

Reaching the Consumers: Pampers' Integrated Marketing Communication Strategies

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Abstract: With the continuous enhancement of the standard of living, customers are more and more selective in baby care products. To stand out from other brands and maintain long-term connections with consumers, many companies have taken advantage of various marketing tools. This paper mainly focuses on the brand Pampers and the integrated marketing communication tools used by it. The goal is to analyze and evaluate IMC's effectiveness in helping Pampers achieve a close relationship with its customers. This paper employs thematic analysis to study the cases of Pampers' marketing campaigns in three dimensions: digital content marketing, cause marketing, and event marketing. The qualitative data mainly comes from research journal articles from diverse databases including Google Scholar and ProQuest One Business. The result of this paper shows that as a consequence of integrating the three main marketing strategies IMC can efficiently build tight connections between brands and customers through increasing interactive engagement, appealing emotional resonance, and delivering shared values.

Keywords: integrated marketing communication, customer engagement, digital content marketing, cause marketing, event marketing

1. Introduction

For a long time, baby care products have had a considerable active market internationally. The fiercely competitive market has made companies today start to pay special attention to achieving brand visibility by forming tight bonds with consumers. Among those brands, Pampers is especially successful with substantial net sales and net earnings. Pampers is a brand under the company Procter and Gamble (P&G). Thanks to Pampers, P&G has a 20% global market share in baby care products such as taped diapers, pants, and baby wipes [1]. Compared to the huge market share, there is little research on the reason why Pampers is so popular. The goal of this paper is to analyze integrated marketing communication (IMC) tools Pampers utilized in creating deep connections with caregivers to build brand recognition. This analysis will be based on the three tools IMC Pampers used to market its products, which are digital content marketing, cause marketing, and event marketing. The paper utilizes the methods of literature analysis and case study analysis. The effectiveness and impact of Pampers' marketing strategies are evaluated using the existing research from previous related academic articles. This thesis can provide insights into competitive dynamics for participants and

policymakers in the baby care industry and offers them pieces of advice on innovating marketing tools and redirecting to consumer-centered strategies.

2. Terminology and Background

2.1. Integrated Marketing Communication

IMC has been a widely discussed management practice or philosophy for almost thirty years. During those thirty years, many researchers came up with definitions of IMC from different perspectives and situations. A generally generic definition is provided by Nadube, which can summarize the major characteristics of IMC. He suggests that IMC is the management procedure that involves coordinating all marketing communications efforts across pertinent audiences to enhance brand coherence [2]. Different from traditional marketing which usually focuses on product promotion and advertisement, IMC mainly focuses on consumers. It aims to communicate and construct close relationships with customers so that they can establish consistent company images. Utilizing the scientometric analysis, Wu et al. recapitulate pivotal phases and development of IMC. In recent years, the words such as “perception”, “advertising”, and “promotion” in IMC have gradually been replaced by the emerging conversation around “brand loyalty”, “user-generated content”, “social media marketing”, and “customer satisfaction” [3].

2.2. Marketing in Baby Care Industry

The previous study of the baby care product market is mainly on the side of consumers. Pakkala and Shivashankar Bhat did a literature review about consumer perception and buying behaviors in the baby care market. In the paper, they revealed that parents stress on extensive significance of quality, hygienic standards, and safety and their purchasing decision is emotional rather than practical [4]. Companies should fully notice these purchasing preferences and tendencies of parents because customers and healthy brand-customer relationships are pivotal factors in deciding companies’ revenue and profits. This gives a hint to companies’ choices of marketing strategies. However, there is little research analysis on baby care products based on the perspective of the brand and its IMC strategies, so this paper will discuss this topic to provide some inspiration for future academic research.

3. Analysis of Pampers’ Integrated Marketing Communication Tools

3.1. Digital Content Marketing

A generic description for digital content marketing is the actions carried out on digital platforms, such as the company website, online communities, blogs, vlogs, social media, and mobile apps [5]. More and more companies realize that digital content marketing is worthwhile to be employed due to the widespread of technological devices to genuinely reach and maintain loyal customers. Like other brands, Pampers exerts full effort in managing their online content marketing.

3.1.1. Official Website

Official websites can provide consumers with valuable information they can refer to. Pampers publishes articles about pregnancy and parenting knowledge on its official website. There are three sections including pregnancy baby (0-12 months), and toddler (12-24 months). The topics range from pregnancy symptoms to baby health, diapering, potty training, and toddler development. Overall, the articles are comprehensive and easily comprehended with bulletin points.

Research conducted by Weerasinghe can be used to disclose the mechanism and effectiveness of Pampers' digital content marketing campaigns. Weerasinghe used an online questionnaire to test the significance of content marketing on online consumer engagement, and she concluded that these two variables have a positive correlation [6]. This is correspondence with the case of Pampers. When reading through the Pampers official website, well-informed new parents digest the novel knowledge, dedicate periodical time on the Pampers website, and could also interact with Pampers by doing some online quizzes to check their knowledge understanding. In this situation, content on the website does increase the online engagement of Pampers' consumers. Weerasinghe also suggests that online engagement is crucial in determining customers' purchasing intention [6]. This shows that more time customers spend on the Pampers' website means more opportunities for customers to be willing to buy Pampers' products, which can potentially increase sales and earnings.

3.1.2. User-Generated Content

Other than the content offered by the official website, user-generated content can also be a form of digital content marketing. User-generated content is defined as digital media content made by the common population instead of the experts [5].

Pampers initiates many campaigns to motivate user-generated discussion online. A recent example can be the #ShareTheLove campaign. Pampers encourages moms to #ShareTheLove on Instagram and Facebook considering the situation in which most of the current mothers are anxious about if they are doing a good and satisfying job in the baby care. This user-generated content serves as a community for mothers to deliver encouragement through the heartening shared stories. The comfortable online environment is so immersive that would naturally guide the moms to accumulate positive affection toward the brand, which would raise their buying intention. Mayrhofer et al. did experimental research on 293 college students, they verified that brand-related user-generated content would like to lessen the persuasion knowledge of customers [7]. They indicated that persuasion knowledge might provoke cognitive resistance and affective resistance. Pampers motivates user-created posts instead of using direct advertisements on social media, which tends to reduce the risk of conveying a message in which they are urging the consumers to buy their products. Mothers would be more likely to buy the products of those who care about their psychological health and provide them chances to engage in meaningful conversations instead of the eager business profitters.

3.2. Cause Marketing

Cause marketing, or cause-related marketing, often refers to for-profit companies' actions to support non-profit organizations. Since the year 2006, Pampers has started the cause marketing campaign with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). For one pack of Pampers bought, one Maternal and Neonatal Tetanus (MNT) vaccine is donated to prevent neonatal tetanus. Except for the positive externality produced to society, which helps save millions of babies' lives, this campaign does benefit Pampers by effectively stimulating consumer engagement in corporate social responsibility actions, both financially and morally.

According to the classification of Yucel-Aybat and Hsieh, Pampers' collaboration with UNICEF represents a high firm-cause fit [8]. This means Pampers is doing a cause that closely relates to its product features and potential customers: both baby diaper products and vaccines are associated with the perception of baby care and baby protection. The tight correspondence can elicit empathy among the underlying customer, which in turn enhances their attitudes toward brands and promotes their purchasing intentions. This is corroborated by Rego and Hamilton who investigated the cause-marketing effect by doing a meta-analysis of academic research articles. They tested their hypothesis and found that cause-brand fit positively correlated with consumers' attitude toward commercial

brands and this positive attitude fosters their purchasing intention [9]. In the case of Pampers, the deed of doing public service can evoke parents' trust in the brand because they are likely to believe that a firm that cares about millions of babies' health would also tend to be responsible for consumers' own babies. Therefore, they will be engaged in the campaign voluntarily and their purchasing intention and willingness to pay will be increased. When implementing the cause-related marketing campaign, Pampers delves deeply into the emotional trait of its potential customer group and makes use of customer purchasing psychology to enhance consumer purchasing and engagement. Focusing on the consumer is their crucial point to success in this campaign.

3.3. Event Marketing

Event marketing is the face-to-face interaction between brands and consumers to promote the brand values, usually through conferences, meetings, and trade shows. Pampers has used many forms of event marketing. One outstanding instance can be mommy bloggers meeting it regularly holds. In these conferences, Pampers shares its dedication and concentration on baby care and propagandizes its brand values to the bloggers. Compared to virtual marketing practices, event marketing could get in touch with the consumers more directly. In the meetings, Pampers shows bloggers real diaper samples and designs some entertaining games during the process of their experiments to test the diapers' quality [10]. Those offline involvements can give participants a very deep impression of the diaper's quality and safety, which are indispensable in online marketing activities. Also, Pampers' choice of participants attending those meetings is likely to maximize the effectiveness of its event marketing practices by creating a brand community. Bloggers can transfer the values of the meeting from the short-term event to long-term posts on the internet. Pampers meeting event is a physical medium to provide interactions that are beneficial to online discussion. This can be defined as a hybrid community, which refers to an inclusive and changing community combined with both offline and online events around common values and beliefs [11]. This is especially beneficial in the long-term creation of perceived unity: Pampers is able to leave a long-lasting brand image to consumers through this mode, which can enhance consumers' brand loyalty that is directly related to their profits.

4. Conclusion

This paper discussed the three IMC tools Pampers used to make the brand distinctive from other baby care products, including digital content marketing, cause marketing, and event marketing. From the literature analysis and case study presented above, the statement could be reasonably concluded, that Pampers' integration of tools provides them a deciding advantage in reaching the audience with the enhancement in brand recognition. This process is accompanied by the action of fostering interactive interaction, evoking strong emotions, and communicating shared values. The limitation of this essay might be the lack of usage of quantitative research methods such as experiments. This restricts the analysis to the qualitative range, which means it might be inappropriate in real-world situations such as the differences caused by countries and demographic factors. Future research can focus on the aspect of the merged effects of IMC tools instead of discussing it respectively. It might also be inspiring if the future researcher can examine the long-term effect of IMC tools to offer business administration guidance on their financial investment distribution, which is beneficial for firms' healthy long-term operation.

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