

Marketing Communication and Consumer Behavior in Digital Era

Kanchana Meesilapavikkai, Ph.D.⁸

บทคัดย่อ

การสื่อสารการตลาดเป็นส่วนพื้นฐานและซับซ้อนของความพยายามทางการตลาดซึ่งองค์กรทางธุรกิจพยายามที่จะให้ข้อมูล ชักชวน และเตือนผู้บริโภคโดยตรงหรือโดยอ้อมในการอธิบายเป็นข้อความทั้งหมดและการใช้สื่อในการสื่อสารสินค้าและผลิตภัณฑ์ที่ขาย นั่นทำให้การสื่อสารการตลาดมีประสิทธิภาพมาก

การทำความเข้าใจเกี่ยวกับพฤติกรรมของผู้บริโภคและการเรียนรู้ในสิ่งที่ผู้บริโภคต้องการจากธุรกิจเป็นสิ่งที่สำคัญมาก พฤติกรรมของผู้บริโภครวมถึงกิจกรรมที่เกิดทางจิตใจและการตอบสนองทางอารมณ์และร่างกายของคนที่ใช้ระหว่างการคัดเลือก การซื้อ การใช้ และการจัดการผลิตภัณฑ์และบริการที่ตอบสนองความพึงพอใจ พฤติกรรมของผู้บริโภคไม่เพียงแต่การตรวจสอบพฤติกรรมของผู้บริโภคที่แสดงออกเท่านั้น แต่ยังมีเหตุผลสำหรับพฤติกรรมเหล่านั้นด้วย

ด้วยวิธีทางการตลาดจะมีการวางแผนแบรนด์เพื่อสร้างการรับรู้ด้วย การพิจารณา การทำให้ชอบมากกว่า การตัดสินใจซื้อ ความจงรักภักดี และการสนับสนุนกระบวนการซื้อ นักการตลาดมุ่งเน้นบริบทของแบรนด์ที่จะผลักดัน "ข้อความสำคัญ" ไปยังผู้บริโภคเพื่อประสิทธิผลทางการตลาดด้วยการใช้เครื่องมือเพื่อการสื่อสารการตลาด เช่น การโฆษณา การประชาสัมพันธ์ การส่งเสริมการขาย การตลาดทางตรง การตลาดแบบมีปฏิสัมพันธ์ เป็นต้น

ในยุคดิจิทัล นักการตลาดเลือกสรรสื่อใหม่ที่เหมาะสมกับการใช้ชีวิตและดึงดูดผู้บริโภคด้วยการใช้ S.E.O., Blog, Google, Website, Email Marketing, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube เป็นต้น อย่างไรก็ตามมุมมองด้านผู้บริโภคแสดงให้เห็นถึงการใช้ชีวิตตามแนวทางของปัจเจกชนภายใต้ความพึงพอใจในสื่อใหม่ ซึ่งเป็นเหตุผลที่สำคัญมากที่นักการตลาดต้องตระหนักในกระบวนการวางแผนเชิงกลยุทธ์

คำสำคัญ: การสื่อสารการตลาด พฤติกรรมผู้บริโภค ยุคดิจิทัล การตลาดสื่อสังคม

⁸ Assistant Professor ,Instructor, Master of Communication Arts Program,
School of Communication Arts, Sripatum University

Abstract

Marketing communication is a fundamental and complex part of marketing efforts, which firms attempt to inform, persuade, and remind consumers as directly or indirectly to describe as all the messages and media to communicate the products and brands that they sell. That makes marketing communications be extremely powerful.

Understanding consumer behavior and learning what consumer wants from the business is very important. Consumer behavior includes mental activity and emotional and physical responses of people during their selecting, purchasing, using and disposing of products and services which make them satisfy. It examines not only what behaviors of consumer exhibit but also the reasons for those behaviors

Brand, by the way of marketing, is planned for awareness, consideration, preference, action, loyalty, and advocacy. Marketers focus on brand context to push the “Message” to customers in the way of marketing effectiveness. They select tool for marketing communication as advertising, public relations, sales promotion, direct marketing, interactive marketing, etc.

In digital era, marketers determine new media to match lifestyle and impress consumers as Search Engine Optimization (S.E.O.), blog, Google, website, Email marketing, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, etc. However; for consumers' perspective, they have individual lifestyles up to their satisfaction in new media. This is the important reason for marketers to realize in the process of strategic planning.

Keywords: Marketing communication, Consumer behavior, Digital era, Social media marketing

Introduction

Marketing communication (MarCom) is a fundamental and complex part of marketing efforts that can be described as all the messages and media to communicate with the market. Marketing communications are the means by which firms attempt to inform, persuade, and remind consumers- directly, or indirectly - about the products and brands that they sell (Kotler and Keller, 2009). Marketing communication includes advertising, direct marketing, branding, packaging, online presence, printed materials, PR activities, sales presentations, sponsorships, trade show appearances and more.

To provide value and customer satisfaction, effect target customers, enhance the value of the company, improve products and services, create a competitive advantage, expand the knowledge base in the field of marketing; many product decisions are answered routinely every day. By achievement, "All marketing decisions are based on assumptions and knowledge of consumer behavior," (Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2007). Researching consumer behavior is a complex process, however how to understanding consumer behavior is critical to marketers for their professional also.

Consumer behavior is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations in the selecting, purchasing, using, and disposing of goods and services to satisfy needs and desires. It examines not only what behaviors of consumer exhibit but also the reasons for those behaviors (Gibler & Nelson, 1998). Consumer behavior includes mental activity, emotional and physical that people use during selection, purchase, use and dispose of products and services that satisfy their needs and desires (Kotler, & Armstrong, 2010).

In digital era, social context is evolved rapidly in the world of social media as; Facebook, LinkedIn, Youtube, Instagram etc. Consumers are increasingly digital experience. They are constantly connected through the internet via a variety of devices and networks. This digital connectivity raises new opportunities and

challenges for organizations striving to manage their consumer communications to create brand value. While marketers now have more means than ever to reach, engage with, and influence consumers, knowledge of and expertise in managing intensive tools is essential for success.

However, consumer behavior leads to a purchase decision on the basis of different buying motives of product choice, location choice, brand choice, and other choices. The purchase decision comes from demand that marketers increase by matching new media to consumers. Therefore, marketing process by marketers need to influence consumers behavior to increase their purchases.

Social Media Marketing

In social media context, consumers are rapidly adopting social networking sites, engaging in micro-blogging, and downloading applications for smartphones to enhance their social lives and promote sharing and communication with friends and family (Richardson 2010). Interactive Marketing (2012) shares about research from LoyaltyOne, Northwestern and Ivey Business School which demonstrates up to 30% increase in purchase behavior from social media participants. Transaction-based proof that social media participation increases purchases is the outcome of a research.

However, Rogers (2011) shares "Rethinking the Marketing Funnel" of awareness, consideration, preference, action, loyalty, and advocacy with OLD: Broadcast and NEW: Customer Networks which in this article focusing in New Side: Customer Networks; see Figure 1.

He points about 6 factors in marketing process and the New Side of new media using as followings.

1. *Awareness*: social media using as Search, Buzz, Blogs
2. *Consideration*: social media using as Online Research, User Reviews

3. *Preference*: social media using as Social Networks, Youtube, Local Search
4. *Action*: social media using as Group Discount, Purchase Online/In Store/Mobile
5. *Loyalty*: social media using as Friending (FB, Twitter, email), Customized Up-Selling
6. *Advocacy*: social media using as Reviews, Links, Likes, Social Buzz

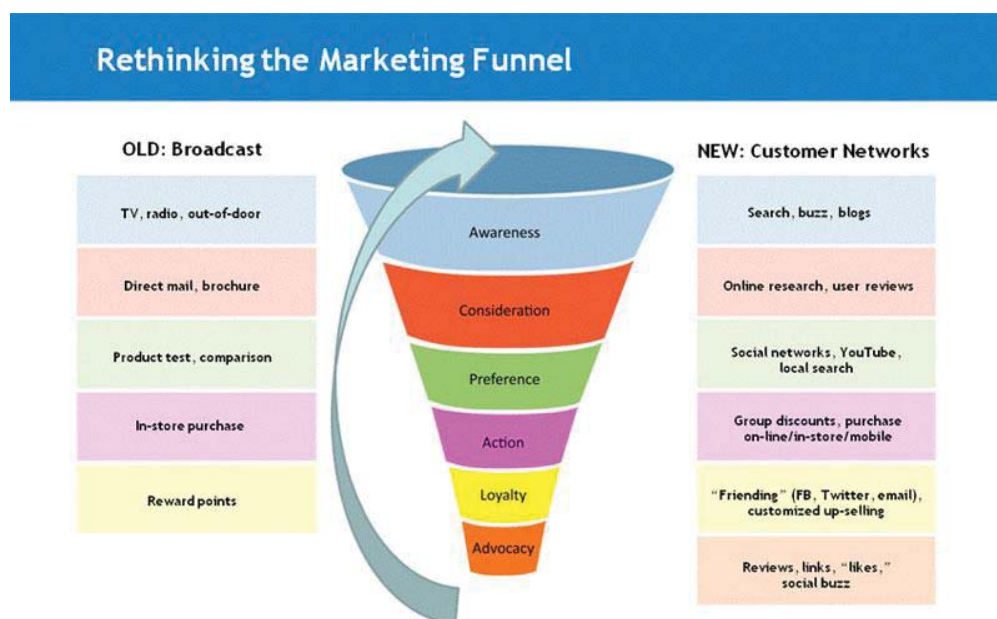


Figure 1. Rethinking the Marketing Funnel, D. Roger 2011

This figure, for New Side: Customer Networks, demonstrate by the way of "Filtration" on dual sides: marketing goals from awareness to advocacy to match consumer behavior in social media using. Digital consumers, exactly, use social media by their satisfaction therefore marketers should well plan for this point.

Another social media marketing model in this article, Periman (2013) points about Social Media Sales Funnel which consists of 6 factors, see Figure 2.

1. *Generate Leads*: social media using as Facebook Advertising, Google Advertising, Search Engine Optimization (S.E.O.)
2. *Build Credibility*: social media using as Website, Local Directories, Social Media Profile
3. *Stay Top of Mind*: social media using as Social Media postings, E-mail Marketing, Blog
4. *Drive to Sweet Spot*: social media using as Specials, Exclusive Offers, Discounts, Clear Call to Action
5. *Strengthen Relationship*: social media using as Personal Facebook Page, LinkedIn Profiles
6. *Earn Referrals*: social media using as Online Testimonials, Reviews, Get Introduced Feature on LinkedIn



Figure 2. Social Media Sales Funnel, Corey Periman, 2013.

This figure shares what and how in marketing process especially sales tactics in selecting of social media that fit with digital consumers. Consumers by behavior increasingly digital experience are very important for product decision making.

Marketers should realize in the way of consumer individuals' satisfaction of in each kind of social media.

The comparison of Social Media Sales Funnel and Rethinking the Marketing Funnel, is in the same way using social media for marketing communication. These two models reflect the marketing ideas in senders' perspective of communication process to strongly make consumers into the process of product decision making. However, "Content" for marketing communication is very significance for consumers.

Marketing Communication

Marketing communication, by definition, is a subset of the overall subject area known as marketing. Marketing communications have a mix. Elements of the mix are blended in different quantities in a campaign. They are the tools a company uses to deliver a range of promotional messages to its target markets (The Chartered Institute of Marketing, 2009) and essentially a part of the marketing mix which defines the 4Ps; product, price, place, and promotion, of marketing and promotion is what marketing communications is all about. The message of organization is going to convey to the market. Different messages are going to convey through different media.

In present, emails, sms, blogs, and company websites have become the trendy way of conveying the organization's message to the consumers. It is important though that the message given in one medium should count the message provided in other medium, using the same logo in on website as in email messages. Similarly, blogs messages should convey the same message as websites.

New media, marketing communication strategies require database-driven segmentations approach for advantage. Actually, by traditional and/or electronic means, firms must develop ways of collecting information at the individual level to create information intensive customer communication strategies. These strategies

should then employ the new media to generate interaction with customers. (Peltier, Schibrowsky, & Schultz 2015)

New media selection for marketing communication reflects important issues as Rosen (2014) points that reliance on reviews can vary across customer segments, rely primarily on reviews and more on the marketer as a source for information. This analysis should drive the marketing strategies to influence each segment. By behavior, the way consumers make decisions is constantly changing, so marketers should be on the game-changing technologies that can change the influence mix for marketing effectiveness. Marketing communications as strategic function emphasizes the strategic importance of such communication and its long-term effect on consumers that help to define an organization's relationship with its customers.

A successful digital marketing strategy is one that brings the brand of a company in the awareness, consideration and respectively the choice set of consumers. The task of marketers becomes more challenging because the Internet provides not only information about the brands known to consumers from the offline environment, but also data about numerous other brands and their features. In the Internet environment, marketing communication, the complexity of the search process increases substantially.

Consumer Behavior in Digital Era

Consumer behavior by definition is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, use, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs. In the past, consumers focused on average to make better choices and act more rationally. Consumers used compromise effect in many cases of purchasing in terms of price and features.

Recently, the research found something interesting in this digital era, consumers review written by other consumers, feature comparison charts. The better informed to customers about the actual, absolute values of products and dependent

on things like brand name, the effect becomes much weaker. Today, customers are better able to evaluate products for what they are rather than just how the products are described or how they compare with other options they happen to see (Simonson, 2014).

Manicom (2015) focuses that the digital era has and will continue to change social trends, which in turn directly affects consumer behavior and demands. Consumer behavior change can be hard to understand or even recognize. However, brands today need to realize that it is happening and they need to change and adapt their customer service accordingly. The digital consumer has the potential to unsettle current competition as well as new players in any industry.

In digital era, internet access is a key facilitator between internet uptake and the share of consumers who have purchased goods and services online. The internet has led to emergence of a “prosumer” which means an individual who is both a consumer and a producer.

Compared to the offline marketplace, the digital environment is much more interactive, allowing consumers not only to access content, services and products for consumption, but also to enter the market as creators or sellers of content, products and services through, for example, YouTube, eBay or other intermediaries. This potentially leads to innovation, creativity and consumer empowerment. However, prosumers cannot fully develop under current legal framework (Muller et. al, 2011).

Marketing Communications and Consumer Behavior in Digital Era

In Digital Era, marketing communications connect consumers in a vastly different set of practices. The digitization and networking of information transform for the success. Several of the core principles of marketing communication; consumer insight, data-driven decision making, cross-media integration represent an improved framework for managing communications. The role of media in marketing

communications practices shifts from the execution of message strategies into an extension of consumer understanding.

Brand, by effectiveness of marketing, is planned for awareness, consideration, preference, action, loyalty, and advocacy; from Roger 2011, see Figure 3. It is important for brand to adapt the message to the wants and desires of consumers. Marketers focus on brand context to push the “Key Message” to consumers in the way of marketing effectiveness. Key messages are the most important details to communicate about the company, product, service or issue to make consumers understand exactly what it is doing or selling.

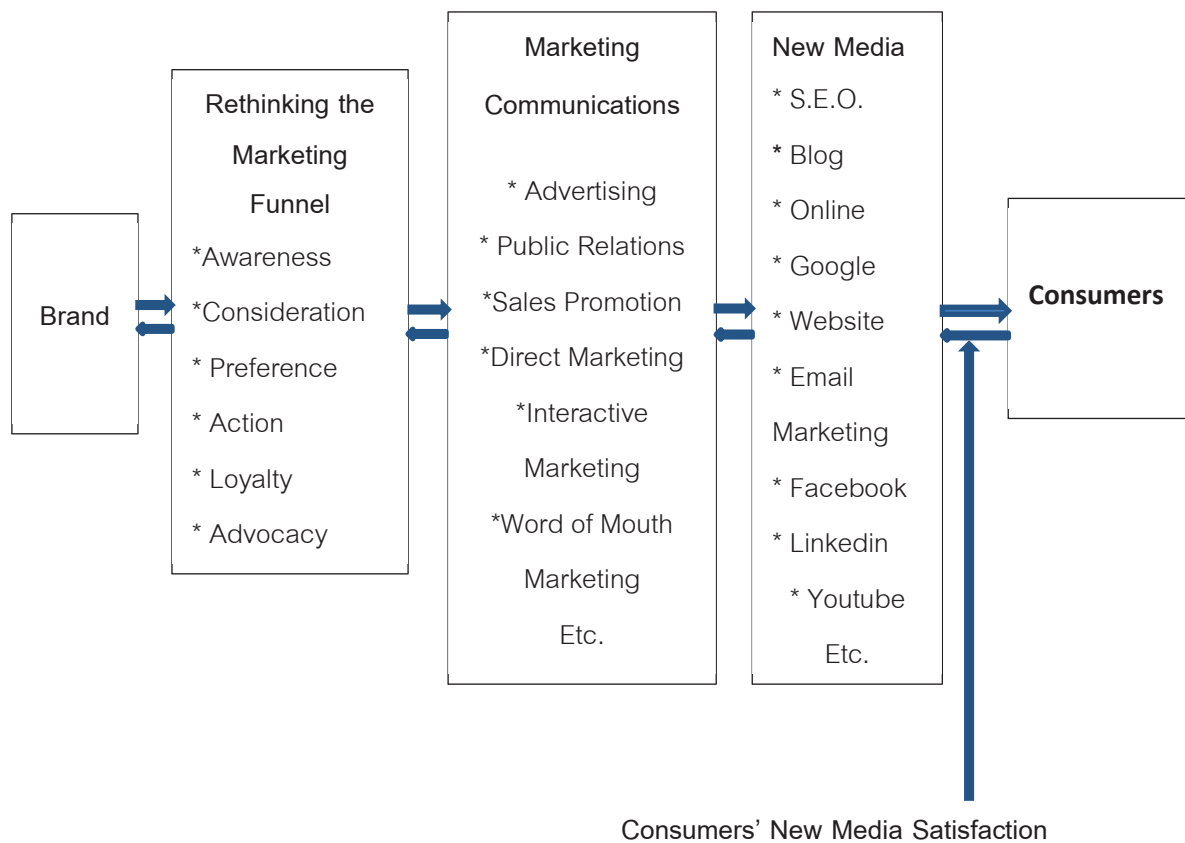


Figure 3. Marketing Communications and Consumer Behavior in Digital Era

Marketers select tools for marketing communication as advertising, public relations, sales promotion, direct marketing, interactive marketing, word of mouth marketing, etc. In digital era, marketers determine new media to match and impress consumers' lifestyle as Search Engine Optimization (S.E.O.), blog, online, Google, website, Email marketing, Facebook, LinkedIn, Youtube, etc. In the process, they have focused almost on stages of Product Life Cycle (PLC) concept, Business Strategy and Business Performance.

Mulhern (2009) shares on his article "Integrated marketing communications: From media channels to digital connectivity" that marketing communications in digital era have a vastly different set of practices for connecting consumers and brands with 'infinite reproduction of content.' The role of media in marketing communications practices shifts from the execution of message strategies into an extension of consumer understanding in a digital world.

Relationship between IMC process and brand outcomes; such as brand awareness, action/ sales, and brand loyalty; in Figure 3, are critical issues. Reid (2013) presents the research paper to examine the relationship between the IMC process and brand outcomes by employment a modified version of the Duncan-Moriarty IMC miniaudit (Duncan and Moriarty 1997). Data were collected from managers in both consumer goods and consumer services organizations. Reid indicates that the results show a positive relationship between the implementation of the IMC process and brand outcomes, IMC is used more in companies with a market orientation, and in those that encounter a high level of competition.

However; as mention earlier; for consumers' perspective, they have individual lifestyles up to their satisfaction in new media that reflect their behaviors. This is the important reason for marketers to realize in strategic planning.

Digital communications are increasingly "social, mobile, and local." The Web is moving far beyond its current state of connecting people and content as billions of devices with embedded mobile functionality create an "Internet of things." Consumers

are drawn into this world because it can satisfy their need to connect, create, consume, and control their experiences. Remember, consumers are seeking proof in the purchasing process and do not want to be educated from sellers.

Bibliography

- Gibler, K.M. & Nelson, S.L. (1998). *Consumer behavior applications to real estate*. Paper presented at the American Real Estate Society Meeting.
- Hajli, M. N. (2014). A study of the impact of social media on consumers. *International Journal of Market Research* Vol. 56 Issue 3.
- Hawkins, D.I.; Mothersbaugh, D.L.& Best, R.J. (2007). *Consumer behavior: Building marketing strategy*. Boston: McGraw-Hill/Irwin
- Interact Marketing. (2012). *Social Media Engagement Drives Sales, Study Reveals*. Retrieved from <http://www.interactmarketing.com/social-media-engagement-drives-sales-study-reveals/>
- Kotler, P. & Armstrong, G. (2010). *Principles of marketing*. (13th ed.) Pearson.
- Kotler, P. & Keller, K. (2009). *Marketing management*. Pearson Education.
- Manicom, S. (2015). How digital is changing consumer behaviour. Retrieved from <http://www.mediavisioninteractive.com/blog/social-media/how-digital-is-changing-consumer-behaviour/>
- Muller, P., Damgaard, M., Litchfield, A., Lewis, M., & Hörnle, J. (2011). *Consumer behaviour in a digital environment*. Policy Department Economic and Scientific Policy, European Parliament, B-1047 Brussels.
- Mulhern, F. (2009). Integrated marketing communications: From media channels to digital connectivity. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, Volumn 15, 2009-Issue 2-3: Integrated Marketing Communications, pp. 85-101.
- Peltier, J.W.; Schibrowsky, J.A. & Schultz, D.E. (2015). *Interactive integrated*

- marketing communication: combining the power of IMC, the new media and database marketing. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02650487.2003.11072841>
- Periman, C. (2013). How to use social media to sell. Retrieved from <http://ebootcamp.com/blog/2013/10/21/how-to-use-social-media-to-sell/>
- Perner, L. Consumer behavior: The psychology of marketing. Retrieved from <http://www.consumerpsychologist.com/>
- Reid, M. (2013). Performance auditing of integrated marketing communication (IMC) Actions and outcomes. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00913367.2005.10639208?src=rcsys>
- Richardson, T. G. (2010). "Internet/E-Commerce Statistics," Retrieved from www.witiger.com/ecommerce/ecommercestatistics.htm.
- Rogers, D. (2011). The network is your customer. Yale University Press.
- Rosen, E. and Simonson, I. (2014). How the digital age rewrites the rule book on consumer behavior. Graduate School of Stanford University, interview part. Retrieved from <https://www.gsb.stanford.edu/insights/how-digital-age-rewrites-rule-book-consumer-behavior>
- The Chartered Institute of Marketing. (2009). 10 Minute guide: How to plan marketing communications? Berkshire, SL6 9QH, UK.

