# PLANNING MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

## 9.1. Selection of Communication Media

Implementing marketing communication activities requires significant distribution expenditures, especially in advertising. Therefore, the demand for their effectiveness and the need to ensure that communication campaign ideas are transmitted to the target goals as efficiently as possible are entirely justified.

Planning the use of communication media involves the selection of message channels, their delivery to target markets, determining how to use them and how much to allocate to each tool, as well as developing a schedule for communicational impact.

The content of the communication impact plan depends on the relevant communication sphere, the advertiser's material and financial potential, the quality criteria of influence, and the requirements for the integrated use of various distribution tools to achieve effective influence on consumers.

The complexity of selection is explained by the variety of options, the breadth of consumer communication coverage, and the advertiser's financial capacity. The greater the advertiser's possibilities, the more challenging it becomes to make an optimal decision.

How should one choose among television, radio, newspapers, outdoor advertising, and other types of advertising? For instance, every advertising medium is characterized by the effectiveness of its particular communication channel (publication, program) used for advertising.

When selecting a communication medium, the following main requirements should be considered: **avoiding preconceived (usually negative) opinions, possessing deep knowledge, conformity with editorial materials, rating, emotionality, and the interest level of the communication audience**.

Avoiding preconceived opinions concerns issues of political and social nature. If a publication is reputable and characterized by the objectivity of its materials, the advertisement is perceived as more credible.

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Possessing deep knowledge means that the advertising medium must correspond to the target communication audience. For instance, dairy processing specialists search for relevant information in the *"Dairy Industry"* journal, while prospective university students seek information in publications such as *"Where to Study?"*

To ensure compliance with the principle of compatibility with editorial materials, it is necessary to monitor the harmony between the content and tone of the advertisement and the editorial content. The greatest effectiveness is achieved when there is harmony and no dissonance or unpleasant associations in perception.

For example, if a reader encounters an advertisement for packaging machines next to an article about commercial success stories, this advertisement is more likely to achieve significant results

compared to other ads. For this reason, Coca-Cola never places its advertisements near materials covering global disasters or tragic events.

The **rating** or reputation of the advertising medium provides an opportunity to reach a larger communication audience. The image of the publication psychologically influences the perception of the advertised material.

Posting university admission announcements on bus stops or poles is nearly ineffective, as the expected result will be almost zero. When planning to advertise a brand, one should predict the expected emotional impression and select the media most suitable for achieving it. Therefore, glossy magazines that promote "the sweet life" are considered the most appropriate for cosmetic and perfumery products.

The effectiveness of emotional transmission increases when the interested audience becomes familiar with the message. During perception, initial impressions may change, and doubts about the advertised product may decrease. However, several researchers note that emotional perception sharply declines when the advertisement is broadcast at the end of a commercial break—a moment professionals call the "pod."

The **interest level** of the audience is determined by the main content of the medium in which the advertisement is placed. The more attentively a viewer watches a program, the more effective the accompanying advertisements become. Therefore, proximity to highly engaging programs is crucial. However, if a program attracts *too much* attention, advertising effectiveness can decline and even irritate or annoy viewers.

Capturing the target audience at the right moment is essential in launching advertising media. The advertisement should be placed so that the intended audience can both see and hear it. The optimal time should therefore be chosen carefully. For example, during late evening and early morning hours, people are generally relaxed and more receptive to information.

It is important to retain attention by including a distinctive detail (a "trigger") that captures the audience through consistency, originality, and relevance.

Analyses show that advertising media do not influence consumers equally. Individual consumers pay greater attention to outdoor and transit advertisements, particularly when the product range is stable and the manufacturer's name is short (for example, *VITA* cheeses).

Advertisements successfully placed in visible locations are seen daily by a large number of people. With good text, typography, and artistic design, such ads are easily remembered, and the product quickly becomes recognizable and familiar.

Conversely, specialists prefer to obtain information about equipment purchase opportunities from specialized publications. Using print media is particularly effective in advertising campaigns for newly launched brands. While reading a new issue of a magazine, the consumer can examine a new cigarette pack in greater detail than they could from a street poster and can carefully read the advertisement text explaining the product's features.

Television advertising is visually powerful but often too expensive for many processing enterprises. The price for a one-minute commercial depends on the channel and the time slot (daytime, evening, weekend) and can exceed the company's financial capacity. Print media, by contrast, is relatively inexpensive and provides practical results. Moreover, people are accustomed to obtaining news from newspapers, so information about a new product or service

immediately attracts attention. In this case, the cost of one advertisement in a newspaper or magazine—excluding layout expenses—is much cheaper than a TV commercial.

Ultimately, everything depends on specific conditions. Each advertising medium has its own distinctive features as a unique means of influencing the consumer.

Therefore, a program that determines the optimal variant of an advertising campaign is necessary, taking into account competitor strategies, required expenditures, and the desired level of impact.

A good example of effective advertising is the campaign launched by the **Milk Advisory Board** to promote dairy products. Marketing research revealed that people stopped drinking milk because they considered it a high-calorie addition to meals and mistakenly believed that low-fat milk contained fewer nutrients than regular milk.

As a result, the company changed its strategy by emphasizing the role of calcium—an essential nutrient for bone development in youth and the slowing of aging processes in adults. To increase milk's appeal, advertisements featured famous athletes.

The target segment consisted of women aged 25–44 who genuinely needed milk and calcium. Efforts were made to reposition milk by associating it with respected older figures, who testified to its bone-strengthening benefits, and athletes, who highlighted milk's ability to restore energy quickly.

To support the campaign, a contest titled *"Milk: Where's Your Mustache?"* was launched. Participants submitted a photo featuring a milk mustache along with a store receipt and an entry form obtained in-store.

The slogan *"Where's Your Mustache?"* proved exceptionally productive—it aimed to turn milk into a symbol of popularity comparable to the celebrities who endorsed it.

Unexpected celebrity appearances reinforced the campaign with slogans such as:

- *"Milk. Here's your surprise gift!"*
- *"Stay on track. Three glasses a day."*
- *"Calcium? It's always on my mind."*
- *"Milk – the drink of goddesses."*

The total advertising budget exceeded **$100 million**. Contest posters featured celebrity photographs, and the grand prize was a trip to Australia and the opportunity to appear in *Rolling Stone* magazine's advertisement with a milk mustache.

# 9.2. Media Planning

Selecting the tools of communicational influence requires managers to possess **media planning skills**, the ability to **combine communication channels and timing**, to **set objectives for information dissemination**, to **evaluate the potential of target markets**, and to **develop a communication impact schedule** within available financial resources.

Media planning is subject to a set of essential requirements that ensure **reliability, timeliness, informativeness, comprehensiveness**, and the ability to achieve stated objectives simultaneously.

A **media plan** should ideally include the following sections:

- the main marketing strategies and objectives;
- the selection of the communication audience to be influenced;
- analysis of advertising and marketing in the market;
- the media strategy;
- the schedule of advertising exposure;
- methods for evaluating and controlling effectiveness.

The media planning process forms the basis for shaping **tactical communication actions** and **strategic development**. The **media strategy** encompasses the selection of advertising media according to audience preferences, the determination of creative and communicative components, and the identification of an effective period of influence.

Choosing the right **promotional objective** depends on both the object of influence and the means of distribution; it must consider all factors that directly or indirectly affect sales, encourage purchase decisions, and foster repeat buying.

Throughout the entire sales chain, substantial expenditures should be directed toward emphasizing product advantages, raising awareness, motivating purchases, and stimulating repeat sales.

Based on **market analysis**, the advertiser must understand whether customers make purchase decisions under strong or weak influence from advertising. The less familiar the consumer is with a brand but the more interested they are in it, the higher the **perceived risk** in making a purchase decision. When the consumer becomes inclined to buy, the advertiser can achieve a positive decision with fewer and simpler alternatives.

Thus, the communication audience—such as consumers who buy chewing gum to eliminate bad breath, prevent cavities, or simply because it has become a social habit—should be studied carefully. The number of such reasons may be large, requiring thorough research and prioritization by importance.

However, marketers often face the risk of **misinterpreting survey results**. Respondents may exaggerate their attitudes: for example, many claim they enjoy buying new and diverse products and value quality above all, yet most of their purchases are made in discount stores. Similarly, while we may agree with doctors' advice to reduce fats and eat more fiber-rich foods, we continue to consume white bread, pastries, cream, and butter. **Taste and pleasure** often distort consumer behavior. Among young people, fashionable or trendy products may take precedence over healthier choices.

**Internal factors:** strengths and opportunities
**External factors:** weaknesses and threats

→ Analysis of competition and market problems
→ Development of communication campaign objectives
→ Formulation of communication campaign strategy
→ Development of the communication budget
→ Selection and placement of communication tools
→ Development of the communication impact schedule
→ Preparation of the information message and scenario
→ Payment for information placement and airtime

→ Layout preparation and advertisement production
→ Evaluation of communication campaign results

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A situation analysis is required to summarize existing information. It helps clarify the situation of interest to the entrepreneur and provides answers to numerous questions concerning **demand volume and nature, competition, environmental factors, product characteristics, costs, distribution systems, and company capabilities**.

**Product research** involves assessing product application, packaging, quality, and price, as well as evaluating the brand's image. It is necessary to analyze features that distinguish the product in terms of **production culture, resources, corporate goals, life cycle, and placement strategy**.

**Market research** focuses on defining the demographic and psychographic characteristics of consumers—who buys, when, where, and how they buy the product, and what they do before making a purchase decision.

**Competitor analysis** involves monitoring market share, product characteristics, advertising schedules, and strategies. Conducting a **SWOT analysis** enables entrepreneurs to identify their **advantages and opportunities** as well as **weaknesses and risks**, revealing both internal and external influencing factors.

It is crucial for the manufacturer to understand the existing problems and identify reserves for improving competitiveness.

Knowing the market and potential consumers allows one to clearly define the **objectives and ideas** of a communication campaign. When dealing with a small number of clients, direct communication may prove more effective than advertising. Conversely, when the aim is to deliver information to a large target audience within given financial constraints, the effectiveness of the chosen media tools may be lower.

The objectives—such as **sales volume, market share, and profitability**—must be clear, measurable, achievable, time-bound, and controllable.

Experts distinguish several important factors that influence the **content of the media plan**, including the company's overall objectives, target audience, product life cycle stage and profitability, distribution channels, production and financial resources, and the degree of integration of marketing communications.

External factors—such as **economic conditions, competition** (market share and number of competitors, state of rival products and regulation levels), as well as **scientific-technical, legal, and cultural environments**—must also be considered.

It is necessary to establish and clarify the **advertising priorities**, such as:

- explaining the essence of a new product;
- changing or strengthening the company's image;
- overcoming seasonal consumption fluctuations;
- counteracting competitors' brands (especially those with strong trademarks);
- attracting new consumers;
- ensuring brand recognition in the market.

When developing a plan for the use of communication media, it is necessary to identify the composition of the target audience based on **demographic data, lifestyle, location of potential buyers, distinguishing characteristics, perceived product benefits, pricing strategy**, and the **medium and form of information delivery**.

The **selection of the target audience** depends on the advertising object and its placement: chewing gum is intended for youth; *Hennessy* cognac—not for alcoholics, but for connoisseurs; washing powder—for housewives. Hence, in the *Dunhill* lighter advertisement, the slogan reads:

"If you only need to light a cigarette, use a match."

In planning the audience coverage, one must also account for **"lost circulation"** caused by inappropriate timing, geography, or channel selection. Whether we like it or not, most news from Namangan is irrelevant to residents of Jizzakh and vice versa. On average, lost circulation is **20–25% for print media** and **40–45% for television**.

The planned objectives of marketing communications must be linked to the company's expected **profit, sales volume, and production activity plan**. This is typically achieved by preparing a **table of key company performance indicators** for both the reporting and planning periods.

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**Table 9.1. The Potential of Advertising Media for Brand Perception**

| Characteristics of the Target Consumer | Requirements for Advertising Media to Achieve Brand Perception Objectives | Type of Message | Color Duration Intensity |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Type of Awareness** | | | |
| 1.1. Recognition | Visual | As appropriate | Short High |
| 1.2. Recall | Verbal | Not essential | Short Low |
| **2. Nature and Degree of Brand Information Perception** | | | |
| 2.1. Low involvement, informational | Verbal | Not essential | Short Low |
| 2.2. Low involvement, transformational | Mostly visual | Appropriate | Short High |
| 2.3. High involvement, informational | Verbal | Not essential | Long Low |
| 2.4. High involvement, transformational | Mostly visual | Appropriate | Short Low |

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Based on these distinctions, the **priority directions of marketing communications**, which should be reflected in the communication budget structure, are determined.

Next, directions for **improving the communication impact design** and the **main campaign themes** are selected. Then, considering the company's resources, the **required and feasible communication budget** is determined.

When defining the nature of the information message, if the topic requires a unique approach, both the **language and medium of advertising** are specified. The **placement option** is determined by the frequency required to achieve maximum target audience coverage.

To select the most effective communication options, one must consider **market characteristics** (sales channels, schedules, competitors' actions) and **advertising media features** (audience size and profile, cost, content, theme, and quality of execution).

When selecting communication media, it is advisable to consider their potential in achieving brand recognition objectives based on **awareness type** (recognition or recall) and **consumer perception type** (informational or transformational).

For instance, if the goal is to ensure that a low-involvement consumer recognizes the brand through transformational perception, the main share of informational impact should be directed toward **print and outdoor advertising**. In this case, it is appropriate to decorate the advertising message with **color visuals** and **short but intense exposure**.

A methodology for selecting advertising media according to consumer perception characteristics was developed by **J.R. Rossiter and L. Percy**.

The **communication promotion plan** must align with the objectives of the overall **marketing plan**. While the marketing plan supports the general business plan in terms of product sales volume and projected prices, the marketing communications plan disseminates ideas consistent with the proposed product, pricing, distribution, and promotion strategies in the market.

# 9.3. Communication Impact Schedule

Developing a **media schedule** involves defining the requirements for the production of advertising materials, their placement in communication channels, and the allocation of the budget among various media tools.

In the process of **media planning**, it is often necessary to distinguish between **primary** and **supplementary media** and to ensure their rational integration during the campaign, taking into account promotional objectives.

Under specific circumstances, regardless of cost, the **primary medium** should be the one that provides the most effective influence on consumer behavior, especially during the **initial stages of the product life cycle**. Accordingly, the **media mix program** must evaluate the potential for combining different advertising media.

Research findings show that advertisements for certain beer brands can be suspended for a year without causing serious losses in sales. Later, by resorting to intermittent advertising for six months, the company can restore sales growth while achieving significant savings in the advertising budget. This pacing can also be applied to **new products** and **seasonal sales**.

The effectiveness of **intermittent advertising** can be increased when combined with **coupon distribution** or **price discounts** aimed at stimulating sales.

If advertising is engaging in terms of timing, it gains **additional longevity through repetition**. In such cases, the number of repetitions increases proportionally to the number of elements included in the message content. The **initial impact rate** characterizes the period of **intensifying advertising exposure**.

Experts note that consumers dislike only about **21%** of advertisements for products they already use, while **37%** of advertisements for products they do *not* buy are disliked. Other studies show that in terms of **frequency**, limiting exposure to four contacts per month is sufficient. However, if the effectiveness begins to decline after four exposures, the intensity schedule must be strengthened, since a **50% discrepancy** is often observed between the number of advertisements viewed and the number of actual informational impressions.

For lesser-known or newly introduced brands—particularly when purchase intervals are long and the market is saturated with similar advertising messages—the repetition frequency may need to be higher due to lower consumer motivation and weaker message receptivity.

Each of the **three sequential advertising exposures** differs in effectiveness:

1. The **first exposure** arouses interest.
2. The **second exposure** sustains this interest and adds an evaluative reaction.
3. The **third exposure** serves as a **reminder**.

When the communication audience coverage is around **60%**, it is sufficient to ensure **2–3 information exposures per month**. Increasing the number of exposures beyond this point results in **inefficient budget use**, since most of the audience has already responded to the offer.

Researchers also emphasize that to maintain satisfactory **brand awareness**, an average of **three advertising exposures** between two product purchases is adequate. Thus, the **effective repetition frequency** corresponds to **three or four message contacts**.

The **effective repetition frequency** (or minimal number of exposures) represents the **lowest level** at which no sufficiently reliable communication is established between the audience and the message.

Increasing the number of exposures raises costs and should be justified only to achieve specific tasks within a given period.

When combining informational influence tools, the marketer must treat **coverage, frequency, sequencing, and message volume** as interrelated elements of the advertising campaign, configured in various combinations.

The integration variants are determined by the **sales situation**, the **stage of the product life cycle**, and the **size of the budget**.

The **communication schedule** should reflect the following parameters:

- the **product (brand)**;
- the **geographical areas** and **types of communication media**;
- the **placement method** (at points of sale, in wholesale networks);
- the **product price** (premium, high, medium, or low) and **consumption frequency**;
- the **campaign goal** (e.g., awareness, reinforcement, conversion);
- the **placement type** (desserts, fast food, delicacies, etc.);
- the **target group**;
- the **campaign duration**;
- the **media used** (specific publications and programs);
- the **advertising characteristics** (size, length, placement location);
- the **placement options** and **intensity levels**;
- and the **budget**.

The **communication impact schedule** should show the **relative weight** of each medium, such as the share of advertising displayed or printed during specific periods. Such a chart facilitates **financial planning** and **rational allocation of resources**.

The ratio between **sales and expenses** enables the company to manage cash flows and monitor the effectiveness of the communication campaign.

When planning informational campaigns, it is important to **distribute activities in time and space**, setting specific tasks consistent with the enterprise's image and the product's promotional goals.

The **duration** of informational impact depends on **financial capabilities** and **objectives**.

During the **first 18 months** of launching a brand, the goals are to **create awareness**, **stimulate recall**, and establish understanding of the brand's intended positioning.

Between **months 19–36**, the brand begins to demonstrate its communication influence, and between **months 37–48**, the tendency to share information through users themselves becomes consolidated.

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## Questions for Discussion and Control

1. What requirements should be taken into account when selecting advertising media, and why?
2. What requirements are imposed on media planning?
3. Using a specific product as an example, justify the necessity of certain stages of an advertising campaign.
4. What elements are included in the advertising material placement schedule?
5. Why is the combination of mass media into a **media mix** implemented?
6. How are frequency and audience coverage jointly considered in selecting advertising distribution tools?
7. Evaluate the effectiveness of combining advertising media using a specific **food product** example.