

## Select the Best Integrative Marketing Communication Method via AHP Method in Yademan Trade Tower in Alborz Province

Beibeik Darvishvand Zahra, Hashemnia Shahram and Danaie Habibulah  
Department of Executive Management (Strategic), Payame Noor University, Tehran, Iran

**Abstract:** The present research aims to select the best integrative marketing communication method via AHP method in Yademan trade tower in Alborz province. The present research is a descriptive-applied study in sake of aim. In this research, the statistical population consists of sale, marketing, financial units and managers at Yademan trade tower in Iran. In receiving experts' views, views of 7 experts at sale, marketing, financial units and managers at Yademan trade tower were used. To determine criteria affecting suitable integrative marketing communication, the questionnaire with Likert scale was used. Validity of questionnaire was confirmed by receiving experts' and professors' views at the field of commercial management and reliability was estimated equal to 0.757. Results from one-sample t-test in software SPSS indicated that six criteria of model (execution time, influence and roundness, participation and involvement, cost and budget, measurability and audience coverage) are the criteria affecting selection of the most suitable customer communication method in the organization.

**Key words:** Integrative marketing communication, customer relationship management, customer relationship means

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### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, customer relationship management has turned to one of the priorities of companies that they put large investment in this context for survival in competitive markets (Clow, 2010). The customer relationship management has targeted in increasing the customer's repurchase opportunity by improving process of relationship with him, providing proper suggestion through price and product and using a proper communication channel at the right time (Smith and Zook, 2012). Customer relationship management programs have focused on detection of the best customer and persuasion of customer to further use of products and services at company which marketing communication is the key for success at this relationship (Kanibira *et al.*, 2014). Marketing communication should be well suited to product position and product line and the enterprise should be well suited to lifetime curve, enabled to specify their position with the least error by determining major and secondary indices of product at target market and provide a suitable and effective message. Integrative marketing communication can be a model for better detection of audiences and identification of enterprise and its products and services, brand, goals and programs of enterprise to notify, persuade and influence target audiences at market (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

Yademan trade complex in Alborz city with 92 trade units has been one of the most suitable items to design and implement integrative marketing communication model that has put most of companies with famous brands together and these companies have been working directly not as agent in this unit, thus the provided model from point of view of experts can have generalizability (Lekhanya and Mason, 2014). Hence, using analytical hierarchy process, it was given a response to this question that which of the identified instruments in the context of mixed marketing communication can be proposed as the most suitable instrument and/or communication channel with customers? What ranking the methods under study will enjoy? In this regards, the present research has examined and confirmed research criteria through hypotheses below (Kitchen and Tao, 2005) after confirming hypotheses, the most suitable method has been determined in ultimate model of research based on analytical hierarchy process (Duncan and Ouwersloot, 2008):

- Criterion "extent of influence and robustness" affects selection of suitable method for customer relationship
- Criterion "extent of audience coverage" affects selection of suitable method for customer relationship

- Criterion “extent of required cost for means” affects selection of suitable method for customer relationship
- Criterion “extent of customer participation and involvement” based on the used instruments affects selection of suitable method for customer relationship
- Criterion “measurability of customer relationship” based on the used instruments affects selection of suitable method for customer relationship
- Criterion “execution time” based on used instruments affects selection of suitable method for customer relationship (Baran *et al.*, 2008)

**Propose model and theoretical background for research criteria:** With regard to the factors mentioned in introduction, integrative marketing communication can arise from six mentioned criteria in research hypotheses, (Ranjbarian and Mojtaba, 2013) which these six criteria can develop the conceptual model of research when they are examined together with the model based on customer relationship methods; the definitions for each of four customer relationship methods have been proposed in selection below, based on which the conceptual model of research with integration to criteria has been depicted regarding Fig. 1 (De Bruyn and Lilien, 2008).

**Non-individual advertisement:** This implies any non-individual supply of ideas, goods or services which is

made through an advertisement unit, required for cost. Among elements of integrative marketing communication model, advertisement has more recognized position to other elements for product positioning, because the customers can be informed of new products through advertisement (Glazer and Weiss, 1993).

**Individual sale:** This implies making effective relationship with target customers and providing information on products, services, ideas and such things for potential purchasers for sale of products or services. Despite other mixed elements, this element has a mutual nature and has a more effectiveness in some cases (Schultz, 2007).

**Sale improvement instruments:** This implies a series of diverse and different driving instruments which are used to stimulate consumers or purchasers to faster or further purchase of goods or services.

**Public relationship instrument:** This implies non-individual persuasion of demand for a product, service or trade unit through inserting positive and significant trade news in media without paying a certain amount including creation of suitable relations with various communities which deal with the firm through gaining good reputation, creating a desirable global image or resolving the problems, rumors, traditions and adverse events (Mpofu and Chigwende, 2013). Therefore, the conceptual model of the present research has been depicted

Table 1: Descriptive analysis of the effective criteria in selection of instrument

Criteria	Mean	Median	Mode of data	SD	Variance	Minimum	Maximum
Execution time	3.22	3.0	3.0	0.9270	0.860	1.0	5
Measurability	3.29	3.0	3.0	0.9020	0.814	1.0	5
Participation and involvement	3.4	3.0	3.0	0.9740	0.949	1.0	5
Audience coverage	3.46	4.0	4.0	0.9030	0.817	1.0	5
Influence and robustness	3.59	4.0	4.0	1,0357	1,073	1.0	5
Cost and budget	3.79	4.0	4.0	1,0473	1,097	1.0	5
Total mean	3.33	3.5	3.5	0.6100	0.373	1.5	5

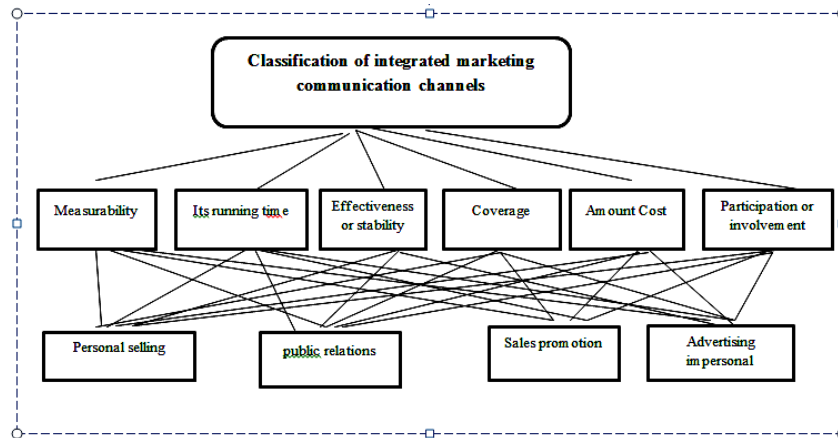


Fig. 1: Conceptual model

regarding the considered indices in integration with existing communication instruments in Table 1 (Fig. 1).

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The present research has been an applied study in sake of aim and a cross sectional study in sake of data collection and a descriptive-analytical study in sake of data analysis in which the indices affecting access to a suitable mixed marketing relation have been detected and ranked. In this research, experts' views have been received to weigh and rank each of customer relationship criteria and methods in determining the most suitable method. To determine major criteria affecting selection of the most suitable method, experts' views have been received.

**Statistical population and sample group:** In this research, the statistical population consists of the managers and experts at Yademan trade complex at sale, marketing and financial units. In receiving experts' views, the experts and managers at sale, marketing, financial units have been used, equaled to 7 experts. Experts' views have been received to determine the most suitable method. As mentioned earlier, experts' views were received to confirm the determined indices in the present research, for which 100 questionnaires have been distributed and collected. This part has intended to confirm the indices proposed in conceptual model of research well suited to outlook and job nature of this complex (Vollmer and Precourt, 2008).

**Data collection method and instrument:** In this research, library method has been used to collect data related to determination of customer relationship methods and criteria in which four criteria of extent of influence and robustness, extent of audience coverage, extent of the required cost for instrument and extent of customer involvement and participation have been selected. Further measurability of customer relationship method and execution time of customer relationship have been introduced as new criteria based on experts' views. To confirm the mentioned criteria, the experts' views have been received based on questionnaire regarding five-point likert scale.

**Validity of instruments:** The research questions were examined and defined to confirm validity of research instrument in meetings by receiving experts' views in Yademan trade tower in Alborz province. Validity was confirmed by receiving the professors' views in the context of commercial management field of study.

**Reliability of instruments:** To determine reliability of the instruments which have been considered to receive experts' views on appropriateness of the criteria, Cronbach's alpha test was used. For this, 25 versions of questionnaire were distributed as pre-test and the reliability of instruments was confirmed by estimating value of Cronbach's alpha coefficient with value  $>0.7$ . Further, reliability of instruments was examined by examining the rate of incompatibility concerning the pairwise comparison questionnaires in hierarchical analysis after end of performing hierarchical method, in such a way that at the time the considered criteria and items are compared and scored properly, value of compatibility rate is estimated under 0.1, indicating properness of scoring and comparison of related items and criteria.

**Data analysis method:** To confirm the considered criteria, the descriptive and inferential analysis of the criteria was presented using software SPSS that Measures of central tendency, position and dispersion were examined at descriptive analysis. In inferential analysis, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and one-sample t-test were used. After confirming the criteria in this research, software expert choice was used to determine weight of each of customer relationship criteria and methods based on pairwise comparisons with the results as follows.

## **RESULTS**

**Results from descriptive analysis:** Results from study on central indices (mean, median and mode of data) and dispersion indices(standard deviation) together with maximum and minimum of data for each of 6 considered criteria have been displayed in Table 1.

The information in Table 1 has been sorted based on values of mean of criteria in a descending way. In this regards, the obtained value in mean of criteria is in range of 3.22-3.79, thus the execution time among audience group has enjoyed the lowest value with mean (3.22). Score 1-5 can be assigned to questions in the questionnaire based on likert scale. Therefore, value of mean of execution time among statistical population has been reported greater than average. Criterion 'cost and budget' has been reported with the highest mean among the statistical population with value 3.79. The next ranks have been assigned to criteria measurability, participation and involvement, audience coverage, influence or robustness with mean 3.29, 3.4, 3.46 and 3.59, respectively. In all these criteria, value of data dispersion regarding value of deviation from data has been reported with less value, indicating that the results calculated in this part can

be invoked. In the last row of Table 1, total score of criteria which is the sum of scores of other criteria has been represented. The results from general mean of criteria have indicated that the statistical population under study with mean (4.33) has confirmed influence of considered criteria in the present research.

**Results from Kolmogorov-Smirnov test:** In this study, how the data are distributed is examined via Kolmogorov-Smirnov test with hypotheses below:

- $H_0$ : distribution of data related to each of variables is normal
- $H_1$ : distribution of data related to each of variables is not normal

The results from Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for each of criteria have been proposed in Table 2. With regard to the results in Table 2, it was specified that data enjoy normal distribution in all the criteria under study ( $p > 0.05$ ). Therefore, the research hypotheses were examined at inferential part using one-sample t-test.

**Results from one-sample t-test:** In this part, each of criteria under study has been confirmed or rejected by examining t-test. Research hypotheses have been proposed in form of hypotheses as follows:

- $H_0$ : the criterion under study is not effective in selection of customer relationship instruments
- $H_1$ : the criterion under study is effective in selection of customer relationship instruments

The results from one-sample t-test have been proposed in Table 3. In this part, test value was considered equal to 3 regarding likert scale. With regard to the results in Table 3, it has been specified that sig value of test has been under 0.05 in all the criteria under study, under which all the criteria under study were confirmed regarding viewpoint of audience.

**Results from hierarchical analysis:** The research criteria were weighed and ranked by receiving experts' views in this research. Results from analysis in pairwise comparisons based on experts' views on considered indices have been proposed in Table 4.

Results indicated that shelf life in customer's mind to use identified method or channels has enjoyed higher priority than other factors, with rank 1 with weight (0.379). Further, participation or involvement with weight (0.248) has been given the second rank and ultimately execution time of customer relationship method than other methods has enjoyed lower significance (0.041). Further, incompatibility rate with 0.03 has confirmed accuracy of the pairwise comparisons and results.

In this regards, customer involvement or participation than robustness has enjoyed relative significance degree of 65.5%; in this way the criteria coverage level, cost of relationship execution, measurability and execution time than duration to keep in mind have enjoyed relative significance of 41.7, 30.3, 15.7 and 10.7%. In following, the results from pairwise comparison of common instruments and methods in the context of mixed marketing relationship have been proposed, weighed based on effective factors and represented in Table 5.

Table 2: Results from Kolmogorov-Smirnov test

Criteria	No	Mean	SD	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Execution time	100	3.22	0.9275	294	0.057
Influence and robustness	100	3.59	1.035	264	0.079
Measurability	100	3.29	0.9022	246	0.068
Cost and budget	100	3.79	1.0473	319	0.053
Participation and involvement	100	3.4	0.9744	219	0.088
Audience coverage	100	3.46	0.9036	275	0.081
Total mean of criteria	100	3.33	0.61087	170	0.093

Table 3: Results from one-sample t-test

Criteria	Test value = 3				Confidence level (95%)	
	t-test	Freedom degree	Sig.	Difference of means	Low bound	Up bound
Execution time	2.372	99	0.002	2200	0.0360	0.404
Influence and robustness	5.697	99	0.000	5900	0.3840	0.796
Measurability	3.214	99	0.002	2900	0.1110	0.469
Cost and budget	7.543	99	0.000	7900	0.5820	0.998
Participation and involvement	4.105	99	0.000	4000	0.2070	0.593
Audience coverage	5.091	99	0.000	4600	0.2810	0.639
Total mean of criteria	5.402	99	0.000	3300	0.2088	0.451

Table 4: Results from pairwise comparisons on factors affecting selection of mixed marketing communication channel

Factors	Shelf life	Participation or involvement	Audience coverage	Customer relationship management	Measurability	Execution time	Incompatibility
Total weight of criteria	0.379	0.248	0.158	0.115	0.060	0.041	0.03
Priority of criteria	1	2	3	4	5	6	-

Table 5: Results from pairwise comparisons of instruments or channels under study

Factors	Personal selling	Public relations	Advertisement	Sale improvement methods	Incompatibility
Total weight of methods	0.327	0.129	0.212	0.332	0.03
Priority of methods	2	4	3	1	-

Table 6: Combined table of pairwise comparisons based on methods and criteria

Decision making items	The required cost	Robustness	Audience coverage	Participation or involvement	Measurability	Execution time	Incompatibility rate	Method priorities
Total weight of criterion	0.115	0.379	0.158	0.2480	0.06	0.041	0.040	-
Priority of each criterion and total weight of each method	4	1	3	2	5	6	-	-
Personal selling	0.469	0.469	0.106	0.2720	0.096	0.093	0.327	2
Public relations	0.137	0.079	0.273	0.0880	0.118	0.245	0.129	4
Advertisement instrument	0.079	0.137	0.487	0.1570	0.571	0.508	0.212	3
Sale improvement	0.315	0.315	0.134	0.4830	0.215	0.154	0.332	1
Incompatibility rate	0.020	0.020	0.010	0.0054	0.080	0.030	0.030	

Table 7: Algorithm for selection of the suitable customer relationship method

Criterion	Criterion	Criterion	Proposed method
Cost and/or budget	Priority of amount of required cost and/or budget for the instruments used in customer relationship	Priority of cost	Personal selling, sale improvement
Robustness	Priority of the extent to which it can remind the relationship made by customer	High priority of robustness	Personal selling, sale improvement
Audience coverage	Priority of extent of audience coverage in making relationship with customer	Needing to coverage level	Public relations and advertisements
Participation or involvement	Priority of extent of required participation or involvement for the instruments required for making relationship with customer	High priority of customer participation	Personal selling, sale improvement
Measurability	Priority of extent of measurability in making relationship with customer	High priority of measurability	Advertisement and sale improvement
Execution time	Priority of extent of execution time of a relationship in making relationship with customer	High priority of execution time	Advertisement and public relations

With regard to the results from comparison of relationship methods based on all the criteria under study, it has been specified that personal selling and selling improvement channels have been ranked the first, found with little distance. Advertisement instruments and public relations have been given the third and fourth rank. In this regards, the results from pairwise comparison have been classified in Table 6. As observed, the weights have been obtained from combination of pairwise comparisons made by criteria and items.

With regard to the results in Table 6, it was displayed that the required robustness for relationship instrument with the highest weight (0.379) refers to the most important factor which must be considered in selection process of methods under study. This criterion related to the personal selling method has gained the highest confirmation degree, in a way that it can say that when robustness is of greater importance to the considered organization, the personal selling method in relationship at marketing should be used regarding audiences' views. The send rank has been given to participation or

involvement with weight (0.247) followed by robustness, in which sale improvement instruments have been more likely taken into account than other methods. The third rank has been given to next criterion, i.e., considering audience coverage with weight (0.158). Use of advertisement instrument and required cost are suggested as the method for use of personal selling. It should be noted that the criteria measurability and execution have been given the fifth to sixth ranks, in which the most suitable method with the best rank has been given to advertisement instruments.

**Propose the pattern from research:** In this study, findings from research have been proposed in a pattern and algorithm for selection of suitable method in customer relationship, displayed in Table 7. With regard to pairwise comparisons of criteria, it can propose a pattern in the context of customer relationship process regarding strategic goals and policies of organization and considering assumed status of organization at each of existing criteria.

## DISCUSSION

**Discussion and comparison of findings:** The customer relationship management has been targeted in providing the conditions under which the customer remains loyal to organization and refers there and uses the services and products there. In this regards, Baran *et al.* (2008) have stated that this does not come to realize unless based on proper customer relationship management channels, i.e., marketing communication is the key for success at this relationship. In this regards, the present research determines the more suitable customer relationship method. According to Mpofu and Chigwende (2013), a firm should combine communication instruments with each other accurately so as to create a harmonized combination of customer relationship elements, i.e., a combination which paves the way to achieve marketing and communication goals. With regard to Lekhanya and Mason (2014), De Bruyn and Lilien (2008) and Duncan and Ouwersloot (2008), advertisement, sale progression, direct marketing, public relations, personal selling and support from events have been mentioned as the most important instruments existing in customer relationship, found in accordance with the components used in the present research but support from events has not been confirmed based on experts' view. Blattberg and Neslin stated that a series of various driving instruments which are used to stimulate consumers and purchasers are used in this customer relationship method thus it seems that use of this method can be effective in the stores which engage in supply of various brands. Followed by this method, research findings have displayed that the high priority has been given to personal selling to which the second rank has been given in the present research which this finding is consistent with the finding of research by Glazer and Weiss (1993), mentioned that such element has a mutual nature despite other mixed elements, found with more effectiveness. In general, it should say that implementation of common methods in the context of use of mixed marketing communication seems essential regarding complicatedness of marketing at current age, under which it should take this point into account that it cannot propose a unique pattern for various manufacturing or service institutes and firms. In this regards, various units require implementation of various marketing communication channels and instruments in a proper way. In this regards, the results from study can be used for most of trade centers. In this research, it was specified that among major criteria in the context of mixed marketing communication, more attention should be paid to participation and robustness to which higher priority is

given. To sum up, when the extent of robustness and participation at a trade unit is of greater importance, personal selling and sale improvement are suggested regarding the results from the present research.

## CONCLUSION

In this conclusion, the most suitable customer relationship methods regarding six considered criteria have been prioritized via hierarchal analysis method via software expert choice that the results have been introduced in a table as a pattern for effective relationship with customers.

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