

## **THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION AND PERSUASION FOR A CONSUMER TO SELECT A PARTICULAR BRAND**

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### **Abstract**

*Consumer communication is the way or a tool to persuade someone who is a consumer or a customer to either buy something or to vote or donate. The persuasion can either be verbal, written or spoken. It is a way to evoke emotions and make them work according to their will. Communication can also be done by a visually in the form of packaging or through a memorable logo.*

*“Communication is the sum of all the things one person does when he wants to create understanding in the mind of another. It involves a systematic and continuous process of telling, listening and understanding”. - Louise Alien*

*Communication is the process of conveying messages (facts, ideas, attitudes and options) from one person, to another so that they are understood. – M.W.Cumming*

*Communication is a continuous process of telling, sharing or giving information, putting across an idea, having a discussion or exchanging of one's thoughts. It can be conveyed or adopted through different types of mediums. It transfers messages from a sender to a receiver via some sort of a medium.*

### **Keywords**

*Communication, Persuasion, Brand, Consumer Behaviour, Advertising Medium, Good Persuaders, Common Man, Celebrity.*

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There are 9 components of communication: -

- |             |             |             |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. Sender   | 2. Encoding | 3. Message  |
| 4. Medium   | 5. Reading  | 6. Receiver |
| 7. Response | 8. Feedback | 9. Noise    |

1 **Sender** - The party sending the message to another party is also called the source or the communicator.

2 **Encoding** - The process of putting thought into systematic form.

3 **Message** - The set of symbols that the sender transmits

4 **Medium** - The communication channels through which the message which the message hovers from sender to receiver

5 **Decoding** - The process by which the receiver understands the sender

6 **Receiver** - A message sent to someone is a receiver

7 **Response** - The reactions given by a receiver once he receives the message

8 **Feedback** - The response given to a sender after receiving the message

9 **Noise** - Confused message which a receiver receives from the sender

- The **Sender** can be a formal or an informal source

**Formal Source** – It may represent either a - for-profit commercial or a not-for-profit organization.

**Informal Source** – It can be given through some third person like family or friends. Word-of-mouth communication is very persuasive but you cannot really rely on it.

- There are many intermediary and unattended audiences for marketing communications.

**Intermediary Audiences** – They are wholesalers, distributors and retailers.

**Unintended Audiences** – These include all whether or not they are specifically targeted by the source.

- **The Medium** – It is a channel through which a message is conveyed from a resource to a destination. The medium can be of two types –

**Interpersonal** – It can either be a formal or an informal conversation between two people.

**Impersonal** – This is a mass media which includes **Print** which includes newspapers, magazines, and billboards. **Broadcast** includes radio and television. **Electronic** includes fax and computers.

- **The Message** – The message can be verbal or nonverbal or a combination of both.

**Verbal** – A verbal message is much more properly explained or informed rather than nonverbal. It can be either in written or spoken. It can also sometimes take the help of an illustration or a diagram.

**Non – Verbal** – Non – Non-verbal communication is usually done through signs, symbols, illustrations, drawings or logos.

- **Feedback** – It is an essential component of both interpersonal and impersonal communications. Easier to get verbal and non–verbal feedback in interpersonal situations.

The objectives of a good communication help in leading or succeeding in persuading of anything like a product or service positively so that the product or service gets a symbolic meaning and helps in persuading that the product or service is the best in comparison to other competitive brands.

One has to take a few steps in developing an effective communication.

- Identify the target audience.
- Determine the communication objectives.
- Design the message.
- Select the communication channel.
- Develop the total promotion budget.
- Decide on the promotion mix.
- Measure the promotions results.
- Manage and coordinate the total marketing communication process.

Less confident people are seen to be more perusable and the ones who are self-confident are thought to be less perusable. There are majority who rely on the outer world and are easily persuaded. A woman shows more traits of such kind rather than men.

The message must reach the sense organs of the persons who are to be influenced. Having reached the sense organs, the “message” must be accepted as a part of the person’s cognitive structure. TO introduce a given action by mass persuasion, this action must be seen by the person as a path to some goal that he has. To induce a given action an appropriate cognitive and motivational system must gain control of the person’s behavior at a particular point in time.

The important characteristic of the target audience is Comprehension. The key role of comprehension is to determine how a message is interpreted with the personal characteristics that influence the accuracy with which an individual decodes a message. Perception influences message interpretation based on expectations, motivation and past experience.

**The level of Involvement** is another important characteristic of the Target audience. It depends on how much attention is paid to a particular advertisement and one sincerely reads or watches the details of the advertisement to then comprehend, and carefully decode. A person's levels of involvement play a key role in how much attention is paid to the message.

**Mood** plays a very important role in an individual life. It is the mood of one which indicates how the message is perceived by an individual. If the mood is good, and lively, then the person quickly, and carefully goes through the advertisements and enjoys it and then reacts to it depending on his / her choice. It's also easier to recall a certain thing if it's conceived well

A **positive Mood** or positive approach enhances the reaction and quickly reacts to a particular situation. Positive feelings are induced by a commercial that shows positive outcomes.

**Negative Mood** – Sad and depressing commercials may induce negative moods that may be in harmony with the objective of the marketer. Consumers may be persuaded that a negative outcome will occur if they don't buy the advertised product for example – Life Insurance.

**Non-cognitive mood** is induced with the help of music to change the mood of the purchaser.

**Selective Exposure and Selective Attention** choose which commercial to watch and which one to skip and ignore. Marketers know that viewers often try to skip watching the ad and change the channel.

Therefore, they play the same commercial on different channels at the same time intervals.

Credibility plays a very important role in affecting the decoding of the message. Credibility depends on a number of factors. One of the most important ones is how the intentions of the source are understood or realized, in other words interpreted.

#### **Types of Credibility of the Source**

**Informal Source** – Informal Source means receiving messages from neighbors, friends, and family that have a strong influence on a viewer's behavior. These sources themselves become an opinion leader which often gains psychologically if not capable of being touched in a materialistic way.

An individual who has had a good experience with his last purchase or decision would definitely advise the others with the same hoping it would have been the best. Not all have a good experience every time with a product or service.

They are reassured that the purchase is advisable and a good decision to make. Thus, the informal source can or sometimes may not be warranted.

**Credibility of Formal Source** – The most likely experience of the Formal Source of credibility is a natural rating service or editorial source. They are more appreciated with the judgment or assessing a product or service. The reader is more confident to receive a message from an editorial context rather than from a paid advertisement.

#### **Factors in Message Credibility**

The most important factors in conveying the credibility of the message to the masses are reputation, expertise and knowledge.

**Reputation** – The reputation of the product or service depends mainly on commercial sources such as manufacturers, and service companies, and commercial source credibility such as past performance of the product, the quality and the kind of product or service they provide.<sup>4</sup>

**Expertise** – The second most important factor in giving credibility to the message is Expertise. Magazines and spokespersons help in giving a message a good credibility. They built in more trust in themselves and therefore much more believed.<sup>5</sup>

**Knowledge** – Thirdly knowledge comes in with the interaction between the spokesperson and the medium. The capability of the source is perceived only if there is a compatibility with the source. The ability to understand anything is low when receivers rely on the spokesperson's credibility and it is understood that when the ability to understand something is high the expertise of the source has far less impact on a receiver's attitude.<sup>6</sup>

#### **Impact of Attitudes on Credibility**

**Initial Opinion** – One makes or builds an initial opinion of something whether positive or negative depending on either high or low favorable sources. According to Robert R. Harman and Kenneth A. Canay, when the audience is opposed to the communicator's position, the high-credibility source is likely to be more effective than the less credible source.

#### **The Consumers Own Experience with the Product or the Retail Channel**

A product or service proves what is promised in their advertisement for sure increases the faith in the customer's mind and heart and hence the credibility of that product increases. If they don't keep to their promise or give a false promise, then they deny the credibility of the message. If the customer's expectation is not fulfilled when he or she reads or sees the ad, then the credibility for that particular

product or service is reduced and slowly they try to convince others also not to fall into the trap.

**Special Events** – The companies also sponsor big shows and events just to gather the attention of the audience and also to show that they are socially active and taking care of any profit or non-profit organization. The corporate sponsor events include marching bands, fireworks displays, computerized, laser shows and athletic events.

### **The Effects of Time on Source Credibility**

Persuasion plays a very crucial role in high-time plays a major role in affecting the credibility Carl I. Hoveland and Arthur A. Lomodaire have called this happening as the sleeper effect. People not only forget the source of the message but sometimes the message too or vice versa. According to Darlane B. Hannah and Braim Sterntha persuasion stands very important. He believes that the commercials should be repetitively conceived so it does not wash away from one's memory.

### **Feedback - The Receiver's Response**

Feedback is what a person gets which is the source that is very important in pursuing him or her to buy a product or service. Marketing whether done well or not depends on the receiver's feedback. One can judge by seeing the response and reaction of the consumer related to the particular service or product. If the feedback received from the consumer is prompt and good then marketing gets affected.

### **Interpersonal Communication**

Interpersonal communication is the interaction on a directly with the target audience. Therefore, one gets to get the direct feedback as to how and what is the reaction of the audience. When the markets get direct feedback it helps them to improve on where they are going wrong. Immediate feedback on quits feedback helps in personal selling which becomes much easier and effective.

### **Impersonal Communication**

The feedback coming from impersonal communication is more effective than interpersonal communication as it involves mass media and more money and when more money is spent on a particular event then the feedback conveyed from there is accepted as more valuable and accurate.

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