

h m c i

haytermarketingcommunicationsinc.

Marketing Communications Distinctionary

This Distinctionary outlines the distinctions and perceptions we believe affect internal and external marketing success.

Communication/Information

Often there is the mistaken belief that communication and information are synonymous. Information is the raw product that is used in the communication process to create an output or results which often includes shared understanding and meaning. *Information* is not made understandable and meaningful to another person until it is processed. The mere act of disseminating information is not an adequate substitute for communicating. *Communication* is a much more sophisticated process than transmitting or disseminating information because it seeks to produce a cognitive, emotional and/or action-oriented response. Responses are tracked by acquiring feedback from the listener/receiver. Therefore, the feedback channel is an essential component of the communication process – without feedback there is no communication.

Information/Knowledge

Information is the raw product. Knowledge is created by: capturing, defining, extracting, monitoring and aggregating “golden nuggets” of information – within your organization and from outside (your customers/stakeholders and environment); translating the information into relevant knowledge that is communicated to relevant people so that they can respond. In turn, this knowledge contributes to continual learning and the creation of a knowledge bank – both of which you can capitalize on repeatedly.

Image/Identity/Reputation

Image is how you want to be perceived (such as: on time, reliable). **Identity** is visually how you are seen (reinforced by identifiers such as: logo, signature, advertisements, business cards, internal newsletter/e-zine). **Reputation** is what you are, is fundamental – positive or negative communications can alter reputation within hours – we also sometimes refer to this as ‘Brand Reputation’.

Boundary-Spanners/ Market Influencers/ Market Levers

Boundary-spanners are defined as people that because of their position (from job, within sector/field and/or physical location) can connect people within your organization and/or from your organization to other groups of people and organizations you want to reach. In some organizations, this function is part of the Chief Knowledge Officer’s role. In essence, boundary-spanners represent people and groups that are the gate keepers to the targeted audiences. Boundary spanners can include: Executive Directors of professional associations; and, government representatives.

Market influencers include media contacts, sales people and your suppliers that are in a position to influence awareness and in turn, support and growth of your organization.

Market levers is the term we use for the combined audience of all boundary-spanners, market influencers and customers.

Emotional Goals/ Material Goals

In our experience, people are **motivated by the perceived emotions** they will experience by attaining material goals. For example, employees will state "we want more money". Customers will demand "better prices". It is suggested that *material goals*, like more money and better prices represent specific emotional goals such as: being valued, respected, feeling powerful and listened to. Effective marketing communicates the emotional goals your products, services or ideas fulfill.

Result Objectives/Process Objectives

In the context of marketing communication programs and actions **hmci identifies and measures result and process objectives**. The types of *result objectives* are: informational (do people know what you are talking about?), attitudinal (what attitudes are established, need to be reinforced or altered?) and behavioral (what do we want people to do?).

Determining and tracking **result objectives** relates to discovering: current levels of understanding (including brand awareness and loyalty); attitudes about what you represent and offer; what people are willing to believe about what you offer; and, perceptions of where your product or service is in its' lifecycle.

Process objectives relate to the implementation of the strategy/program and the distribution of program materials (such as tracking: the number of meetings with potential customers, number of calls made / brochures distributed and number of news releases sent each year). These objectives are also called: 'output objectives', 'support objectives', or 'program effort'. The tracking of output objectives often gets mistaken for success.

Grapevine/Formal Channels

The **grapevine is considered 5 x faster than formal channels**, whether the information is true or false it is generally awarded the highest credibility by audiences (especially in times of change). Effective internal communication uses tactics to positively feed the grapevine. Internal channels can include employee feedback forms, intranets, hosting facilitated sessions on marketing related issues and goals, training employees on effective communications. In turn, external communication approaches also leverage the power of the grapevine by first making your employees your best ambassadors and choosing tactics to keep audiences well informed of your products, services and ideas.

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