that the integrated marketing communications theory can adapt to the market and enterprises' development present situation in China, which need to create a set of integrated marketing communications theory with Chinese characteristics.

- First, form the concept and idea of Integrated Brand Marketing. Global marketing is not just a way of integrated media communications, IMC must promote and develop as a kind of thought, and an idea in China. But there is not enough for China companies to know the IMC, not to say to form ideas for promotion. Some business, at the same time, our country enterprise did not begin to register trademark of the brand as a starting point of construction until 1979, and the combination of integrated marketing communication and brand communication appear later. Leaders know the concept of integrated marketing communications, but the understanding is not deep, some even misunderstand the meaning of IMC by mixing with the traditional marketing communication, or simple a combination of a variety of medium, but the essence of integrated marketing communications is integrated brand marketing. In the theoretical circle and academia, integrated marketing communications is a theory that has not form a corresponding system of academic research and also has not related to all colleges and universities which can't provide the training of talents. Therefore, Chinese enterprises must strengthen the understanding of integrated marketing communications system, form ideas of IMC, increase the transmission of global marketing talent, lay the foundation to sound IMC in Chinese enterprise.
- Second, strengthen the establishment of the database. Database is the indispensable condition of the implementation of IMC. Only under the condition of the database established gradually perfect, can truly interactive relationship established between consumers

and brand, can IMC be realized in real sense. In recent years, Chinese enterprises have begun to pay attention to the establishment of the database, collect customer information, establish enterprise internal database, and focus on the development of related technologies. Some good databases have gained popularity, such as customer relationship management system database. But this still has certain difficulty in China. Firstly, the research funding will not be able to fully guarantee; Secondly, the technical supports do not keep up with demand; Thirdly, Chinese credit conditions are relatively poor, affecting the integrity of the data; Forth, the related legal laws and regulations is not sound, many consumers have credit problems when filling in their information, they often can't fill in real information, so even the establishment of a database is unable to use the information. This is a big obstacle for IMC based on database for hardware support , and therefore must be conduct a real database collection.

- Third, integrated communication of enterprises' brand image. Brand image involves all aspects of business, which need to use the means of integrated marketing communications to convey the brand information to consumers. Integrated marketing communications performs the reorganization of enterprise marketing and the overall management strategy by means of integration of enterprise internal and external resources and consumers as the core, it makes the enterprise of each department, each member, and all stakeholders can achieve effective communication in order to achieve the ultimate goal of brand value maximization. Brand media, formed by the combination of brand integration and integrated marketing communications and integrating all kinds of transmission of information and channels, builds the unity of customer oriented and specific brand image and brand value. Therefore, Chinese enterprises must first recognize the brand image of enterprise development; Secondly, Chinese enterprises must be out of the traditional media advertising thinking in the process of shaping the brand image, and integrate the effective way of marketing communications, which have represented a single concept in the minds of all consumers, in other words, form a unified brand image.

In addition, the building of IMC system with Chinese characteristics should put emphasis on the development of marketing management, staff knowledge of IMC, brand

management knowledge, and the construction of new structure and compensation system, and so on. Overall, it is a long road for the IMC in China. Majority of Chinese enterprise on the integrated marketing communications is still predominantly advertising and facing various challenges, but the construction of the IMC theory with Chinese characteristics is bound to bring significant economic benefits to enterprises in our country.

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