

COMMUNICATION IN TOURISM PROMOTION CAMPAIGNS

BABCSANYI CRISTINA¹, ȘUBA ANKA¹, IOSIM IASMIN*¹, VĂDUVA LOREDANA¹
¹*Banat's University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine "King Michael I of Romania" from Timisoara, Faculty of Management and Rural Tourism*

*Corresponding author's e-mail: iasminaiosim@yahoo.com

Abstract. *Marketing over time has become the meeting place for retailers and consumers. Using online marketing, the world expects tourism-related sales to continue to grow. Using the online environment helps to reduce expenses and there is also the advantage that the internet is unlimited. Many services can be purchased through the internet and people can select their preferences.*

Keywords: *communication, tourism, promotion campaigns, Integrated Marketing Communications*

INTRODUCTION

Organisations need to spend much of their business time on marketing (promotion) to ensure that their tourism products are recognised and accepted by the public [2, 4, 7, 25, 30, 31].

In this paper, we use the following concepts with their specific meanings:

- Marketing campaign is defined as an action to promote and sell a product or service [28];
- Promotion is defined a publicity campaign; the activity of organizing publicity campaigns [28]
- Communication is defined as the exchange of transmission of information though writing, speaking etc.[28].

The most widely used types of communication in promotion campaigns are:

- *Written communication*, i.e. *books, newspapers, magazines, and other printed forms of media*
- *Audio communication*
- *Audio-video communication*

The most used tools in communicating marketing messages are:

- *Advertising*, defined as describing or drawing attention to (a product, service, or event) in a public medium in order to promote sales or attendance [28]. [34] identifies advertising, part of a marketing program involving public promotion of a product of service, with communication: for him, advertising is *paid, non-personal communication* by an identified organization to present a persuasive message in order to stimulate sales or some other specific action, and *communication of information, usually paid for and usually persuasive in nature*, about products, services or ideas by an identified sponsor through various media. Advertising relies on communication developed from a consumer's perspective, helping him/her learn about and understand marketplace alternatives and make informed, rational choices.
- *Corporate identity* is defined as a company's public image, especially the use of a distinctive logo and coordinated packaging[28]: the phrase *public image* designates the ideas and opinions that the public has about a person or an organization [24], a *distinctive logo* involves a symbol or other design adopted by an organization to identify its products, uniform, vehicles, etc. [28], while *coordinated packaging* involves materials used to wrap or protect goods [28].

- *Direct marketing* refers to the sale of products or services directly to the public [28]: a *mail order* involves the selling of goods to customers by mail, generally involving selection from a special catalogue [28], while *telephone sales / selling* involve selling or marketing products or services by means of (chiefly unsolicited) telephone calls [28].
- *Face-to-face selling* or *personal selling* is defined as selling in which one person who is the salesman tries to convince the customer in buying a product [36]: the phrase *face to face / face-to-face* points to people involved being close together and looking directly at each other; in direct confrontation [28].
- *Packaging*, materials used to wrap or protect goods [28], should be communicative, i.e. give information about the brand utility and about the product quality: it communicates this information through colour, container, cover, design, picture, size, etc.
- *Point-of-purchase*, the location or medium at which a product is purchased by an end-user [8], can be *physical* (booth, retail outlet, store) or *electronic* (telephone-based ordering service, website).
- *Public relations* refers to a good public image - *public image* is defined as the ideas and opinions that the public has about a person or an organization [24].
- *Sponsorship*, financial support received from a sponsor [28].
- *The Internet*, a global network of computers that provides a lot of information [28]
- *Trade shows*, exhibitions at which businesses in a particular industry promote their products and services [28].
- *Word of mouth*, spoken language; informal or unofficial discourse [28]: an *informal discourse* is a discourse denoting the grammatical structures, vocabulary, and idiom suitable to everyday language and conversation rather than to official or formal contexts [28], while an *unofficial discourse* is a discourse not officially authorized or confirmed [28].

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The method used in this study is the **comparative method**. We have analysed the most widely used *types of communication in promotion campaigns* and the most widely used *tools in communicating marketing messages* and we compared them with the types of communication and marketing communication tools commonly used in the tourism industry. We then analysed the possibility of applying *Integrated Marketing Communications* in tourism. The information used in this paper come from literature.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The most common types of tourism promotion tools are, according to literature, *film*[16], *printed materials*[26] such as *brochures*[14, 41], the *Internet*[3, 6, 15, 27, 32, 33, 38], *public relations*[18, 19], and *video*[17], which is, from far, just a small part of the wide range of promotional means generally used in marketing.

However, recommendations made by specialists in tourism promotion suggest that the ideal way to promote tourism is Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC). IMC is no novelty in tourism marketing (it emerged in the 1980s and has gained importance in the years that followed). Kulluvaara, C. & Tornberg, J. (2003), worked on a BA Thesis focusing on a case study (*Icehotel AB*) [21]; Wang, Y.-J., Wu, C. & Yuan, J. (2009), focused on the role IMC on heritage destination visitations [40]. In Romania, Stăncioiu, A.

F., Botoș, A., Orzan, M., Pârgaru, I. & Arsene, O. (2013), analysed both off-line and on-line environments in the advertising of two historical provinces – Muntenia and Oltenia – and reached the conclusion that there is no IMC in the tourism promoted in that area [35].

Percy L. (2008) was among the first to have emphasised the theoretical and practical issues of IMC. He mentions the *barriers to effective IMC: organisational barriers* – difficulty of managing information from various agencies and vendors, low standing of marketing communication function, and vertical organizational structures where cooperation is needed between functions; *organisational character* – financial considerations placed ahead of consumer considerations, lack of common understanding of IMC, resistance to change and fear over who will be in charge, and rigid organisational culture; *compensation* – dependence of rewards on budget size or billings, not on the overall program and fear of losing position and financial reward without budget control). He also provides solutions for overcoming these barriers. According to Percy L. (2008), IMC is more complex than any other type of marketing: at *target audience level*, there are audiences with conflicting interests, different media habits, and multiple people involved in decision; at *product/service level*, there are highly technical or innovative, varied, and multiple-attribute products/services; at *distribution level*, there is limited/specialised, highly-influential in decision distribution. It is important to understand consumer decision-making (complexity of the distribution, complexity of the purchase decision, complexity of the target audience, likely importance of retail messages, need for multiple messages, need to isolate segments, opportunities for trade incentives, opportunities for unique message delivery, short- vs. long-term communication objectives). Percy L. (2008) also suggests that IMC should be planned strategically, following the five steps below [29]:

- Choosing the right target audience;
- Determine how that target audience makes product and brand decisions;
- Establish how the brand will be positioned within its marketing communication and select a benefit to support that position;
- Setting communications goals;
- Establishing the appropriate media for communication

Kumar, N. (2009), made a very suggestive graph of integrated marketing communications plan (Figure 1) starting with marketing objectives and ending with monitoring; evaluating and controlling the IMC programme [22].

Du Plooy, T. (2012), embraces Shimp's definition of IMC as communication process that entails the planning, integration and implementation of a variety of marketing communication elements, and specifically out-of-home advertising media types, that are delivered to targeted customers and prospects (Shimp, 2010, in [12]).

Lule, J. (2012), focuses on IMC and *new media* (Internet, mobile phones, and texting), *user-generated content* (blogs and YouTube), and *out-of-home advertising* (billboards and movable promotions). [23] Regardless of the type of media used, marketers use integrated marketing communications (IMC) to deliver one consistent message to buyers."

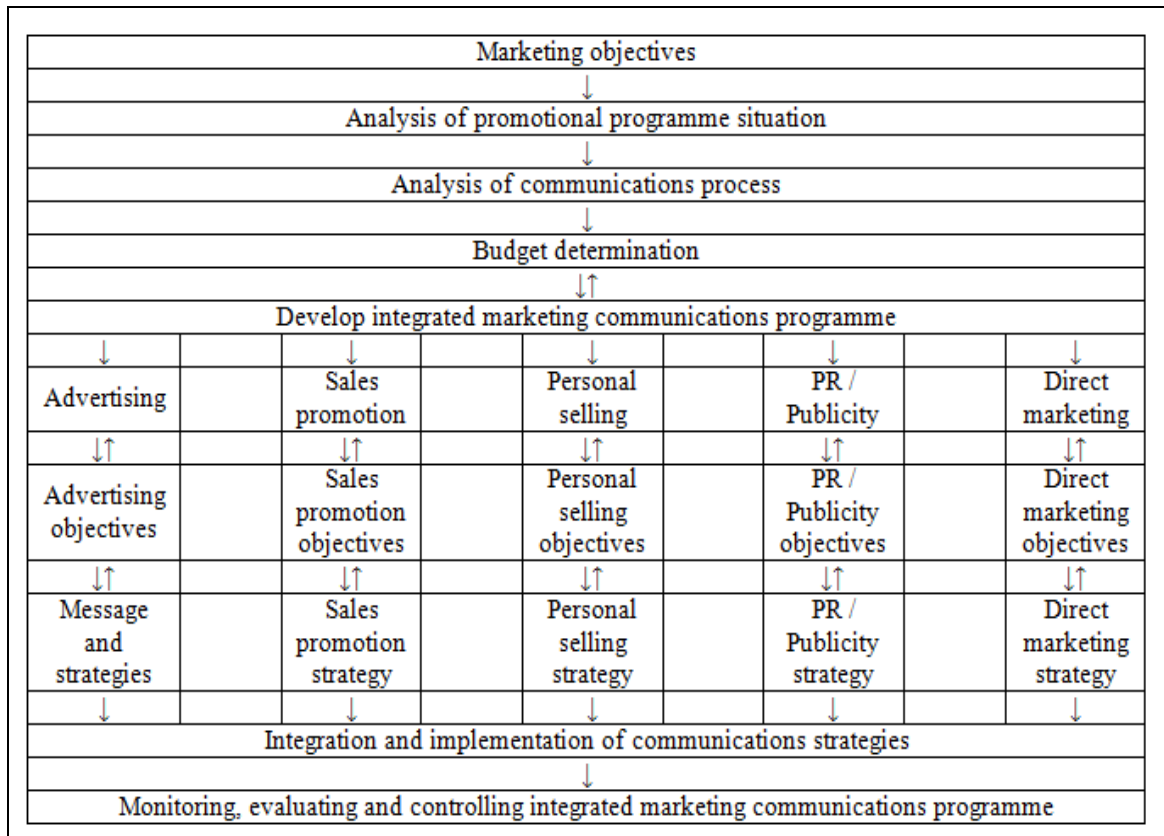


Figure 1. Integrated marketing communications plan (after [22])

Camilleri, M. A. (2018), claims that IMC should include *broadcast advertising* (cinema, radio, TV), *digital advertising* (online banners, online streaming channels, opening sections of streaming audio and video, web pop-ups), *direct marketing* (electronic newsletters, fliers, magazine advertisements, mobile messaging apps, newspaper advertisements, offline catalogues, online adverts, online catalogues, outdoor advertising, promotional letters, targeted television, websites), *interactive marketing* (blogs, customer ratings and evaluation systems, mash-ups, media and content syndication, message boards, online videos (vlogs), podcasting, tagging, virtual worlds, web fora, wikis), *outdoor advertising* (banners attached to airplanes - billboards, doors of bathroom stalls, elastic bands on disposable diapers, human billboards, musical stage shows, overhead storage bins, passenger screens, roof mounts, seatback tray tables, shopping cart handles, sides of buses, sky writing, sporting venues, stickers on apples in supermarkets, street furniture including infrastructure, subway platforms and trains, taxicab doors, town criers, wall paintings), *personal selling*, *print advertising* (backs of tickets and supermarket receipts, brochures, inflight magazine, magazines, newspapers, posters, printed fliers), *public relations and publicity* (mainstream media, new media), and *sales promotions* (consumer-oriented – competitions, complementary upgrades, contests, freebies, redeemable coupons, samples, special offers, sweep stakes – and trade-oriented – cooperative advertising allowances, exhibitions, temporary off-invoice price discounts, trade shows) [9], (Figure 2).

CONCLUSIONS

The most widely used types of communication in promotion campaigns are *written communication*, *audio communication*, and *audio-video communication*.

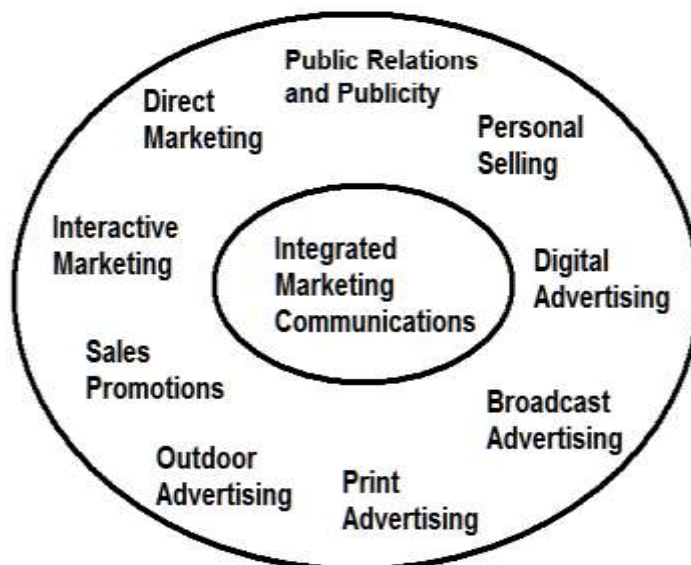


Figure 2. Integrated Marketing Communications (after [9])

The most used tools in communicating marketing messages are *advertising*, *corporate identity*, *direct marketing*, *face-to-face selling* or *personal selling*, *packaging*, *point-of-purchase*, *public relations*, *sales promotion*, *sponsorship*, *the Internet*, *trade shows*, and *word of mouth*.

The most common types of tourism promotion tools are *film*, *printed materials* such as *brochures*, *the Internet*, *public relations*, and *video*.

Specialists in tourism promotion suggest that the ideal way to promote tourism is Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) because it benefits from unlimited Internet access and greater online availability of services.

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