



## The Six "C's" of Marketing

Traditional marketing courses tell about the Four P's of marketing: *Product, Place, Price* and *Promotion*. The Six C's do not replace the Four P's; rather, they expand on the *Promotion* element.

### **CUSTOMER:**

Today, a company's marketing strategy needs to be customer-focused. It's about understanding the target consumer's values, wants, needs and motivations. Not "understand" them as demographics or psychographics, but rather understand them as *real people*.

Its understanding why customers do what they do (or don't do) when they do it. Such knowledge is critical in marketing since having a strong understanding of buyer behavior will help shed light on what is important to the customer. It's about focusing on the target customer first and then reverse engineering the most effective branding strategies.

It is hard to attract prospects you do not understand. It's imperative that companies have *mindshare* before focusing on market share.

### **CONSISTENCY:**

Companies need to maintain consistency in their message; a practice called integrated marketing communications - from packaging and advertising to sales promotion and publicity. This will maintain and reinforce a brand's personality and image in a real life context.

### **CREATIVITY:**

Creativity is imperative to attract attention in a world cluttered with thousands of messages. Creativity adds *impact through imagination*.

Creativity means laying aside the overly-familiar rules, and embracing out-of-box thinking so that marketers can reach beyond logic and structure and attract using *imagination*.

\* **Creativity Informs:** Marketing's responsibility to inform is amplified via creativity. Creativity makes marketing more vivid, and many researchers believe vividness attracts attention, maintains interest, and stimulates consumers' thinking.

\* **Creativity Persuades:** Today's marketers are making creative storytelling aids: new myths, heroes and symbols like Ronald McDonald, the "Can You Hear Me Now" guy from Verizon, and more recently the Gecko from Geico Insurance.

\* **Creativity Reminds:** It reinforces the brand with a unique flair. Imagine using the same invitation, without any creativity, to remind people to try a particular product everyday for a



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month. The invitation would become stale very quickly. Only creativity can transform boring reminders into interesting, entertaining marketing communications.

Nike is proof. Several commercials in a Nike campaign never mention the company name or even spelled it out on the screen. *Each communication told a story.* And, the only on-screen cue identifying the sponsor was a single "swoosh" logo inscribed on the final branding scene.

### **CULTURE:**

Speak the CUSTOMER'S language to reach them in their world. All marketing communications needs cross-cultural research to be able to succeed. It's simple to see things from your own perspective, assuming that everyone else in the world thinks exactly like you and should understand what's so great about your product or service. Just reading about all the mistakes made by large corporations proves that even the most sizable and experienced marketers have made errors time and again.

As David Ogilvy, known as the Father of Advertising, states, "If you are trying to persuade people to do something, or buy something, it seems to me you should use their language, the language in which they think".

### **COMMUNICATION:**

Consumers don't want to be "marketed to". Rather, they want to be "communicated with". Communication ties right into the tips about Culture above.

Good marketing communication creates value with target customers, speaks in their language and tells your story. It's about building long term, trustworthy, and profitable relationships with your customers.

### **CHANGE:**

Marketing is not just a business function, but a process. There is a beginning, middle, but there is never an end. Marketers must constantly CHANGE as society changes. They should never be afraid to try something new.

Marketing needs to be an evolving process that considers change in the world, economy, market, consumers; as well as internal change within the organization.

Ask yourself, "what does my audience think now" and then ask yourself "what do I want them to think instead."

*Note: the above text is based on an article by Michael Brito*

END

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