

**Book review**

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## ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION: AN INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS PERSPECTIVE

Belch, E. G., & Belch, M. A. (2012). New York, NY: McGraw Hill,  
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Due to modern information technologies, the emphasis is shifting from the mass media to a more segmented approach that provides more information about consumers at individual levels. Striving to reach sales of goods and services and to improve the market position of a company, advertising proves to be one of the key marketing activities.

In the book titled *Advertising and Promotion, An Integrated Marketing Communications Perspective*, the authors E. G. Belch (professor at San Diego State University, USA) and M. A. Belch (professor at San Diego State University, USA) explain promotion as a segment of the marketing mix, also deeply considering the perspective of integrated marketing communications. The purpose of this book is to give a comprehensive explanation of promotion activities as well as to identify plans for their evaluation, implementation and control. The focused problems are aimed at researches whose field of interests is the

modern aspect of communication with consumers. The book consists of seven major parts organized into several chapters.

The first part of the book, titled *Introduction to Integrated Marketing Communications* (pp. 3-64) consists of two chapters and examines the basic elements of the promotional program, paying special attention to the contemporary perspectives of its development. Moreover, it presents the reasons for the growing use of the integrated marketing communications concept, with the dominant role of the development of databases. Another subject of examining is the competition analysis as well as the analysis of the demographic, behavioral and geographic variables are used as the most common criteria for market segmentation.

The second part of the book, divided into two chapters and titled *Integrated Marketing Communications Program Situation Analysis* (pp. 67-142), analyzes the complex process of creating and the implementation of integrated marketing communications programs. Specialized agencies, which, due to their expertise

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in marketing services, management and finances, contribute to the improvement of a company's competitiveness are often hired for their realization. The authors here also examine the importance of the motivation research as well as external factors influencing the decision-making process of the consumer.

The third part of the book is titled *Analyzing the Communication Process* (pp. 145-175) and consists of two chapters. This part focuses on the importance of a company's communication with various groups of stakeholders, having positive implications on an increase in the rate of return on investments. The most important communication models are explained. It also presents opinions and approaches of different authors, whose comparative analysis enables the reader to modify the given models in accordance with specific situations as well as to identify relations among the applied communication elements and consumer responses.

The fourth part, titled *Objectives and Budgeting for Integrated Marketing Communications Programs* (pp. 213-252) examines the models (above all the DAGMAR model) contributing to the logical setting and evaluation of communication objectives and to the differentiation of advertising goals and marketing goals which are often equaled due to a lack of their clear differentiation. Considering the size and the potential of a market, the authors present the concept basis of the marginal analysis and the allocation of funds, based on the arbitrary method, the percentage-of-sales or competitive parity method, using numerous charts and tables.

The fifth, and the most comprehensive, part is titled *Developing the Integrated Marketing Communications Program* (pp. 255-594) and consists of ten chapters. At the very beginning, it elaborates on the determinants of creativity and its contribution to advertising as well as on the most important techniques of qualitative researches, like focus groups. This segment also explains planning activities, the implementation and evaluation of advertising strategies and various types of appeals, the creation of which requires certain interdisciplinary knowledge. Further, answers are given to the most frequently asked questions related

to advertising activities in the media, the reach, frequency and identification of market segments. The authors highlight the advantages and shortcomings of the elements of the promotional mix, such as the television, the radio, the print media and sales enhancement, and elaborate on their educational and informative importance as well as their role in the advertising process. They present the integration of direct marketing into the communication strategy of a company, whereas internet marketing is covered in a separate chapter, due to its rapidly growing importance in advertising. Some relevant determinants of public relations are highlighted; however, when examining them, public relations in situations of crises have not been taken into consideration, which often impose a need to change business principles and require that specific strategies and tactics should be applied.

The sixth part of the book, titled *Monitoring, Evaluation, and Control* (pp. 595-630), is the segment where factors in favor of the evaluation of promotional campaigns (like the evaluation of alternative strategies) and factors relating to opposing attitudes to this problem (i.e. expenses) are identified. Some evaluation methods developed by renowned market researching companies are explained. Such indicators can provide some directions for future researches; however, possible obstacles, like quantifying the results or financial limitations for the realization of this process, should first be explored.

The final, seventh part of the book, titled *Special Topics and Perspectives* (pp. 631-707), consists of four chapters, the first two being included in the printed book and the final two being available in an online form. Due to globalization and growing competition, promotional programs of companies on the international market should be created by taking into account economic, legal and political factors, the importance of which is specially highlighted. The social, ethical and economic aspects of the advertising process are also explained as well as criticism from the perspective of an influence on the consumer behavior.

Due to the authors' extensive experience in scientific and research work and their engagement authors in developing the integrated marketing communications of the renowned world companies (Microsoft, DuPont, McDonald's), this book represents a significant

contribution to the contemporary development of integrated marketing communications. The examples from practice introducing every chapter of the book enable the valorization of theoretical aspects. Moreover, the authors also refer to online publications, which, using numerous case studies, give a possibility of broadening the existing knowledge and skills. A very important fact is that the book recognizes and appreciates the importance of the coordination of all

the elements of the promotional mix with the aim to develop an efficient communication program.

When explaining advertising and promotional programs, the authors mainly consider the experiences of developed countries. To incorporate less developed economies into the study could provide a comparative analysis of integrated marketing communication programs and identify their critical success factors.

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