

# INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

Engaging consumers in a digital era

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# INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

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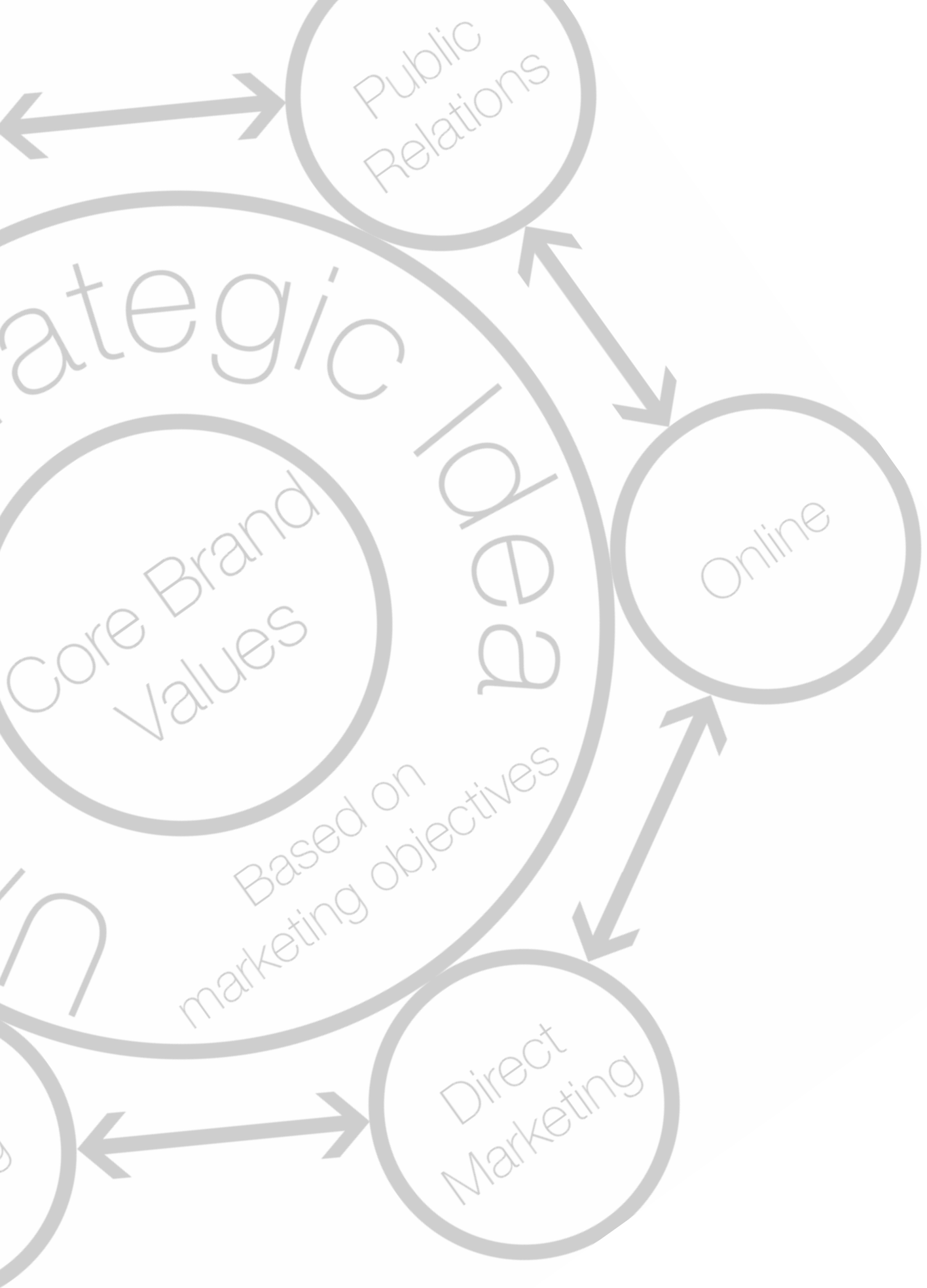
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## Abstract

Internettet og nye digitale medier har ændret den måde kommunikation og interaction foregår i det moderne samfund. Dette speciale omhandler hvordan denne ændring påvirker markedsføring og hvordan markedsføringsbranchen kan omfavne denne udvikling og bruge den til deres fordel. For at løse dette problem etableres et strategisk rammeværk under paradigmet for holistisk markedsføring til brug under udvælgelsen og integration af mediekkanaler til markedsføringskampagner.

Specialet starter med at filosofere over internettet som en teknologi der konditionerer samfundet omkring sig, og derigennem ændrer forbrugsmønstre, igennem Pierre Lévy's arbejde omkring cyberkulturer. Dette gøres for at danne et teoretisk fundament for antagelsen om at digitale medier har ændret kommunikation i samfundet, og derigennem har en indflydelse på hvordan markeds kommunikation skal gribes an.

Specialet konkluderer at markedsføring til den moderne forbruger skal skabe relationer og fordrer interaktion mellem virksomhed og målgruppe, og finder at digitale platforme kan skræddersyes til dette formål. Dette findes gennem en analyse af forskellige markedsføringsteoretikeres arbejde b.l.a. Kotler, Keller og Wind. Endvidere findes det nødvendigt at integrere og målrette markedsføring kommunikationen endnu mere end det holistiske paradigme foreskriver og integrere nødvendigheden af at skabe relationer i processen hvor mediakanaler udvælges. Dette gøres ved at integrere branding teori og brand værdi som kernen af enhver kampagne.

For at teste validiteten af de fremsatte tanker foretages et case studie af en af markederne indenfor relations og emotionel markedsføring, Coca-Cola. Coca-Cola's historie og markedsføringsteknikker undersøges, og det fremsatte rammeværk testes ved at blive benyttet som hoved analyseværktøj i en analyse af en af Coca-Cola's seneste globale kampagner.

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# INTRODUCTION

**marketing** | 'mɑ:kɪtɪŋ |  
noun [ mass noun ]

the action or business of promoting and selling products or services, including market research and advertising. the West-  
ern arts of marketing and distribution.  
[ as modifier ] : a marketing campaign.

ORIGIN Middle English, via Anglo-Norman French from Latin mercatus 'from mercari 'buy',  
(Stevenson, 2010)





# INTRODUCTION

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Ever since John Locke defined the right of private ownership as a mix of first occupancy and the moral significance of labour done (Waldron, 2012) and Adam Smith theorised about the free market, marketing has been an essential and driving force of western economies, and in extension of this, western society. In a society based on the basic principle of private ownership of physical and intellectual properties, the marketer wields immense power, as the foundations of societies are built on trading commodities.

Marketing however, doesn't shape societies as much as it is a reaction to fluctuations in said societies and as a function of this, marketing as a discipline has evolved with the society it resides in. Take a look at commercials from 50 years ago, compare them to adds made a decade ago, and then compare them to contemporary campaigns. The marketers are always trying to capture the vibe of the time, trying to predict and hop onto trends in society. Marketing is very much about being ahead of the curve, about doing stuff that's cool, before it's cool.

This thesis is a take on the discipline of marketing and the role of the marketer from the perspective of media studies. As such the focus will be on the nature of the marketing communications channels, with the internet as the central element. This means that important aspects of the marketers functions, such a legal and financial issues will be omitted, as the purpose is to propose a framework for marketing communications with focus on tight integration of marketing disciplines, brand values and the company ideals. All of this based on the assumption that new media has changed the way consumers think, act and interact with marketing materials.

### **The internet**

The idea of the modern internet was born in the 1950's, and was meant to be a network of connected computers that could be utilised by the American military for research purposes. This network was dubbed ARPANet, and went live on the 29th of October 1969 at 11:30 PM. This first small step in networked computer mediated communications consisted of the sending of a 5 letter text string, spelling "login" from a computer located at UCLA to a computer at Stanford. Unfortunately, the connection between the terminals broke down during the test having only transmitted the first 2 letters, but it still marks the start of the ever-connected, always transmitting society that exists today.

The technology has evolved at an amazing speed since then, and at the dawn of the new millennium the internet became user-centred with the advent of Web 2.0 and content creation and sharing tools for the common internet consumer. The internet has transformed the way humans interact with each other and by doing so, has changed the way people live their lives within an internet based society. This development has made the computer, if defined as a connected device, the super media of our time, by being able to blend different forms of media into one, and yet remediate and present them in new ways, changing both the content and form of the contained information. The way media is consumed has changed with this revolutionary super media, and it looks like the age of the mass media is coming to and end. Computer mediated communications has made the society polycentric, rather than monocentric, it has many centres because of the ability of the digital networks to mediate information from everyone, to everyone regardless of physical position. Every user of the internet has the ability to create content and publish it for everyone else to see, which means that the rigid structure of content creators and content consumers dissolves as the borders get blurred.

This has a profound effect on marketing as marketers have to adapt to this new scenario and need to learn how to harness this huge resource of creativity by creating relatable brands that consumers wish to advertise for through their content creation.

The premise of this dissertation is that marketing is a product of the society it exists within, and that the rapid evolution of media technology has changed the way consumers consume media, and therefore the way they are exposed to, and relate to marketing. This poses a challenge for the marketer, who have to adapt and change the channels used to communicate the marketing messages to the consumers. Marketing campaigns are increasingly being integrated, so that the different disciplines are being intertwined to convey a single strategic message. This is dubbed Integrated Marketing Communications, or IMC for short, and is becoming the de facto standard of how to do large scale campaigns in the advertising world. But marketers early integrate one campaign with another, focussing more on current communication objectives (increase sales of product x, for example) than on the overall picture. This thesis has two objectives: make it possible for marketers to integrate to do cross campaign integration and incorporating digital marketing into the promotional mix. This is done under the premise that the disciplines can be blended even further together by making campaigns based in the digital environment using the internet as the primary media and focusing on digital relations in the process of creating brand equity, thus moving away from the print/tv ad as the main pillar in advertising campaigns, and making marketing more personal, social and user centred. The goal is to combine a theoretical survey and creation of a strategic framework from these theories, with a case-study on Coca-Cola exploring how a successful brand implements a strategy like this, to validate the proposed framework by applying it to praxis.

**The strategic framework** proposed in this thesis rearranges the marketing disciplines into a formation based on the closeness of their internal relationships, incorporates online marketing as its own discipline and centres the communication efforts around the core brand values of the company. These core values are user generated, and are likely to change at a slower rate than marketing objectives, if they change at all. This means that campaigns based on this model will have user-centred core messaging elements that are interconnected, creating a holistic model for integrated marketing strategy.

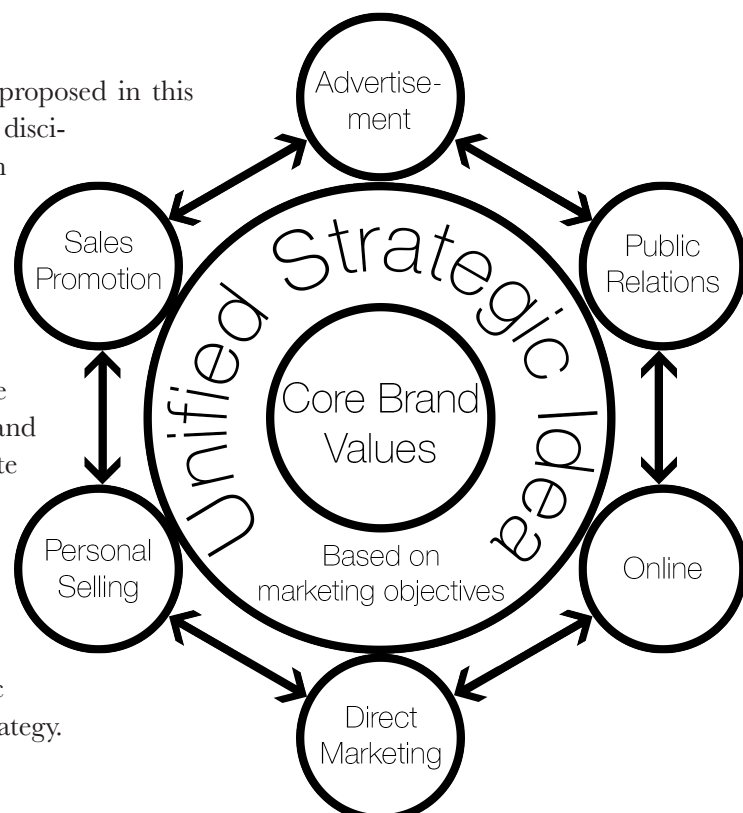


Figure 1: The final proposed framework.

### **The problem statement**

The premise of this thesis is that the development of the internet has brought changes in communications on a societal and even global scale, and that this has an effect on persuasive communications profound enough so that it needs to be incorporated into the planning on marketing campaign on a strategic level. This has lead to the formulation of the following problem statement, that has guided the work done throughout the process.

**What is the impact of digital media technology on marketing communications, and how can online marketing be incorporated in a generic strategic framework for holistic marketing to the modern consumer?**

To answer this it is necessary to explore the idea of technology, its impact on society, and how that relates to digital media. Furthermore it is important to look at marketing basics, to construct a state of the art to build upon, and to explore the relations between the two domains. Finally a discussion of the findings are key in uncovering the actual challenges that arises from using a generic framework to plan marketing communications.

# 2

# METHODOLOGY

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**methodology | məθə'dɒlədʒi |**

**noun (pl.methodologies)**

**a system of methods used in a particular area of study or activity: a methodology for investigating the concept of focal points | [ mass noun ] : courses in research methodology and practice.**

**ORIGIN** early 19th cent.: from modern Latin *methodologia* or French *méthodologie* .

**(Stevenson, 2010)**

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore the inclusion of online marketing as a strategic discipline in marketing communications and to incorporate emotional values into strategic marketing thinking. The outcome of this exploration is to be a strategic framework of how the different marketing disciplines can be integrated with each other. This framework is to serve as a strategic tool when integrating the communications efforts of a campaign and also enable marketers to easily integrated multiple campaigns each each other. When the framework has been constructed through theoretical exploration, a case study of a company that seems to have embraced the approach to marketing that this thesis is developing a strategic and holistic framework for; Coca-Cola will be conducted. This will test the proposed frameworks ability to strategically analyse marketing activities, and by correlation its ability to be used as a tool to create strategies. Thus, this thesis is mainly a theoretical project containing some additional elements of a case-based project to support the theoretical findings and improve the validity of the conclusions drawn from the theories. The dissertation is split into 3 major parts: the theoretical discussion, the case study, and a discussion of the viability of the digital IMC plan. This structure means that different methodologies must be used and blended together.

From a philosophical standpoint the thesis approaches the generation of knowledge through hermeneutics. The idea behind this is that throughout the process the knowledge that is gained and the interpretations that is made will be utilised in the process going forward. In praxis this means that every time a conclusion is drawn it will become the foundation of the next step in the process, and the size of the knowledge pool created will expand because of it. In this case it is the development of a theoretical understanding of the domains that will enable the development of a framework through a more and more specialised view of the subject matter. The process starts with my current knowledge and preconceptions of the domain. Understanding and interpretation in hermeneutics is a circular motion as an exploration of each element of a whole will develop a new understanding of the whole that in turn will develop a new understanding of the individual parts of the whole (Holm, 2013, p. 83). This means that I explore my preconceptions about the domain by operationalising the elements of a theory I gain a new perspective of the theory as a whole, which closes the circle and lets me build on this understanding adding another theory thus creating a new loop. In addition to this hermeneutic approach I will conduct a case study to test the validity of the conclusions that are drawn from another perspective.

The theoretical part of the thesis is to be developed by using the method of eclecticism. This is a methodology that recognises that in any given scientific research process, the empirical data that the researcher analyses and bases her conclusion on, are chosen by the researcher. This means that there will always be a bias of some sort, as it's impossible to include every piece of empirical data available in any given analysis (Køppe, 2012, p. 13). The basis of this understanding of the scientific process is that it is impossible the create new knowledge or new understanding without drawing on previous works, which are consciously or subconsciously chosen, or discarded. In other words, one cannot gain a scientific understanding of something in a developmental vacuum (Køppe, 2012, p. 1).

The method of eclecticism is the constructive use of this preliminary bias by creating inter-theoretical relations between the empirical data chosen by the researcher on the basis of her preliminary understanding of the subject (Køppe, 2012, p. 2). In praxis, this means that the researcher uses bits and pieces from different theories, analyses them and pieces them

together to form new relations and thereby, a new viewpoint of the subject matter - which is how new knowledge is created in the framework of the scientific theory hermeneutics.

The point of using eclecticism in a dissertation of this type is that every project has its origins in a theoretical question posed by the researcher. This hypothesis is naturally biased by the experience and knowledge of the researcher. Recognising this and using it as a strength rather than a weakness is key to arrive at valid conclusions.

Another method that is used alongside the eclectic gathering of empirical data is the auto-ethnography. This is a method where the researcher starts by looking inwards and using her own actions and experiences to generate knowledge about a subject matter. The auto-ethnography is a method that mixes social science studies with study of literature (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2010). It is useful for gaining insight into what is already known by the researcher, and identifying further problems that might be taken into consideration in the hypothesis. This process identifies the bias of the researcher which gives her the opportunity to choose empirical data that will balance her knowledge, by challenging the proposed hypothesis.

The second part of the thesis is a case study. As explained earlier, this is done in order to validate the conclusion drawn from the theoretical discussion. This is done to validate the conclusion drawn from the theoretical discussion, and because the case study is a method that allows for simplification of very complex problems, such as a digital media strategy, which consists of several interconnected parts. The focus of a case study is to generate an understanding of an object, in this case, the marketing strategy of Coca-Cola campaign, by examining the context in which the object exists (De Vaus, 2001, p. 220). For the purpose of this dissertation, this means that the digital strategy is to be examined in relation to the media in which it is conducted, meaning that the case study is about analysing the actions taken by the company to deduce the strategic idea behind them. In other terms, the actions of the company has to be operationalised to create a foundation for the understanding of the subject matter (De Vaus, 2001, p. 24).

In order for the case study to validate the theoretical framework, it must itself be valid. De Vaus defines two types of validity that is the core of any research design: internal and external validity. Internal validity in a case study is the degree to which the design of the study allows the researcher to draw unequivocal conclusions (De Vaus, 2001, p. 28). In the case of this dissertation, the case study in itself is apart of the research design in order to improve the internal validity of the entire study. The purpose is to observe the actions of a market leader in order to validate the proposed theoretical framework. It is also a way to implement considerations for problems/solutions for situations that occur in praxis, but aren't sufficiently covered by the selected theories. Although the case study does improve the overall internal validity of the dissertation, it is important to note that it is impossible to eliminate equivocation in the drawn conclusions (De Vaus, 2001, p. 28).

The other core concept defined by De Vaus is external validity. This refers to the degree of generalisation that could possibly be drawn from the conclusions of the case study (De Vaus, 2001, p. 28-29). Using a market leader such as Coca-Cola, for example, may end in some of the result being specific to said company at the moment, but the way the case study is used in this thesis means that that is of no concern. The case study is used to test the external validity of the proposed general theoretical framework which means that the external validity of the conclusions will remain intact.

This thesis is about a subset of marketing where integration is key. This means that the overall view of marketing in this thesis is holistic in nature. As such, the case study will also

be conducted with a holistic approach. The view of De Vaus on the holistic approach to case studies can be paraphrased to fit on marketing strategies; a digital marketing strategy is complex in nature and consists of many different parts, but it is the integration and the sum of these parts that makes or breaks the strategy. “(...) The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.” (De Vaus, 2001, p. 221).



# 3

## THEORY

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**theory** |'θiəri|

**noun** (pl.theories)

**a supposition or a system of ideas intended to explain something, especially one based on general principles independent of the thing to be explained: Darwin's theory of evolution.**

**• a set of principles on which the practice of an activity is based: a theory of education | [ mass noun ] : music theory.**

**ORIGIN** late 16th cent.: via late Latin from Greek theōria 'contemplation, speculation', from theōros 'spectator'.

(Stevenson, 2010)

What is marketing? The definition of marketing in the Oxford Dictionary of the English language marketing is, “the action or business of promoting and selling products or services, including market research and advertising” (Stevenson, 2010). This means that any activity performed by an entity, commercial or non-commercial, in order to sell a product, make people use a service or adopt an idea, is considered a marketing activity. In marketing theory, marketing is defined as, “the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion, and distribution of ideas, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organisational objectives” (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 8). Both definitions also include activities that are not in direct relation to the corporate entity and the proposed consumer, such as marketing research. This means that marketing, in its basic form, can be considered as the act of either preparing or actively communicating information about a subject in order to achieve a particular reaction from the receiver of the information. Marketing is about building relationships that create some form of value for both parties involved (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 8). This thesis focuses solely on a subsection of marketing; marketing that is conducted under the paradigm of integrated marketing communications; a paradigm that entails the fact that all of the marketing activities conducted are tied together by a single strategic idea which communicates a single narrative across the disciplines and the media channels used for this communication (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 11).

The purpose of this chapter is to lay down the foundations of a multitude of theories that span different disciplines in order to create meaning of the theories combined, and operationalise the elements of the theories in order to rearrange them into a strategic framework. As this thesis is about integrating marketing in the digital space as a key component of marketing strategy, and it's been established that marketing is in its basic form, communications, this chapter will explore the effects technologies have on society, how communications are conducted in the context of these technologies, and the sociocultural impact of this. This is done in order to gain an understanding of why the internet as a technology has an impact on the marketing domain. As this is a subject that warrants a thesis of its own, the focus will be on communication and new media, as this is what can be utilised in the proposed strategic framework. The chapter will also explore the theory of integrated marketing communications, explain the marketing disciplines involved, and use this to build the framework step by step. Furthermore, the concepts of customer-based brand equity and Lovemarks will be investigated in order to gain the means to tie, or build, a user-centred element into the framework that will allow for integration across campaigns.

### **The modern consumer**

The advent of web 2.0 has had a profound effect on media and have caused the reinvention of lots of traditional media (Jennings, 2007, p. 178). The established media, with media in this context referring to established media companies such as the BBC, have adopted, or are trying to adopt, traits from cyberculture in an attempt to stay relevant to the consumers of the 21st century. The dominant takeaway is mass participation such as votes cast in programmes such as American Idol which have the effect of making consumers used to participating through media, outside of cyberspace (Jennings, 2007, p. 178). Companies who are not necessarily in the media business do well to keep this in mind when they have to sell goods or services. Cyberspace and cyberculture have changed the way consumers behave and communicate, forcing them to become accustomed to living in a world where participation

is key. "...The consumers of the future will have the means to behave even more like selfish, opportunistic scavengers if that's what they want. But the combination of their enthusiasms and the new digital possibilities will also lead them into deeper relationships with the material they like, while enhanced communications will draw them into richer connections with each other, whether that's hooking up with friends to share common interests or stimulating each other to explore new materials." (Jennings, 2007, p. 195) .

What Jennings is essentially saying here is that the possibilities of the internet and cyber-culture is a two-edged sword. The same tools that enable the greater amount of choices makes the consumers more picky, but also enables them to inspire and guide each other towards materials that they like, be it music, videos, or even offline based goods and services. It is this kind of consumer that marketers have to market to and if they are able to understand and utilise this culture, they can do so successfully. But this new type of consumer requires changes in the philosophy of marketing and in the approach marketers take. This section will explore aspects of what has changed in society to breed these new consumers, starting with a look on the relations between technology and society seen from a social constructive point of view, philosophising about correlations between social tendencies and technology. Then moving on to defining new media and asserting what impact it has had on the way communication is conducted. All of this is to determine the importance of cyberspace in modern society and explore why modern consumers act like they do. This knowledge is necessary in order to go forward under the premise that you have to know your target audience in order to market to them. But this is not just about segmentation; it is about gaining a deeper philosophical knowledge about how we got to the point we're at, which will enable predictions of the future to become more accurate.

This thesis is about the way digital technology affect marketing. In order to do this, it is necessary to define, from a philosophical perspective, what a technology is. Whether technology is one all encompassing thing, or whether multiple technologies co-exist in different contexts. The Frankfurter school of philosophy sought to explain technology by speaking of it's sociocultural effects, or it's meaning as a whole. French philosopher Pierre Lévy argues that this can't be done by making a comparison of Nuclear Science and Electronics, and the differences in how society regulates access to these fields (Lévy, 2001, p. 5-6). As such, technology is defined within a context that is dependent on the culture and the society in which the technology exists. This means that it is sensible to define technology in plural even within a single sociological context. Technology is an umbrella term that consists of different technologies.

This brings up the question if technology exists as autonomous entity, or if it's integrated tightly with the society it exists within. Technology is per definition man-made and therefore, an artificial response to observable human phenomena. This means that the technology is as much a part of the cultural and social context it resides within as its creators are. As it is impossible to separate a human from her material environment, or from the semiotics of her culture, it is impossible to separate the material world from the conceptual sphere where the technology and it's use-cases are conceived (Lévy, 2001, p. 4).

A premise for the development of new technologies from a humanist perspective is that the intended users of the technology are open to innovation and are ready to embrace the qualitative change in semiotics and environments that is the results of extensions of communication networks (Lévy, 2001, p. X). Another important premise for the humanistic understanding of technology is that the technology itself is no more than a sandbox for its users. The technology

provides a framework, or a set of tools, for the users to use and create content, and it is the use-case or the actual use that shapes the technology, not the other way around. In this context, the division of a system into three entities consisting of culture, society, and technology can be done, but only conceptually. This is because this model ignores the impact technology has on both culture and society (Lévy, 2001, p. 5). In this model, technology can also be treated as a product of culture and society, but again, only conceptually. This is because the three entities—culture, technology, and society—are not entities at all, but are made up of individuals. It is these individuals who have relationships with each other. No relationship exists between technology and culture, or technology and society, but the bonds are made by, “the multitude of human agents who invent, produce and use technologies” (Lévy, 2001, p. 5).

This can be tied to a model by Terry Flew that divides the correlation between definition of technology and definition of culture into three tiers going from relatively concrete to more abstract. Lévy’s thought about technology lies somewhere between the second and third tier where technology is defined by its use, and culture is seen as ‘social context’ - experiences of the entities living in the society. But where Flew develops a model that shows the correlation between technology and culture, Lévy argues that there is no such correlation qua the individual entities that makes up both technology and culture. It is all about individual relationships.

	Definition of technology	Definition of Culture
<b>First level: “common sense” definitions</b>	Technology as physical objects, tools or artefacts	Culture as ‘the arts’ and aesthetic excellence
<b>Second level “ contextual” or user-based definitions</b>	Technology as content or ‘software’, defined by how it is used	Culture as ‘ways of life’ or lived experience of peoples, communities, or groups
<b>Third level, “Communicative” or “structural” definitions</b>	Technology as systems of knowledge and social meaning	Culture as the underlying ‘structural system’

Figure 2: Relation of technology and culture(Flew, 2008, p. 54)

If these relationships are the producers of technology, then technology must have an impact on the society that these relations make up. But is the evolution of society determined, or conditioned by the advent of new technologies? It is important to note that the culture of the society in which the technology is invented, or adopted, plays an important role in how the technology is adopted and used, or if it is used at all. Think about the earlier example of nuclear power. Many nations around the world have adopted fission technology as a renewable and clean source of power. But other nations, such as Denmark and Norway abstain from using the technology because of resistance from their respective populations.

A new technology can have a profound impact on society when it is introduced, but Lévy makes the point that a society is conditioned, rather than determined by its adopted technologies, and that the same technology will have different impacts in different cultural climates (Lévy, 2001, p. 6-8). The point is that the advent of the right technology at the right time can nudge a society into a new phase, if the conditions are just right. But there is no telling if the society would have arrived there by different means. Lévy uses the example of the stirrup, a rather trivial and simple piece of technology to illustrate this point. The invention of the stirrup was a necessity for the medieval knights to be able to ride and fight in their heavy armour. From Lévy’s point of view, this is an indication that the stirrup conditioned a society making

the foundation of chivalry possible, which in turn made it the basis for the feudal society adopted by most of medieval Europe (Lévy, 2001, p. 6). But this evolution wasn't determined by the stirrup - it is certainly folly to attribute the change of the entire political landscape in medieval Europe, and the idea of hereditary rule, which still lives on in some form or the other in modern monarchies, to a piece of bent iron. The material device itself didn't cause these events; it conditioned them, as a small piece of the overall puzzle (Lévy, 2001, p. 6). In essence, people cause change by using, or inventing, technologies - the technology conditions people to determine the outcomes.

This view of technology makes the invention of the internet one of the most empowering discovery in the history of mankind. All of the sudden, millions of people are connected, independent of time and space, which normally are constraints for interactions. The internet is in itself a technology, but it is populated with various other technologies all empowering its users. In a way, the internet is a perfect metaphor for the relationship described earlier - technology conditions, people determine - because of its nature as a sandbox. The internet is nothing more than a network of connected conducting cables, granted a huge one, but nothing more without its users. The internet and all of its standards, www, http, html, css, php, javascript etc. is one huge conduit for content that is conditioned by these standards, but also conditions whoever receives its message.

The nature of digital technology is that it is fluid and in constant motion. (Lévy, 2001, p. 9). Moore's law illustrates this, as it is an observation of this fluidity. It states that the number of transistors that is financially viable to fit onto integrated circuits doubles every two years, meaning that raw computing power exponentially increases over time. This also means that at a certain point, the technology has evolved to a level where the amount of computing power is so great that the price for the average consumer starts to decrease, as most everyday tasks become a trivial matter for most devices. This means that limitations disappear and Lévy's thoughts about how technology is actually about the activity of human groups starts to become reality. He argues that what a technology is, what it does and so forth is all about the social processes. It is the use of a technology that makes it what it is; not the technology itself (Lévy, 2001, p. 10).

If we subscribe to this point of view, it means that the internet has been a deciding factor in conditioning the modern consumer. But we also established that the internet is a container for other technologies, so it is necessary to narrow it down to examine what specifically conditions modern consumer culture. The internet as a whole has many names. A common denominator often used to describe the internet in its entirety is cyberspace. But what does this entail? It is not what makes up the internet in a literal sense that is important in this context, but rather the philosophical thought: what is cyberspace?, what does it consist of?, and how do people relate to that?

The term cyberspace, which is today broadly used to describe all the content and interactions that make up the internet, as experienced by its users, was coined by William Gibson in 1984 in his fictitious work "Neuromancer" and means a universe of digital networks (Flew, 2008, p. 23). Lévy defines cyberspace slightly different as: a communications space made accessible through the global interconnection of computers and computer memories (Lévy, 2001, p. 74). The first part of the definition is relatively straightforward: cyberspace is the space that people use to communicate and interact and this is enabled by the technology of the internet. The second part is less clear, as it refers to computer memories. This is not

a reference to the actual physical memory of the computers that form the internet, but a reference to the data that I collectively stored and accessed via the network. This means that one has to take previous forms and means of communication into account when defining cyberspace in order to differentiate computer mediated memories from other memories; in this case, the distinction is between the data stored in digital formats and data stored in, for example, books. Therefore, if cyberspace is defined as a communication space that is made possible by the internet, it is important to look at pre-internet era communications, as these stored memories, or texts, are different forms of communication. In the pre-internet era a communication space required the physical presence of its participants, and accessible data was stored and accessed either through print or oral delivery. Communication among people has always relied on context. When written language was invented, humanity was faced with the problems of losing context, as knowledge could now be distributed beyond the presence of the original creator, meaning that the reader is oblivious to context in which the text was written by the author. This is true for every form of knowledge, stored on any given medium, and this causes difficulties in reception and interpretation of the texts. The solution to this problem is to create universal texts that are as close to being independent of context as they can be. The scientific community is doing this by sticking to the scientific method which means that the methodology used to create any given knowledge is described in detail, so that the experiments can be reproduced in different contexts, thus making the original context mean less (Lévy, 2001, p. 94-95).

During the development of semiotics when oral language evolved into written language, a loss of context occurred. Humanity has tried to bring universality to linguistic technology in an effort to create texts that can circulate anywhere. As a result of this, special requirements for decontextualising discourse have been implemented in order to achieve universality. But due to its technological roots, the written language is not able to determine the universal; it is only able to condition it. The universal, in this context, is to be understood as an attempt to introduce same meaning into every environment. In other words, the context of the sender is to be rendered not important by the decontextualisation, meaning that the receiver is able to perceive and interpret the contents of the text as they were meant to be (Lévy, 2001, p. 95-96).

In modern society, mass media is a continuation of this trend; it is a media that is tailored to a one-size-fits all mentality and is broadcast to a huge audience. It is compatible with a mental common denominator (Lévy, 2001, p. 96). Because of these factors, the mass media is unable to take advantage of the context of a single viewer, or receiver. (Lévy, 2001, p. 97).

However, when television content is streamed live, as for example during a sporting event, it has the ability to act on a different emotional plane. Although the context of each viewer is different, the medium lets them partake in the context of the event as it is happening. But the principal difference between this participation in the media-centric context and the oral one is that it is impossible for the viewer to be practically involved. Everything is happening at an emotional level, separating the viewer from the event by the physical distance (Lévy, 2001, p. 97).

*“The true break with the pragmatics of communication brought about by writing can’t take place with tv or radio because there is simply no place wiring these instruments of mass distribution for true reciprocity or nonhierachical interaction among the participants. Rather than giving rise to living interactions among one or more communities, the global context created by the media remains out of reach to those who remain it’s passive, isolated receivers.”* (Lévy, 2001, p. 97).

This is different in cyberspace, as users are in constant real-time connection with each



other which in turn enables them to create a shared context (Lévy, 2001, p. 99-99). The nature of the internet is based on hypertext which means that everything is connected. No matter what the message is, it is connected to other messages and to other people interacting with said messages, creating content in the form of comments and commentaries that spark debates in real-time (Lévy, 2001, p. 99).

Cyberspace has a universality, just as the texts previously discussed, because there are no official guidelines for what kind of information that can be accepted into the information flow. There is no regard for local semiotics (Lévy, 2001, p. 91). Lévy argues that cyberspace is a self-governed entity where said information that is uploaded can have severe repercussions on the uploader in the outside world, but cyberspace itself is in its essence, universal. (Lévy, 2001, p. 91).

Cyberspace has made generalised interconnection into a new form of the universal; a universal that is “not articulated around a semantic closure brought by decontextualisation” (Lévy, 2001, p. 99) meaning that cyberspace is able to carry the context of its information through its communal nature. It is a universal that unites its users through contact and interaction with each other, rather than totalise itself through meaning, as previous attempts at achieving universal texts have done. (Lévy, 2001, p. 99).

Cyberspace is able to reinstate some of the co-presence of verbal communication and is able to deliver texts in their original context in a fluid medium that is not time-sensitive. The global interconnectedness means that a student in Europe can attend a lecture from an American university in real-time and inherit the context of the college classroom from his own home, half a world away. But the same student can attend the same lecture at any other point in time and still inherit the majority of the original context. In both cases, the student is a part of a virtual community that extends the classroom and the discussion within into the digital realm, thereby extending the context of the original text (Lévy, 2001, p. 75). This is one of the defining qualities of Cyberspace.

It has now been established that there are different forms of the universal text and that cyberspace has its very own definition of universality. But what does universality actually mean? In the eyes of Lévy, in relation to cyberspace, the universal is humanity’s virtual presence itself. And what about totality? Lévy defines this as a, “stabilized collection of meanings of a plurality,” meaning discourses, situations, events, and systems are put in place to decontextualise content in order to make a text universal. The thing that cyberspace is doing is creating a way to bring the humanity, which is the universal, face-to-face with its virtual presence without depending on totality, which in this sense is the identity of meaning (Lévy, 2001, p. 102).

Lévy defines cyberspace as not being a specific technology or infrastructure, but a way of making use of existing infrastructures (Lévy, 2001, p. 104). The growth of cyberspace has been guided by three principles, according to Lévy: interconnectivity, the creation of virtual communities, and collective intelligence (Lévy, 2001, p. 107). These virtual communities are constructed on the basis of related interest among their users, shared or related knowledge and/or shared goals, just like ‘regular’ communities. Cyberspace enables this independence of the geographical location of the participant, which means that the pool of knowledge and experience that can accumulate is much, much larger than what is possible offline, even at, say, a university (Lévy, 2001, p. 108). Within these communities, there are sets of unwritten rules that participants follow consciously and/or subconsciously. For example, advertising is not only not recommended, but strongly discouraged within these groups (Lévy, 2001, p. 108).

Collective intelligence is defined as the grouped knowledge of a community, when this

community is working together towards a common goal, and is what Lévy refers to as the spiritual aspect of every online community (Lévy, 2001, p. 111-113). The many facets of cyberspace and its universality discussed previously makes it a perfect incubator for collective intelligence in the virtual communities (Lévy, 2001, p. 10). But it takes more than the existence of cyberspace to guarantee that collective intelligence will develop. As with any other technology, cyberspace is not able to determine, but only condition by being an environment with all the right characteristics for communities to thrive and grow (Lévy, 2001, p. 11). Lévy argues that collective intelligence is not the only thing that is created in these conditions. He mentions cognitive isolation and overloading, dependence, domination, exploitation, and collective stupidity (Lévy, 2001, p. 11). What these all have in common is that they require active participation which means that nonparticipants will be left behind, and people who haven't even entered cyberspace will experience even more exclusion (Lévy, 2001, p. 12). An example of this exclusion is the elderly who, at the time of the publication of this thesis, are facing a governmental ruling that all communications from public offices will be digital-only. But these excluded users are by far a minority in today's societies. In 2010, 88% of the Danish population had access to the internet from their homes and the average for the 27 members of the European Union is 74% (Danmarks Statistik, 2011). Out of these 88%, 68% of Danes aged from 17-74 years old use the internet to purchase goods or services. In special relation to the exclusion discussed above, and the example of the elderly trailing in internet use, the statistics show that 1 out of 5, or 20%, of the elderly aged between 65 and 89 are members of at least one social media service, and 50% of this age group use the internet for shopping (Danmarks Statistik, 2011).

Lévy argues that cyberspace is a thing that is here to stay and even though it's impossible to predict the future, it is possible to predict that the elements of cyberspace will continue on the path they are on now towards integration, interconnection, and interdependent system that are both universal and transparent (Lévy, 2001, p. 93). In the thirteen years that has passed since he published his book on cyberculture, this is arguably what has happened. Lévy continues this sentiment by drawing parallels to McLuhan's claims that the medium is the message by stating that if that holds true, then the message of this medium is: *"and therefore if the medium is the message as McLuhan claims, then the message of this medium is the universal, a transparent and unlimited systematicity, one that effectively corresponds to its designers intentions and it's users' expectations."* (Lévy, 2001, p. 94).

This section has been a shallow dip into how the internet, or cyberspace, can be perceived from a philosophical standpoint. The reasoning behind this is to form an understanding of how the internet has come to be a factor in consumer behaviour through the development of online communities and social networks. These communities feed the internet with information on almost any imaginable product in the form of reviews and tales of customer experiences through the entire process of buying a product. The definition of technology can be of value, if it is translated into marketing thinking. By using the definition of technology as something that is able to condition, not determine, as a metaphor for the impact of marketing activities, we are able to gain an understanding or at least a philosophical insight into why some activities work better than others. If the marketers get it just right and hit the bullseye of the current and social trends, the marketing will be 'adopted' and the nudge towards making a purchasing decision will be more powerful than if not.

The next section will explore 'New Media' which is an umbrella term that encompasses



some of the thoughts from the previous sections, but does so in the context of other trends and phenomena that have an effect on how we conduct ourselves in society. Through that we can gain better knowledge on how we behave as consumers.

### What is new media? a definition.

There is more to the definition of new media than the word suggests. A new technology mediating something isn't always enough to constitute a new medium and as technologies are bound to age and become, at some point, obsolete, the new medium must be separated from its underlying technology. Terry Flew uses a definition of new media based on convergence of three overarching terms: communications networks, content (media), and Computing/IT (Flew, 2008, p. 2-3). In modern society, these three converge in digital media which can, and does, encompass all of them. Flew defines digital media as being forms of media content that combine different characteristics such as text, data, sound, and images with the common feature that they are stored in digital formats (Flew, 2008, p. 2). The digital element of media content gives it a defining set of characteristics. Digital media is:

Manipulable: Digital information is easily changeable and adaptable, at all stages of creation, storage, delivery, and use
Networkable: Digital information can be shared and exchanged between a large number of user simultaneously, and across enormous distances
Dense: Very large amounts of digital data can be stored in small physical spaces (e.g. USB flash discs) or on network servers
Compressible: The amount of capacity that digital information takes up on any network can be reduced dramatically by compression, and decompressed when needed
Impartial: Digital information carried across networks is indifferent to what forms it represents, who owns or created them, or how they are used

Figure 3: Definition of Digital media (Flew, 2008, p. 3).

When looking at this table containing defining characteristics of digital media, then subscribing to the definition of new media as being digital media (Flew, 2008, p. 3), and finally comparing them to cyberspace, as it is discussed and defined in the previous section, the similarities become clear. But the question is, is cyberspace a new medium, or is cyberspace the carrier of new media content? It has been established that cyberspace is a communications space in digital form built upon a technological base of networked computers. This means that all of the criteria above are not just contained within cyberspace, but it is a product of the technological evolution of the internet itself. One could therefore argue that new media is an entity that lives wholly inside cyberspace, or to use a crude analogy, new media is the content and cyberspace is the pipes it flows through - the infrastructure that facilitates the delivery of the content.

But the lines are not as clearly drawn up as that. In the previous section, societal changes are attributed cyberspace and its ability to condition change by its status as a technology. So where does cyberspace end and where does new media begin? From my point of view, the two are interdependent and so intertwined that it is impossible to distinguish the end of one and the beginning of another - hence the complexity of the internet. Content becomes infrastructure and infrastructure becomes content. Cyberspace and New Media are therefore

an open platform for its users; a platform that inspires co-operation and creativity, and sharing of knowledge.

It is the premise of this thesis that this platform has changed the way consumers and corporations interact, and thus changed the way marketing communications should be conducted. Social media has made consumer-corporation communication infinitely more important than it ever was before. Consumers have gained an access-point where they can publicly voice their opinions about everything related to a company, its goods or services, to a huge audience. Websites like *trustpilot.com* aggregates consumer reviews from thousands of users about all kinds of businesses - a fact business owners have to deal with. The power of word-of-mouth is greater than ever before because new media has the ability to mediate word-of-mouth through cyberspace and a single disgruntled customer's experience can reach and influence hundreds to thousands of other potential consumers.

Cyberspace has also enabled near-global commerce - the global market is still limited by taxation and import barriers that vary from country to country, but product purchases are not limited by the physical location of the consumer anymore.

The rise of cyberspace and New Media have made consumers more critical, have expanded their options - which means increased competition, have made consumers want to participate in creation of products, and have given consumers a tool for their voices to be heard. They endorse their favourite products and brands while showing public disdain for the ones they don't like. It is therefore vitally important for firms to integrate their marketing and branding efforts in order to not send different messages to consumers. Fragmentation of branding messages will confuse consumers and is not easily hidden or forgotten in a digital era where information is ubiquitous.

The following sections will explore the idea of integrated marketing communications and how that theory can be altered to apply to a marketing and branding model aimed towards the consumers of the 21st century.

## Marketing

Marketing is a huge and complex subject. It can be split into two overarching disciplines, one concerned about building and maintaining brands, and one concerned on pure marketing. And each of these can be divided into a myriad of subcategories. Marketing activities include identifying the target audience, determining communications objectives, designing the communications, selecting communications channels, establishing a total communications budget, deciding on the communications mix, measuring the results, and managing the communications process (Kotler & Keller, 2007, p. 291). Branding activities include building customer based brand equity, positioning brands, considering brand resonance and the brand value chain, managing branding strategies, measuring brand performance, and managing brand extensions (Keller, 2012).

The previous chapter established the importance of cyberspace in modern society, and the fact that it has changed how information is consumed, which have an impact on marketing. The purpose of this chapter is to build on these realisations by examining a subsection of the whole that is marketing and developing a framework that integrates brand equity and online marketing into the promotional mix of an integrated marketing strategy. This framework will be a tool for developing multiple-vehicle, multiple-stage campaigns, with focus on building

online marketing platforms that convey core brand values as well as marketing messages. First the chapter will explore the thoughts of marketing professor Yoram Wind about how the mental models of marketing might need to change, and the importance of building platforms for consumers to interact with. Then integrated marketing communications will be explored, and its promotional mix broken down into segments, and their internal relationships will be examined. Finally the chapter will explore the core mechanics of branding, and a branding philosophy centred around Lovemarks, and incorporate this into the proposed model.

### **Towards a new marketing paradigm**

Building on the conclusion from the last segment it can be said that there is an increasing importance of segments of empowered and sceptical consumers. This is due to the enormous advances in science and technology, and it have resulted in increased complexity and uncertainty in doing business (Wind, 2014, p. 3). This means that traditional marketing have to be reimagined in order to fit to this new user base. Yoram Wind addresses this in his article by examining 10 traditional mental models for marketing and explaining why they're becoming obsolete fast. One of the key points of is that marketers need to utilise the resources that the new empowered user base provides them (Wind, 2014, p. 3). Innovation in different areas challenge existing mental models, or cognitive maps. The iPhone changed the mental models of mobile phones, google and Facebook changed the mental models of online advertising, Napster changed the mental model of music consumption and so on (Wind, 2014, p. 4). The point of this being, that through all of these innovations marketing as a whole has stayed based largely on the same values for decades. This means that the current mental models of marketing are facing several challenges (Wind, 2014, p. 5). Seeing as digital media advances rapidly marketing is affected by relatively new forces such as the emergence of big data, social media and a global economy that means consumers have access to more channel and device choices than ever before, which in turn result in shifting consumer characteristics (Wind, 2014, p. 5).

New business models, born out of new media, have implications on marketing activities. Co-creation involves the consumers in everything from design and development to marketing activities of the product in question. In this model customers become more like partners in the firm, and this is especially relevant for the segment of empowered consumers. This model naturally have major implications for the company's product offerings and development platforms (Wind, 2014, p. 7).

The open innovation model builds on the premise that including more people to solve a problem yields results on a larger scale than trying to solve the problems internally. Wind uses the iOS ecosystem as an example of the power of open innovation. Even with all the resources available to Apple it would be impossible to create all the content found on the App Store (Wind, 2014, p. 7-8).

New revenue models have also appeared with the rise of new media. Some companies have had success with reversing the usual pricing process by allowing consumers to decide how much they are willing to pay for at certain service or product, with the baseline being that the product/service is free. Another example of a new revenue model is the pricing strategy Apple have implemented in its App and music stores. This consists of a single, or more recently a couple, low price points for everything on the store (Wind, 2014, p. 8).

The holistic model is based on a realisation that consumers want a holistic solution, that integrates every activity on every touchpoint to deliver a consistent message. The challenges

in this is that a consistent strategy across all touchpoints often require cooperation between multiple internal and external stakeholders, and the role of the marketer in such a setup will be radically different than it is today. This will require a new mental model for marketing (Wind, 2014, p. 8).

It is this last approach that thesis thesis is trying to explore. Using Integrated Marketing communications as a basis it is the goal to develop a strategy with even tighter integration. Wind makes six points that he thinks needs to change in the mental model of marketing in order for it to succeed in the 21st century. These are listed in the table below.

Develop platforms to engage consumers in all the areas that traditionally the firm used to do by itself
Shift the focus from the traditional boundaries of marketing to greater coordination and integration with the other management disciplines and within the marketing discipline bridge the traditional silos to facilitate the delivery of a holistic offering involving all touchpoints
Augment your current offering with “on-demand” marketing and advertising
Expand the marketing capabilities to accommodate open invitation for all the marketing domains
Change the approach to strategy from design and execution of a single “best” strategy to the adoption and of the adaptive experimentation philosophy and approach
Expand the objectives of marketing (and business) strategy from profitability (maximize long term shareholder value) to include positive social impact.

Figure 4: Proposed changes for the mental models of marketing (Wind, 2014, p. 14)

The types of consumers found in modern societies today are empowered by new media, and require platforms rather than campaigns to be persuaded by marketing. A platform needs to engage the consumer in four key areas; Platforms for engaging the consumers as co-designers or co-producers of customised products or services, platforms that allow consumers to manage their relationship with companies, platforms that engage consumers as salespeople and marketing advocates and platforms to allow consumers to determine the price and value of goods offered (Wind, 2014, p. 10). The primary use of the platform marketing strategy is to engage consumers with the company and to create a meaningful relationship by making them feeling involved.

The second point is about bridging the gaps between departments in the corporate culture. It is important to integrate every department, doing every marketing activity in order to achieve a holistic offering. The communication that goes towards the consumers have to be seamless, and this is only achievable if the internal divides between divisions are minimised (Wind, 2014, p. 11).

The third point is referring to marketing techniques made possible by technological advancement in new media, and employed by the likes of Google and Facebook. As consumers prefer customisable products, customised and personalised targeted ads are a effective addition to regular marketing campaigns (Wind, 2014, p. 12).

The fourth point is about the tighter integration of disciplines, and how open innovation is a must for companies, since it is impossible to employ talent in every discipline and thus impossible to be able to solve every challenge internally (Wind, 2014, p. 12).

The fifth point is to change the way corporations measure the effect of marketing campaigns, the point being that they need to be more flexible (Wind, 2014, p. 13). The whole aspect of measurement of efficiency of marketing activities is not one that will be addressed

in this thesis.

The last point is a social one, and not one that will be easily implemented in corporate culture. It is based on research that shows that growth of companies whose core value is to improve people's lives outperform firms that are solely trying to turn a profit by a wide margin (Wind, 2014, p. 14).

The takeaway from this is that marketers need to develop holistic platforms that engages the consumers, and that the digital space is a perfect venue to do this. This can be implemented in the strategic framework by adding an online element as an explicit discipline to take care of these challenges, and making it a central part of campaigns.

### **The idea of IMC**

The subset of marketing that this dissertation is concerned about is called integrated marketing communications. This is a marketing paradigm that itself is a subset of holistic marketing.

Holistic marketing is a concept that is based on the realisation that the development, design, and implementation of marketing programmes processes and activities are all connected, and that all of these activities have interdependencies that the marketer needs to take into account. Holistic marketing recognises that a broad and integrated approach to marketing is necessary (Kotler & Keller, 2007, p. 8).

Integrated marketing communications has its root in the 1980s where mass marketing was the holy grail, and advertising where the go-to method for moving product. During this period of time sales promotion, direct marketing and public relations were in rapid development, and this meant that advertising was challenged as the dominant marketing discipline (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 11). This was the birth of Integrated marketing communications, that is the idea of combining the strengths of all of the marketing disciplines to communicate a unified message, to convey a single strategic idea to the customers, and to take advantage of synergies among the promotional tools to create a marketing mix tailored to deliver the right message in the right way (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 11-13). In a larger scope IMC is the coordination of all communications, all sources of brand or company contact with consumers. This is a good idea, because it creates consistency in the communications from the company, which leads to little to no confusion about a company's brand, its product or service among consumers, which in turn leads to higher brand equity (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 11). But the existing models for developing the promotional mix does not take branding and brand messages into account, even though it is included in the definition. Traditionally, the promotional mix is chosen to convey a unified strategic idea based on current marketing objectives. The model being developed in this thesis is incorporating brand values into this mix, and changes the methodology to be more iterative in nature, with the purpose of creating consistency through multiple campaigns, addressing different marketing objectives. This is in line with modern definition of integrated marketing communications, coined by Don Schultz, head of the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern university (Kitchen, 2004, p. 6):

*Integrated marketing communications is a strategic business process used to plan, develop, execute and evaluate coordinated, measurable, persuasive brand communications programs over time with consumers, customers, prospects, employees, associates, and other targeted relevant external and internal audiences. the goal is to generate both short-term, financial returns and build long-term brand and shareholder value.* (Belch & Belch,

2009, p 12)

This means that IMC is to be considered as an ongoing strategic process, not limited to a single campaign, and not just tactical implementations of communications strategies, but as a strategy for the company as a whole, as this definition acknowledges the internal parts of the process.

One reason it is important to integrate the approach to marketing is the sheer amount of information flowing towards the consumers. They are being bombarded with information from multiple media channels which means that a single message broadcast through a single channel might very well be lost in the information flow. An example of this is the amount of tv-channels available to the consumers. In 1995 the average US household received 41 different tv channels, a number that had increased to 104 in 2009 (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 13).

The goal of the IMC approach is to affect the behaviour of the selected audience by considering all the touchpoints between company and consumer, and integrating the message through all marketing channels that are relevant to the audience. The important take-away from this is that IMC starts with the customer and works back from there to determine and define which methods of persuasive communication should be deployed in order to affect behaviour (Kitchen, 2004, p. 7).

The promotional mix is usually composed of the 5 disciplines listed in the table, but different disciplines are starting to emerge as independent pieces of the puzzle. Belch & Belch lists the disciplines as: Advertising, direct marketing, interactive/internet marketing, sales promotion, publicity/public relations and personal selling (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 13), Kotler and Keller adds events and experiences (Kotler & Keller, 2007, p. 10) and Kitchen adds internet or cyber marketing and sponsorships (Kitchen, 2004, p. 30). The last section explored how one might engage the modern consumer, and concluded that online platforms are a tool that can be used for this purpose. Also technology is moving away from being mechanical and becoming digital, and this influences the behaviour of both producers and consumers (Kotler,

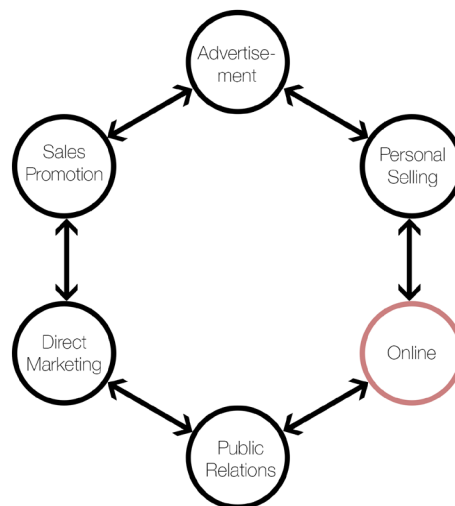


Figure 5: Online marketing has been added to promotional mix. Adapted from the promotional mix (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 13), and the illustration of IMC disciplines (Kotler, 2006, p. 430)

2010, p. 11). Therefore online marketing will be introduced into the promotional mix, as an overarching term for interactive/internet/cyber marketing, while sponsorships and events is



kept under the PR moniker. With this step the basis for the strategic framework is developed. In order to take the next step in the process it is necessary to operationalise the disciplines separate from each other and then examine their internal relationships.

### The disciplines

**Advertising** is defined as any paid form of non-personal communication about an organisation, product, service, or idea by an identified sponsor (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 19). The goal of advertising is to increase demand of a certain service or good either short or long term (Eiberg, 2013, p. 248). But at the same time it is expected that the advertisements integrate into the overall strategy of the brand and delivers a message that is balanced between the tactical goal of the current campaign and the strategic goals for the corporate brand (Eiberg, 2013, p. 248). In order for an marketing activity to be classified as advertising, advertising space must be bought, it must be non-personal, as in mass-media or the likes of it, which usually leaves no option for feedback. The digital age have somewhat changed this as more and more adverts are published on websites and social media in addition to being broadcast through mass media, but it does not changed the fact that advertising is still mostly produced for print and television. Advertising is the best known form of marketing, it's pervasive, as it is able to reach geographically dispersed buyers efficiently (Kotler & Keller, 2007, p. 288). It is a very important promotional tool, as it is possible to build awareness quickly through adverts run in different outlets. Advertising is also able to changes the perceptions consumers have of products or brands, and is thus a valuable tool when trying to build brand equity (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 19). This is one of the reason why the majority of marketing money is spent on advertising. In the United States alone, there are more than 200 companies that each spend more than a \$100 million on advertising each year. (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 18-19). This is because advertising have a low cost-per-thousand of only \$22.87 in 2007 numbers. The cost-per-thousands is how exposure of advertisements is measured, and is the cost the company running the advertisement have to pay the network broadcasting the ad per 1000 exposures. This means that advertisement is a cost effective way of reaching consumers (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 19).

A subsection of advertisement is called corporate branding advertisements, and have the purpose of branding the organisation in its entirety to a much wider palette of stakeholders than the regular advertisement that usually is very specifically targeted to a certain audience (Eiberg, 2013, p. 248).

**Public relations** is a very important important tool in the promotional mix. The public relations discipline can be split into two internal categories Publicity and Public relations (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 24). Publicity is defined as non-personal communication about an organisation, product, service, or idea not directly paid for or run under identified sponsorship. This is PR in a grey area between advertisement and the more 'pure' PR disciplines (Eiberg, 2013, p. 249). Publicity usually appears in the form of a news story, an editorial or an announcement, run in some media outlet. This means that the ad piggybacks on the credibility of the media. (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 24), and also means that publicity is about creating relations with key players, so called influencers, in order to blend the brand and marketing activities discreetly with the values of the cultural segment the company wants to enter (Eiberg, 2013, p. 249). This method poses a risk due to fact that editors exist, and the influencers are

independent people. This means that the company is not in control of when, where, and how the content is published. (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 24). More 'pure' Public Relations activities include communications within the organisation, investor, media and NGO relations, crisis handling, issues handling and some forms of CSR activities (Eiberg, 2013, p. 249). Public relations and publicity have three major qualities that makes it an appealing marketing tool; as mentioned above the credibility is high, it has an ability to catch consumers off guard, as it is not perceived as advertisements among the general public, and the potential for dramatisation of the company or product (Kotler & Keller, 2007, p. 289).

**Personal selling** is a direct communication by a sales person made to a single customer in order to gain a sale. Involves immediate and precise feedback from the customer that allows the salesman to adjust the pitch on the spot. (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 25). It is also an effective tool to utilise late in the purchasing process, as it has the ability to build up buyer preference, conviction, and ultimately action - closing the sale. This is achieved through personal interaction, cultivation of the customer by the sales representative and the human need to supply a response after being courted by the salesman (Kotler & Keller, 2007, p. 289).

**Direct marketing** is the practice of communicating directly with target customers to create a response, and/or a transaction. (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 20). Traditionally not considered an element of the promotional mix, but has become an integral part of IMC strategies for many companies. (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 20). Usually direct marketing is associated with direct mail, and mail-order catalogues, but it is much more. Database marketing, direct selling, telemarketing, and direct response ads. (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 20). In the digital space direct marketing has evolved into what has come to be known as targeted advertising. This is basically an evolution of database marketing enabled by big data. Entities such as Google and Facebook are able to use data collected from users of their services to sell targeted ads, that build on contexts of previous user actions. An example of this is Google serving ads based on previous search behaviour. These are also known as Direct response ads, and are ads where the customer is encouraged to buy the product directly from the manufacturer, immediately (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 20).

**Online** is the marketing discipline that is not always incorporated into the promotional mix. Belch and Belch defines online marketing as marketing activities that takes place on the internet, on cellphones, through kiosks etc. (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 22). The point of online marketing is to use the capabilities of interactive media to entice consumers to interact with brands and products, and also use the online platform to generate direct sales. Also, this discipline is incorporated as its own entity in the promotional mix in this thesis because it allows for the construction of branding platforms discussed in the previous section, and facilitates easy interaction between the consumer and the firm. It is my opinion that online marketing is becoming pivotal in the marketing mix, and at some point in the future will replace advertising as the main source of marketing expenses, because it has the ability to envelop all the other disciplines - every other part of the marketing mix can be conducted through online channels. Also, as discussed in the previous chapter, cyberspace is an integral part of society which means that online marketing should take on a more central role in the marketing mix.

**Sales Promotion** is also sometimes referred to as trade promotion, as it is a discipline



that focuses as much on the distributors as on the consumers (Eiberg, 2013, p. 248). A definition of Sales promotions are that they are marketing activities which provide extra value or incentives for either the customers, the distributors or the sales force the respectively buy, distribute and sell the products. One of the strengths of sales promotion is that it has the ability to stimulate immediate sales (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 23-24). An example of how sales promotion works in Denmark is the weekly printed advertisements that are sent out to households from supermarkets and the likes. These are wholly sponsored by the product manufactures, but are distributed by the retailer. (Eiberg, 2013, p. 248). On a more general level, examples of consumer-oriented sales promotion and trade oriented sales promotions are respectively: coupons, sampling, and premiums and promotion and merchandising allowances, price deals, sales contests and trade shows (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 23-24). Trade-oriented sales promotions does not stimulate the immediate sale as the consumer oriented version. Instead the point of the activity is to persuade retailers to stock, a lot shelf space to, sell, and promote products (Belch & Belch, 2009, p. 23-24). Sales promotion is in particular useful for short-term effects such as dramatising product offers and boosting sales (Kotler & Keller, 2007, p. 288).

Now that the promotional mix have been defined, and online marketing has been added as its own entity in the mix it is time to take a look on the internal relationships between the disciplines. This is important because tight integration relies on combining the strengths of each discipline to cover for the inherent weaknesses. In order to do this one must gain an understanding of how the elements of the promotional mix relates to one another - which elements are overlapping and which are farther away from each other. This will help the marketer decide which elements should tie into each other when planning a campaign, if all the elements are not used. While this section has been a operational look at each discipline, the next will be a more theoretical exercise, with the purpose of refining the framework, making it more useable.

### **The relationship between the disciplines**

Fundamentally, the promotional mix can be split into two overarching domains, marketing and public relations (Eiberg, 2013, p. 247). This should not be taken to mean that Public relations is not a marketing activity, it is just such an important part of the promotional mix that it can be separated from the other activities for this exercise. The purpose of this split is to illustrate the internal relations of the promotional mix, most of the activities can be considered to either be basically advertising, public relations or somewhere in between. Most of the promotional mix belong to the marketing domain, as they are aimed straight at the consumers, and have the purpose of generating sales from the communications. Public Relations are a domain all of its own because it is incredibly important in marketing communications. The figure above shows the overlaps between the domains, and the different disciplines in the promotional mix. As stated earlier the advertisement is the 'classic' form of mass marketing, and the majority of marketing budgets are still spent in this category. If the elements from figure x. that illustrates the marketing mix is superimposed upon this figure, it is obvious that Sales Promotion, Personal Selling and Direct Marketing are much closer related to each other than they are to for example Public Relations. This does not mean that these disciplines are any less important than the rest of the mix, but the knowledge is important when the overall strategy for marketing to the modern consumer has to be laid out. It has been established in previous chapters that the modern consumer is individualistic and critical, which is a perfect

suit for personal selling, but the way this should be integrated into the overall strategy might be through public relations conducted in the online space, which means the integration will be a hybrid of three promotional tools, and as such the relationship status between them need to be changed.

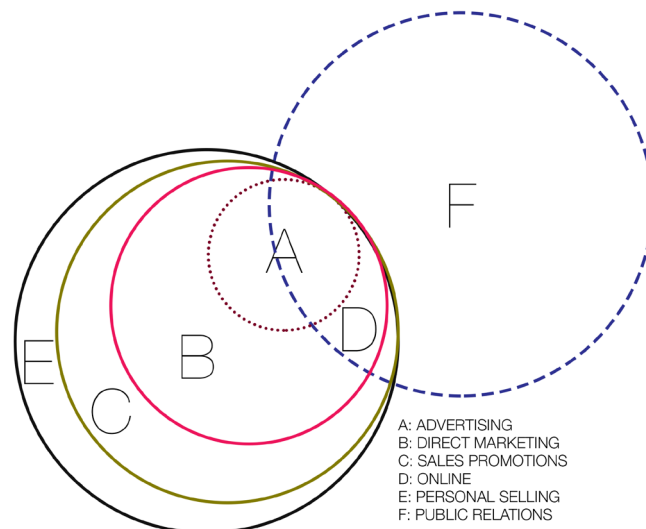


Figure 6: Illustration of the marketing domains, adapted from (Eiberg, 2013, p. 247).

This observation makes it clear that it is beneficial to rearrange the disciplines in the proposed model to better reflect their internal relationships.

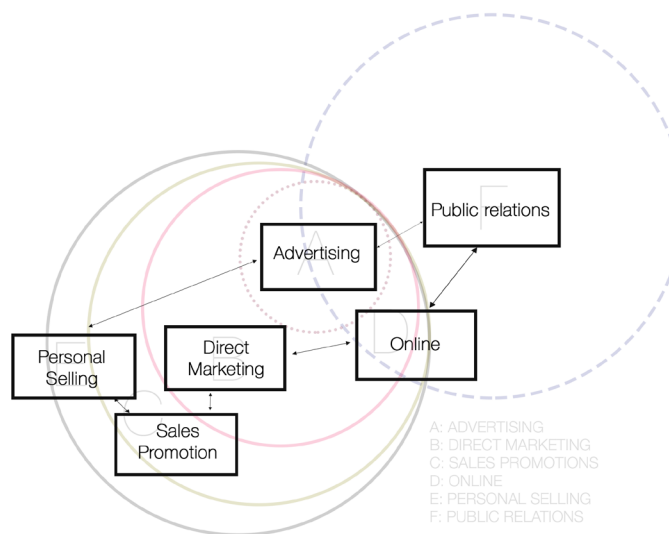


Figure 7: The promotional mix overlaid and connected to make internal relations visible

With the disciplines rearranged to better show their internal relationships it is time to implement the core of the integrated marketing communications idea - the unified strategic idea. This is the foundation of an IMC campaign and is based on the communications objectives

of the campaign. These objectives are separated into goals and objectives, and the unified strategic idea should provide a solution to both. This is where the integration happens, and as such it is necessary to incorporate it in the model. This is done by adding this element into the centre of the promotional mix symbolising that the unified strategic idea is connected to all the disciplines and all that is done in relation to the disciplines should spring from this idea.

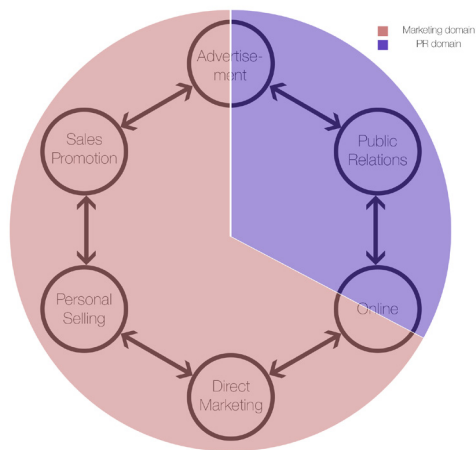


Figure 8: The promotional mix after being rearranged

An example of a goal and an objective for a campaign could be: Objective: expand the target audience by building awareness of [Brand] among a younger demographic. Goal: Acquire new customers. All the marketing disciplines are used in support of this idea, and they should communicate this. A unified strategic idea could, in this particular instance, be: A [Brand product] is more than just a [product category], it's an experience that is attainable for everyone.

This section has defined Integrated Marketing Communications, operationalised the promotional mix and incorporated online marketing into this, as a solution for the need to create platforms that reach further than a simple persuasive message, but engages the consumers to interact. The next step in developing the proposed model is to incorporate branding, in order to make the model usable as a tool in developing long term marketing efforts, rather than using it on a campaign to campaign basis.

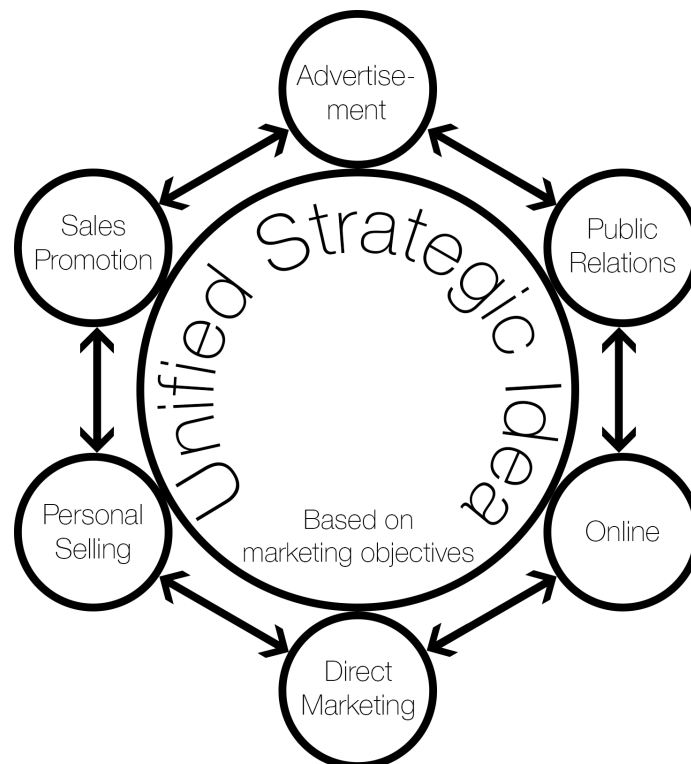


Figure 9: The rearranged promotional mix, centred around the unified strategic idea.

#### **A note on customer-based brand equity**

Customer-based brand equity, or CBBE for short, is a concept that is introduced in branding theory as a means to answer the questions; what makes a strong brand? and how do you build one? (Keller, 2012, p. 68). CBBE takes a user-centred approach to brand equity by approaching the subject from the perspective of the customer. This makes this paradigm a good fit for explaining brand equity in the context of this thesis, as it has been established that the modern consumer has become individualistic and critical and able to express these feelings through cyberspace. The basic premise of CBBE is the realisation that brand value, and the power of a brand lies with the consumers - their experiences with the brand is what makes or breaks it. "...the power of the brand lies in what resides in the minds and hearts of customers." (Keller, 2012, p. 69). In branding theory CBBE is defined as the differential effect brand knowledge have on consumer behaviour. An example of this is a purchasing decision of commodity goods in a supermarket. A brand with positive CBBE will have consumers react more favourably towards it, and this means that it is more likely to end up in the cart and get checked out (Keller, 2012, p. 69).

It is this difference that marketers should be aware of when designing campaigns, as it is these points of difference that should make up the core brand values, and as such be the implicit or explicit core of every message that the company communicates. And while communicating these values marketers should strive to make their brands even stronger by making them more relatable. This is where the theory of Lovemarks enter the picture.

#### **Lovemarks**

Kevin Roberts is the CEO worldwide at Saatchi & Saatchi, which is one of the premier advertising agencies in the world. He has revolutionised the business of branding companies by transforming his agency into something more than the regular run of the mill advertising agency. He has achieved this by guiding the agency along three principal ideas: Saatchi & Saatchi is not an advertising agency, it is an Ideas company. They create and cultivate ideas (Roberts, 2006, p. 21). The agency has to be one of the three leading agencies in the world, preferably the one in the top spot, and most important of all what is the next thing after brands? The answer to this question is what he has dubbed lovemarks, and it is an idea that is worth exploring. Lovemarks is all about relationships, and about creating an emotional response in consumers. (Roberts, 2006, p. 56) Roberts argues that due to the amount of information available to today's consumers, the most valuable currency available is attention (Roberts, 2006, p. 33). This information overload is one of the primary causes for the need of an emotional response. Because if a consumer feels anything towards the brand, the chance of getting a slice of the limited attention is much greater than if the consumer is indifferent.

Roberts argues that love marks is the next big thing, something that replaces brands altogether. But the way I see it is something existing brands should absorb, and learn to utilise in addition to other branding activities. One thing doesn't have to stop being a brand in order to become a Lovemark, it can be both.

## The strategic framework

This brings us to the final proposed strategic framework. The disciplines have been arranged to correspond with their internal relations, online has been added as a discipline of its own and the unified strategic idea has been centred around the core brand values. The result of this is a robust strategic framework for integrating persuasive communications that is both able to fill the need to achieve immediate marketing objectives and the need to build consistent long term communications.

The fact that the core brand values are based in the perception of the consumers makes the framework somewhat user-centred. This ensures that communications efforts planned by using this framework connects with the target audience in a deeper way because the positive brand associations that has been built are the basis for the marketing message. It also allows for a long term iterative approach to developing campaigns by building every campaign on the same core message thus creating consistency in the marketing efforts.

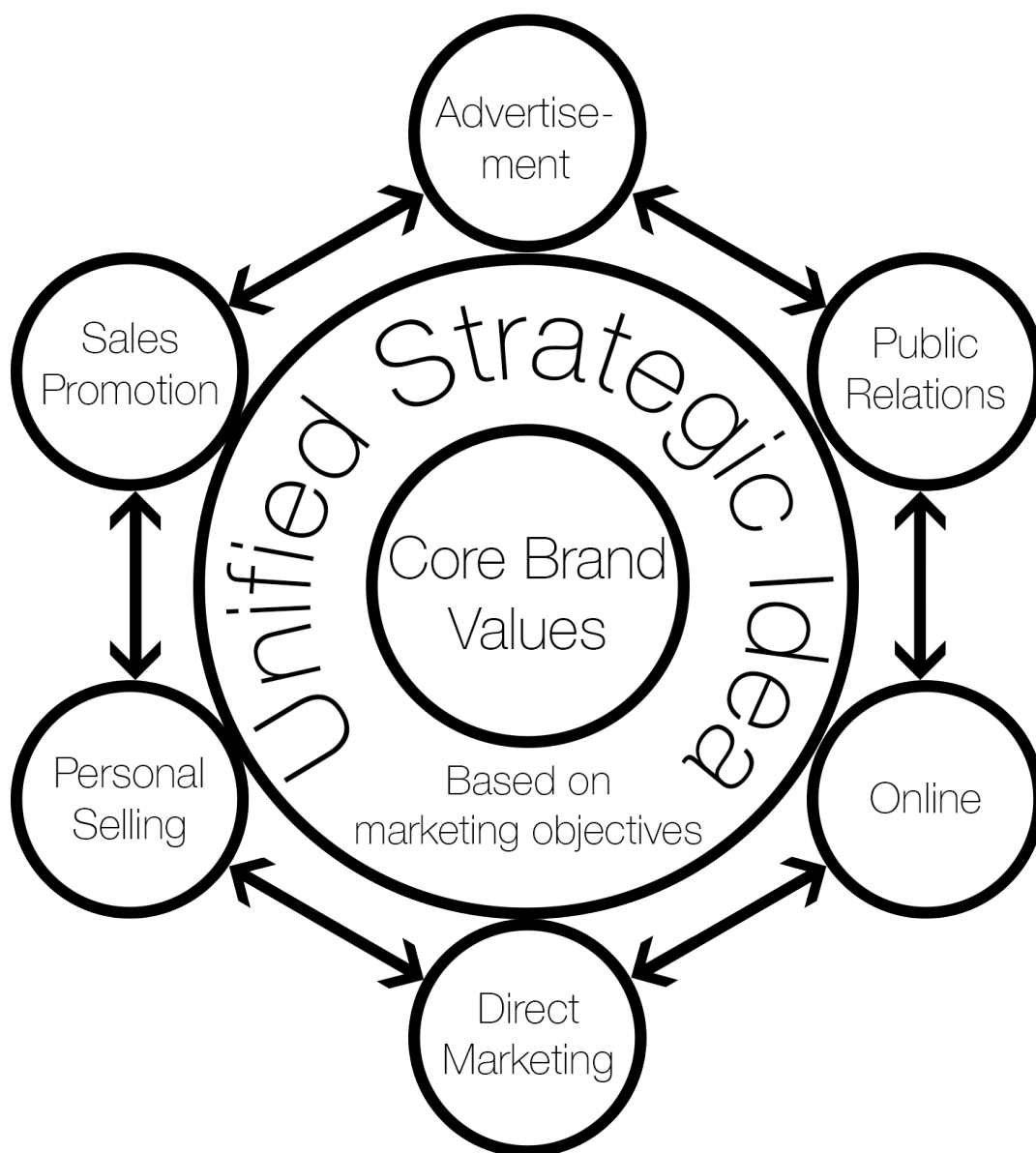


Figure 10: The finished strategic framework

## Chapter 3

### Theory

This concludes the theoretical chapter of the dissertation, that has been focussed on developing this framework. The next chapter will be a case study of Coca-Cola and their marketing strategy. It will analyse a recent global campaign conducted by Coca-Cola named #Reasons-ToBelieve by using the framework to deduct the strategy used.

# 4

## #REASONS TO BELIEVE

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**Coca-Cola** | kəʊkə'kəʊlə |  
noun [ mass noun ] trademark  
a carbonated non-alcoholic drink.

ORIGIN late 19th cent.: from coca and cola.

(Stevenson, 2010)

Coca-Cola is one of the most successful brands in the world. It has consistently been ranked by Interbrand as one of the most valuable brands in the world in the last decade, with it currently being the third most valuable brand in the world (“Interbrand,” n.d.). Coke has a strong online presence with more than 80 million likes on Facebook and numerous popular websites (“Facebook.com/Coca-Cola,” n.d.). Coca-Cola has thus successfully adapted one of the strongest brands in the world to the digital era and embraced the changes needed to thrive in this environment. This case study will look into the marketing strategies of Coca-Cola and what initiatives they are pursuing to build their brand and maintain its vitality. It will also analyse the strategy behind the #ReasonsToBelieve campaign using the model that was developed in the previous chapters, in order to examine its compatibility with a real world campaign that has already been executed.

### **A brief history of the Coca-Cola Company**

Coca-Cola was founded in 1886 by a pharmacist from Atlanta with the name of Dr. John S. Pemberton. Pemberton created a flavoured syrup that he took to his neighbourhood pharmacy and mixed it with carbonated water. Doing so created a soda that could be sold at fountains. Dr. Pemberton’s partner, Frank M. Robinson, came up with the name “Coca-Cola” and the distinctive typesetting which is used in the logo to this day (“Coca-Cola History,” n.d.).

Prior to his death in 1888, Dr. Pemberton sold a majority share of the company to a businessman from Atlanta called Asa G. Chandler. Chandler expanded the business by distributing Coca-Cola to soda fountains outside of the Atlanta area. The next step in the development came from an unexpected direction. This occurred when a reseller in Mississippi decided to attach bottling machinery to the back of his soda fountain, and thereby became the first to make the beverage portable by putting it in bottles. This sparked the interest of three entrepreneurs who in 1899 in Chattanooga Tennessee, set up the first large scale bottling facility after securing the bottling rights from Chandler for just \$1 (“Coca-Cola History,” n.d.).

### **Early marketing**

In 1887, Coca-Cola started their first marketing programme. This consisted of coupons promoting free sampling of the product and ads taken out in newspapers. Promotional items bearing the Coca-Cola logo were also placed in pharmacies around the country to spark interest for the brand (“Coca-Cola History,” n.d.).

A problem faced by the marketers in the early days of Coca-Cola was the lack of a standardised bottle to sell the beverage in. This was essential due to the fact that there were more than a 1000 different bottling plants at the time, each outputting product with different packaging. The product needed a standardised bottle that would be unique and separate Coca-Cola from the competition. In 1916, the bottlers agreed on the signature Coca-Cola bottle that is so distinct that it can be recognised from the touch, in complete darkness (“Coca-Cola History,” n.d.).

Since then the company have continued its growth, and has diversified its offerings without diluting the brand.



## #ReasonsToBelieve

The advertisement adopts a pattern of pairing scenes two and two, with an example of negativity first, followed by what Coke refers to as a “Reason to believe”, with copywriting that acts as ‘call and response’. The establishing copy tells us that there are thousands of reasons to believe in a better world. In between the shots with copy writing, we are sent back to watch the choir of children, which in itself sends a very strong signal, a group of children is a symbol of the future, and they are telling the viewer to believe, through the lyric of the song. The ping pong between the examples has character of everything from mundane things to big societal issues. The first ‘pair’ of scenes shown are a newsreader and someone frosting a cake. This taps into the sentiment that most of newscasting is dedicated to bad news, catastrophes, crimes, economical decline and the likes, contrasted by the universality of liking cake. It’s a macro to micro comparison, but it is almost universally relatable.

The next pair is targeting the viewers on a personal level, making a contrast that is widely relatable, and also is accepted, at least in western culture, as a fact of life that has become almost satirical: everybody hates Mondays. The visuals compare the morning commute, with three people sleeping in a train to a lively party where everyone is happy. It’s a stark contrast, it’s something everyone knows, it’s basically everyday life. It taps into an universal assumption that people enjoy having time of more than they enjoy working, which is an accepted notion in western culture, even though it might not be completely true »»»»



### **Success with product innovation**

When developing new products, there are generally three choices for branding it: a new brand can be established, the product can be applied to one of the existing brands, or a combination of the existing brand and a new brand can be used (Keller 2012, p. 404).

Coca-Cola uses all of the above mentioned strategies. Fanta is an example of the company creating a new brand for a new product. Instead of branding it as a Coke with a new taste, the company chose to give it its own brand, along with its own personality. The different taste variants of Fanta is then branded as their own thing, under the Fanta brand. An example of this would be Fanta Exotic.

Coca-Cola only introduces new products under the 'Coke' brand if they are variants of the classic coke. Examples of this are the sugar free products: Coca-Cola light, and Coca-Cola zero. This makes sense because Coke is so strongly associated with Cola, and introducing these similar tasting, but sugar free alternatives expands the target of the classic soft drink while retaining the Cola association.

New product development is often a way for a company to establish and maintain market power (Cannon 1978, p. 222). This is true for Coca-Cola, who uses product innovation to expand, and to challenge the competition. The company also has a long history of establishing new products, with Fanta being introduced in 1940, and Sprite in 1960 ("Coca-Cola Product Descriptions," n.d.). Coca-Cola has never strayed far from the beverage industry, but has tried to explore new categories in this domain. Coca-Cola excels in new product development due to their gigantic size meaning that there is little risk in trying to innovate. Because of this, they can afford to cancel a product that doesn't live up to expectations (Cannon 1978, p. 222).

One of the the most successful new products launched under the Coca-Cola brand is Coca-Cola light (Zmuda 2011). It was also the first brand to use the Coca-Cola name since 1886. Coca-Cola light was introduced in 1982 and created an entirely new category of sugar free, calorie free soft drinks ("Coca-Cola Product Descriptions," n.d.). Coca-Cola is not historically a company that makes sudden major shifts in its core product line, but the overwhelming success of the launch of an entire new beverage category with Coca-Cola light, might have made the management more inclined to try something similar again (Zmuda 2011). This might be why they decided to change the recipe of original Coke; a decision that produced one of the worst marketing disasters in modern history.

### **New Coke**

One of the most famous marketing fiascos in modern history is Coca-Cola's launch of New Coke. This beverage was meant to take business away from their main competitor, PepsiCo and their Pepsi Cola product, by altering the formula of Coca-Cola to make it taste sweeter, and more like Pepsi. The reason for doing this was declining marketshare (Zmuda 2011). Prior to launching New Coke, Coca-Cola drastically increased marketing spending, to try to recapture the lost marketshare, but to no avail. It seemed like the only option was to change the product (Zmuda 2011).

The next pair is an attempt at tapping into the internet culture, which by now is a part of most peoples lives, and certainly an important part of the lives of the millennials, who might not be old enough relate to the first two segments. The negative in this pairing is public humiliation, the visual is a student falling down some steps after graduating, in front of his entire school. The video itself is filmed in a style that make it look like it was recorded on a phone by one of his peers - it looks like a clip from youtube. The positive is a cat doing stupid things, a typical youtube video, with a copy that says that there is 500 funny videos on the internet. This makes a circle that other than millennials might not pick up on, the negative in this pair could be one of the videos that is the very positive, an extra depth that is appreciated by the internet generation.

The next two pairings are about the weather, with one being country specific, and the other about the changing of seasons. Danes complain about the weather all the time, and combined with the worry about climate change causing more violent weather this visual og heavy rain with the copy: "Even though the weather is often terrible" is countered by a football stadium full of danish flags, tapping into our national pride and love of country while stating that: "we're still the happiest country in the world" referencing a recent study that found the danes to be the happiest populace of any country in the world.

The next pairing is a variation on the same theme, but is not country specific. It is about the chaining of the seasons, with the sentiment that summer, with it's warmth and long sunny days are better than the dark cold of winter. This is a sentiment that is relatable, certainly to the danish target audience, since this is exactly how the chaing of seasons feel like. It is also another accepted "common cultural truth" and just like the one about mondays sucking, it might not be true for all, but everyone can relate to it, regardless of personal feelings »»»



Coca-Cola did extensive research to fine tune the formula, including extensive taste-test amongst consumers. All research showed that the new formula was superior to the old one, and with those results Coca-Cola launched a massive advertising campaign for New Coke.

New Coke launched in 1985, discontinuing original Coke in the process. This caused massive consumer uproar. Coca-Cola had not taken into account the rich heritage of the Coke, and it's ties to American popular culture. They didn't think that their consumers cared so deeply about the brand, and product - they hadn't yet realised that the classic Coke is a Lovemark (Roberts, 2006, p. 193). The company received truckloads of complaints per mail, and an astounding 1500 phone calls a day, complaining about the discontinuation of original Coke (Keller 2012, p. 4). This onslaught of consumer unhappiness was not foreseen by the marketers at Coca-Cola, and in the end original Coke was brought back as Coca-Cola Classic after being discontinued for only 77 days.

### **So was it a failure?**

Coca-Cola spend millions of dollars developing and marketing New Coke, only to have it flop massively when it hit the shelves. It is easy to describe this as a enormous marketing failure, and it is (Dubow & Childs 1998). But in a way, it did what it was supposed to do, just not in the way the marketers had foreseen it to. When asked whether New Coke was a failure or a success, Sergio Zyman, who was the chief marketer of Coca-Cola at the time, replies without hesitation "it was a success. Are you kidding me?"(Zmuda 2011).

The reversal on New Coke was expertly marketed by Coca-Cola and marked a form of rebirth for the company. By not having original Coca-Cola available while New Coke was reigning, the company had inadvertently created an enormous demand for the beverage, which meant that sales soared when it was reintroduced (Zmuda 2011).

So New Coke did it's job not by being the new best thing since sliced bread, but by reminding american consumers of how much the appreciated original Coke. What the marketers at coke originally failed to realise was, that taste is only one factor in the decision making process of being a soft drink. Consumers expect a certain familiarity when buying a soft erin with the coke label, and the sweeter taste of New Coke did simply not provide that (Anderson 1993).

### **Modern Coca-Cola**

Coca-Cola is still expanding and creating new product today, but one thing they have learned from the New Coke debacle, is to not mess with their core product, the cola. Coca-Cola is currently marketing no fewer than 108 brands in the United States alone. Of these 16 is grossing for more than a billion dollars a year ("Coca-Cola Product Descriptions," n.d.).

The company is also using other avenues to continuing being the market leader in soft drinks. The company is exploring social media, and is trying to establish an environmental friendly image, by giving back a litre of water for every litre the company uses. In the social Space Coca-Cola has over 33 million Facebook fans<sup>1</sup>, a massive marketing resource, that the company can put to use (Ignatius 2011, p. 94).

<sup>1</sup> A number that has reached 82,887,246 at this thesis went into print ("Facebook.com/Coca-Cola," n.d.)



The advert is now nearing its end, and the revelations that this is Coca-Cola trying to sell you sugary water, but before that there is a segment about a touchy emotional issue, the opposites being hate and true love. Hate is illustrated by people vandalising a car, while love is illustrated by a wedding. The thing that makes this segment a bit touchy is that the copy talks about “true love” and the visuals show a same sex marriage. But while this is a touchy subject, it is close to being resolved, and Coke takes a relatively safe bet by joining in with the majority who support gay rights. They gain way more than they lose, and it ties in with the brand message about being happy and progressive at the same time. So even though it is delving into a political subject, a thing that the rest of the advert, and Coca-Cola in general does not do.

The final segment is all about Coca-Cola. The negative visual is two girls fighting with copy writing that states: “for everyone who doesn’t get along”. This is countered by a group of happy people centered around a girl drinking a Coke with the copy: “there are many more sharing a coke”. This is stating that Coca-Cola brings people together, while giving a nudge to a previous campaign that had the catch phrase “Share a Coke”.

The advertisement is ended with a white screen with the iconic Coke bottle and logo surrounded by the campaign catchphrase #ReasonsToBelieve and the overarching brand slogan “Open Happiness”, making the brand the ultimate positive, and an enabler for progression, joy and happiness, establishing that Coca-Cola is much more than soft drinks •



The spin-off products are also doing good. Especially Coca-Cola light, a product that had a great launch in the eighties, and has continued to grow ever since is performing impressively. It surpassed Pepsi as the number 2 soft drink brand in 2011, which is quite a feat. Coke remains the number one brand by a large margin (Advertising Age 2011).

#### **Coke from the inside**

As previously stated Coca-Cola is the market leader in soft drinks. Not just in the US, but also worldwide. Coca-Cola was rated as the most valuable brand in the world by Interbrand in 2011 (Keller, 2013), but has since been overtaken by both Apple and Google, and is currently ranked third ("Interbrand," n.d.). The interesting thing about Coca Cola's positioning is that, while they make their living by selling soft drinks, they don't position themselves as a soft drink company. The Coca-Cola brand is as much a brand associated with entertainment as with the cola it sells, at least internally. In 2003, the president of Coca-Cola, Steven J. Heyer, gave a speech about Coca-Cola's vision for future marketing communications. He highlights that it is central to extend the brand, to make it mean more to people than the product itself. The company should stride to make multiple contacts with its consumers, and the strength of the connection this causes is measured by the emotional impact it causes. The consumers should become what he refers to as 'emotional capital' to the company (Jenkins, 2006).

Brand extension builds on audience interest in particular content to bring them into contact again and again with an associated brand. Following this logic, Coca-Cola sees itself less as a soft drink bottler and more as an entertainment company that actively shapes as well as sponsors sporting events, concerts, movies, and television series. (Jenkins, 2006)

Coca-Cola caters to the young and adventurous and it positions itself as a chic fashion product, which is very much linked to the entertainment industry. The mission statement of the company is, from the Coca-Cola website: "To refresh the world... To inspire moments of optimism and happiness... (and) To create value and make a difference." ("Mission, Vision & Values," n.d.).

#### **The strategy of #ReasonsToBelieve**

Coca-Cola is also a very interesting company when looking at their marketing strategy. The proposed model is taking an iterative approach, having the core brand values being part of every campaign, so that the message is consistent over a longer period of time. Coca-Cola is doing this by running a never ending branding campaign under the slogan 'open happiness', and then constructing marketing efforts that creates synergy with this, to promote certain sub-brands and the like.

The campaign #ReasonsToBelieve is a recent example of Coca-Colas marketing efforts towards the general public. It is primarily a campaign based on advertising, featuring a 60 second spot that have been broadcast on television throughout more than 70 countries, in localised versions (Lara O'Reilly, 2013). The campaign also includes Out-Of-Home elements, such as print, digital and cinema exposure ("Ogilvy & Mather London gives people 'Reasons to Believe' in its campaign for Coca-Cola," n.d.). All of these make up the marketing communications strategy for the campaign. #ReasonsToBelieve is a good case, because it is a highly

emotional campaign, that emphasises the brand values as much as it tries to sell a product. There are several reasons that enables Coca-Cola to do this, first and foremost the fact that the brand is widely recognised, and has a strong presence in the minds of the consumers already, meaning that the campaign does not have to build awareness of the brand name itself, but can focus on it's core values. This is valuable to the case study, because the point of the proposed model is to integrate this approach into the corporate culture of clients, and by doing this enable implementation of these steps much earlier in the branding process. #ReasonsToBelieve is interesting because it is a prime example of this approach. Besides this, the tag-line for the campaign is a Twitter/Instagram handle, an encouragement to the consumers to engage with the brand and share their own 'reasons to believe'. The campaign also have websites and Facebook pages to engage consumers, meaning that the campaign is very much aware of the importance of digital tie-ins and integration (Lara O'Reilly, 2013).

So let's take a look at the elements of the campaign, starting with the advert itself. As stated previously it is a 60 second segment - making it double the normal length of television ads, and presumable also doubling the media budget need to run it. As it has been localised to fit 70 different countries, all with different cultural values we will focus on the Danish version, as this is were this dissertation is based geographically. Also, the advertisement shares a large part of source material, that the marketers have deemed to be universal towards the target audience. The advertisement is set to a musical background of a children's choir singing the 1986 single 'You've got the love' by Candi Stanton, a tune that has more recently been made popular by british band Florence and the Machine in 2008 ("You Got the Love," 2014). This gives the advertisement a catchy musical backdrop, that most of the target audience will be able to identify as something familiar. The lyrics also support the emotional message of the advert about sticking together, and even though life has it's downsides there is always a positive way to experience the world, and finally that love conquers all. The ties in with the naming of the campaign, sending a message that there is resins to believe in the good of the world, and the people around you. This is powerful because it allows Coca-Cola to be associated with positive happenings and experiences, whether they happen on a personal or a more societal level. The music is also setting the stage for an interaction between the consumers and the brand. As discussed earlier, the modern consumers is no longer content with being fed information or marketing slogans in order to persuade them to buy a product. The lyrics of the song tells the receiver that "You got the love" a communication on the personal level that, when combined with the imagery, urges the receiver to be the change you want to se in the world, express your opinions, Coca-Cola is giving you the opportunity to show everyone else your reasons to believe. And this is were the integrated part of the marketing strategy come into play. The advertisement urges it's viewers to explore other parts of the campaign, and interact with the brand through the channels that Coke has set up, which all send the

Sometimes I feel like throwing my hands up in the air  
I know I can count on you  
Sometimes I feel like saying "Lord I just don't care"  
But you've got the love I need To see me through

Sometimes it seems that the going is just too rough  
And things go wrong no matter what I do  
Now and then it seems that life is just too much  
But you've got the love I need to see me through

When food is gone you are my daily meal  
When friends are gone I know my savior's love is real  
You know it's real

You got the love  
You got the love  
You got the love  
You got the love

("FLORENCE AND THE MACHINE - YOU'VE GOT THE LOVE LYRICS," n.d.)

same message about believing in the good of other people. This integration is crucial, as the television advertisement itself does not show the actual product until the very end, in fact only 8 seconds of the 60 second advert identify the Coca-Cola brand as the sender of the message, and only during 3 of these 8 seconds is the consumption of the product actually shown. This is more than enough to tie the content of the advert strongly to the brand, and send the mes-

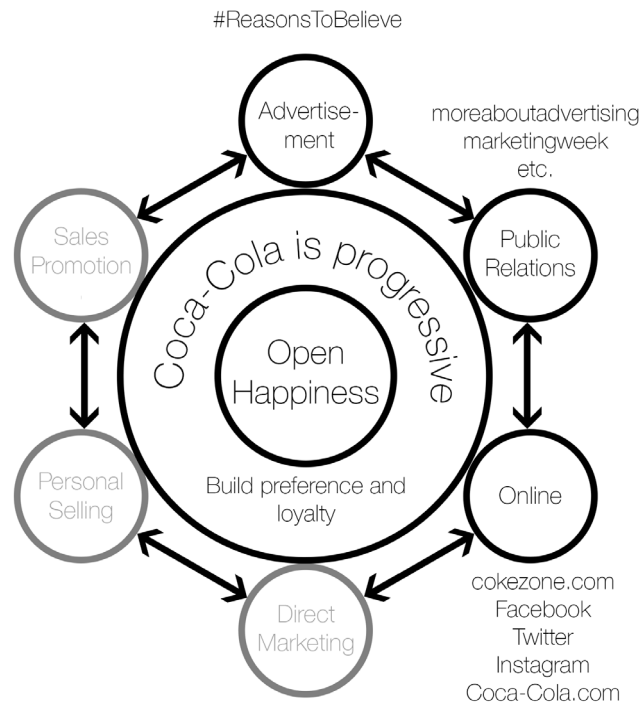


Figure 11: The strategic framework applied to the #ReasonsToBelieve campaign

sage that it is in fact Coca-Cola that gives you reasons to believe in humanity, but percentage wise it is a small part of the entire advertisement. Enter the online integration. Instagram, a popular picture sharing service, and part of Facebook's social network, is overflowing with user generated content showing of coke products along with the hashtag #ReasonsToBelieve, Coca-Cola has successfully engaged it's customer base, and they are now effectively doing the marketing for them ("Coca-Cola - 2013 Year in Review," n.d.).

If we apply the model that was generated from the theoretical discussion of how to apply the marketing mix efficiently towards the modern consumer to Coca-Cola and this campaign we get this:

This show that this particular campaign incorporate three of the marketing disciplines into its campaign, and that it is essentially letting the advertisement and public relations work fuel the user centred digital part of the campaign, shifting the main focus of the marketing from the traditional marketing tools into the digital domain. The reason that the three other disciplines are not integrated as tightly as the rest is the global nature of the firm, and the campaign. There three sales oriented disciplines are more local than global, it is for example impossible to do global sales promotion, because of differences in markets, distribution channels and currencies. Another thing is that soft drink products can be considered as commodities, and Coca-Cola's Cola product is established as a market leader. The first means that sales



promotion is happening on a scheduled basis, soft drinks are always on offer somewhere. It also means that personal selling is not economically viable because of the low return on each sale. The second means that direct marketing tactics, such as sampling, is not needed, since consumers are already familiar with the product. Also the thing that sells commodities over all others is brand value and loyalty. As such this campaign is supposed to build brand loyalty, more than it is supposed to drive direct sales.

And by doing this Coca-Cola is proving that the theoretical thoughts behind the proposed model can be executed in praxis.



5

# CONCLUSION

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**conclusion** | kən'klʊʒ(ə)n |

**noun**

**the end or finish of an event, process, or text: the conclusion of World War Two.**

**• the summing-up of an argument or text. in the conclusion we highlight these and other important issues.**

**ORIGIN** late Middle English: from Latin conclusio(n-), from the verb concludere

**(Stevenson, 2010)**

As previously stated both marketing and branding are very complex subjects. This thesis has been an attempt to expose how the rise of the internet has affected society and the consumers that inhabit the society. It has developed a strategic framework for integrating the promotional mix under the paradigm of holistic marketing and tested this framework through a case-study. All of this has been done in order to provide an answer to the problem statement that is formulated as following:

**What is the impact of digital media technology on marketing communications, and how can online marketing be incorporated in a generic strategic framework for holistic marketing to the modern consumer?**

Through the analysis of cyberspace and new media has made it clear that digital media has a very profound effect on the way marketing communications should be done. This impact comes in the form of changed consumer behaviour. Modern consumers are individualistic and critical, and digital media has given them way to voice their concern, satisfaction and dissatisfaction in a very vocal way to a huge audience. Digital media also facilitates the opening of a wide variety of purchasing channels, and can cause information overflow. It is therefore really important for marketers to integrate their communications between multiple channels and send a consistent message to consumers.

The second part of the problem statement has been solved by analysing marketing theory and operationalising the elements of the promotional mix. This has resulted in the proposed strategic framework that incorporate online marketing as a discipline of it's own, and integrating the internal relationships of the disciplines in the model. Furthermore core brand values has been intreated as the core element of the framework in order to create a strong unified messaging element to marketing campaigns.

In regards to the use of a case study to test the validity of the framework tit can be concluded that the internal validity of the framework is solid, as it has been successfully applied to the case of Coca-Cola's marketing effort. However, the external validity poses some questions as it is not tested how well the framework translates to other marketing campaigns with different objectives, and campaigns by companies with different corporate cultures than Coca-Cola. But due to the frameworks origins in proven theory I believe it is reasonable to assume that the framework is scaleable, an usable for all sizes and kinds of companies and organisations.

6

# DISCUSSION

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**discussion** | dɪ'skʌʃ(ə)n |

noun [ count noun ]

a detailed treatment of a topic in speech or writing. *see Appendix One, for a more detailed discussion.*

ORIGIN Middle English (denoting judicial examination): via Old French from late Latin *discussio(n)-*, from *discutere* 'investigate'

(Stevenson, 2010)

This dissertation has a basis in media studies, and because of that focusses heavily on the online part of the promotional mix and its associated disciplines, and deals less with the likes of sales promotion. It is also focussing heavily on a small part of marketing that belongs only to a certain branch of marketing theory. This is a product of the media studies angle chosen as this subset of holistic marketing is very like the holistic approach used in developing media strategies. The danger of focussing so heavily on something that is a subset of a much larger field is that the connection to the other elements of the field might be obscured by the focus. In this regard it is important to remember that the proposed framework only is a part of the process of developing a marketing plan. It is an improvement on the current models, but it cannot exist as an independent entity. Regular branding activities must still be conducted in order to establish the core values that is the foundation for this framework, and market analysis and segmentation must still take place in order to establish marketing objectives and formulating a target audience that the message can be tailored towards. The strength of the framework lies in its ability to tightly integrate the broadcasting of this message to the intended target. A factor that is completely ignored in the dissertation is media buying and media budgets, which are a large part of the considerations leading up to the choice of elements among the promotional mix. But by providing tighter integration the proposed framework can increase the efficiency of the funds available, as the proper disciplines can be coupled to create the most effective communication.

In establishing the premise for the development of the framework the thesis relies heavily on the thought of French philosopher Pierre Lévy. His work is mainly concerned with the creation of collective intelligence in cyberspace, and the formations of groups in the digital space. But when exploring these subjects deeper realisations of the nature of user behaviour on the internet is revealed. I feel that approaching the consumer behaviour from this unusual angle - at least when talking about marketing - brings a deeper understating of the impact internet has had on society than just subscribing to the marketers version which is that the internet has empowered consumers by giving them more choices as is put forward by for example Yoram Wind. But it also explains a lot about communications in the online space, and highlights its strengths - something that can be utilised when developing persuasive communications. Another of Lévy's strengths are the polemical nature of the text, it reveals some issues about cyberspace and the information age that are sometimes lost in other, more subtle, works (Day, 2008, p. 62). In exploring this area I could have brought in Alvin Toffler's theory of the 3 waves and the concept of the prosumer (Toffler, 1989), but I omitted this because, in relation to marketing, the prosumer moniker relates to product categories, and not segments of the user base. Besides Wind explores the same ideas but put them in relation to marketing. I also chose to omit Niels Ole Finnemann's theories about the five types of information society and the media matrix (Finnemann & Center for Internetforskning, 2001), as I think it is apparent that the part of the world that marketers are concerned about lies within the domain of the 5th info-society. I also feel that the focus on the structural composition of the internet as a finite amount of nodes is less relatable to marketing than Lévy's points about the meaning lying in the relationship between the nodes are less relatable to marketing. Finally Finnemann's work does not cover the deterministic or conditioning nature of the internet as a technology, which is a relevant point that can be translated to marketing - the dream of any marketer is to be able to determine consumer behaviour through the communications, but is the technology used to transmit the communications itself is incapable of anything other than conditioning, the communications can never break loose of these boundaries.

### On the methodology

The methodology proposed and used throughout this thesis mixes different disciplines in order to create knowledge of the subject matter from a new point of view. Because of this, it is important to evaluate the validity of the methodology to make sure that the findings are not forcing knowledge belonging to one paradigm into another through the analysis.

As established throughout the thesis marketing is to be considered as a form of communication. Within the field of communication two overarching paradigms exist, one being the paradigm of the social sciences the other being the paradigm of the humanities (Sepstrup & Fruensgaard, 2013, p. 36). The possible conflict of the methodology arises due to the fact that the basis of this thesis is the humanistic school of thought, while marketing belongs to what is known as operational theory under the social sciences. Operational theory is theory developed as guidelines to solutions of practical problems, which encompass marketing theory (Sepstrup & Fruensgaard, 2013, p. 35). In the past the two paradigms of communications have been completely separated, but in modern sciences the boundaries are less clear (Sepstrup & Fruensgaard, 2013, p. 36).

The paradigm of communications under social science is defined by the gathering of empirical evidence and the observation of connections that are causal in nature. In other words, the paradigm operates under the assumption that it is possible to prove cause-effect relationships through quantitative analysis. This is what is basis of most marketing theory, and it is the basis of all the theories that is used to describe marketing activities throughout this thesis. The paradigm describes communications in two ways; it is the receivers use of the communication that determines the effect of the media, and this effect is understood through causal hierarchies that are modified through individual social characteristics. This means that when a text is transmitted it is the actions this text causes the recipient to take that determines the effect of the text and the media it is transmitted through. If no action is taken, the effect is not existent (Sepstrup & Fruensgaard, 2013, p 36). In terms of marketing this relates to the amount of sales generated by an advertisement.

The paradigm of communications under the social sciences:

Is to be descriptive and a determinator of actions in correlation with the goals of the sender

Relies on empirical observations and on correlations, that have the characteristics of causal relationships

Uses a quantitative methodology

Regards the receivers use of the communication as determining of the effect of mass media

Understands the effect of the media through hierarchies of effects that are modified by individual social characteristics (Sepstrup & Fruensgaard, 2013, p. 36)

This paradigm is dominant in praxis, as its focus on cause and effect makes it easily measurable, which is an important part of marketing communications.

The paradigm of communications under the humanities differs somewhat, as it is based on the qualitative method, is focussed on interpretation and doesn't always assume a correlation between causes and effects. This paradigm is:

Aimed at understanding, but with a developing interest for the causal.

Interpretive in its nature

Qualitative in its methodology

Not assuming correlation between cause and effect

Assuming that both the message and the reception of the receiver are central in the understanding of media use and its effects (Sepstrup & Fruensgaard, 2013, p. 36).

Under this paradigm, the text - the message itself - gains meaning in the communicative process through the individual and situational reception of the receiver. This means that the context of the individual has the power to change perception of a message, even though the message it meant to be universal. This have a massive impact on advertising, and by using new media it is actually possible to, to a certain degree, target advertising at individuals and try to make them fit into the personal context of the target. The fact that the reception of a message can change based on the context of the receiver also means that the final 'responsibility' to interpret and make sense of the message lies with the receiver. As with all communications, there is a possibility that the message will be misinterpreted, even though the sender is trying to transmit a universal message (Sepstrup & Fruensgaard, 2013, p. 36).

As stated earlier, these paradigm, different as they may be, have begun blending, blurring the borders of each discipline. The methodology and through that the way knowledge is created still differs to much for the paradigms to become one whole, but in real life scientist mix and match from the toolsets provided by the paradigms to create a mashup of methodologies and theories to gain new understandings in relation to a specific problem. In other words, in real world usage one should strive to land somewhere in-between the two paradigms (Sepstrup & Fruensgaard, 2013, p. 38).

These are the premises the methodology of this thesis is build on. The dissertation is split into two parts, each belong to one of the paradigms in order to create a multifaceted view of the problem, then the conclusions from each part are blended together to create the final framework, that is the product of this thesis. This is done in order to get a new take on the theory of integrated marketing, that is highly operational in its nature, and I feel that blending in some ideas about media, technology and society from the humanities adds value to the overall field.





# LITTERATURE

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**literature** | 'lɪt(ə)rətʃə |

noun [ mass noun ]

**books and writings published on a particular subject: the literature on environmental epidemiology.**

*ORIGIN late Middle English (in the sense 'knowledge of books'): via French from Latin litteratura, from littera*

(Stevenson, 2010)

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