How can mass communication strategies align ideas and actions to facilitate breakthroughs that influence, persuade, and guide stakeholders towards desired outcomes?

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# Chapter 4: results

The term Strategic Communication is defined by researchers to work with different disciplines – public relations, management communication, and advertising to satisfy a firm’s long term and short term strategic and non-strategic goals (Adler &Elmhorst, 2012). Strategic communication techniques, such as the social communication model and the correlation theory, have been developed by leading scholars to motivate employees and support innovation. The study of communication strategies has received attention in academia recently thanks to its promise to deliver corporate growth; companies often produce higher rates of growth after the utilization of the techniques. This study aims to present strategic communication’s revolutionary formula that can enable organizations to increase growth and attain other objectives (Coombs, 2015).

 The 21st century has enabled organizations to develop new methods for the practice of strategic communication, lending companies unprecedented opportunities to achieve their objectives (Downs & Adrian, 2012). However, the study of organizational communication is not new among scholars, so discussion and research on this topic are relatively straightforward.  This chapter will provide an overview of the results obtained by the utilization of the methodology discussed in the previous chapter, namely qualitative analysis through a telephone interview. Presentation of all the data would not be possible in this dissertation due to spatial concerns; therefore, a summary will be presented. To organize the findings for readers, research has been divided into several themes that were selected after answers were obtained.

## Communication strategy of Google’s YouTube

Companies utilize a variety of different communication strategies to gain a competitive advantage (Pedersen, 2013). Pedersen’s research has been included in the research to support the undertaken survey (interview) and support the research.

 The survey’s first question was ‘How do you communicate with the viewers?’ One employee answered as follows:

 *"Traditionally, communication about the particular service or the product enables the customers to know only when the company has produced the product. But the world has changed, thanks to the growing technology. On YouTube, the product itself is involved in the communication factor that enables the viewers to look through the stuff. That means the videos are the product and it is the method of communication too. For example, the search engine is one of the services provided by the company where the users can communicate with us and utilize their valuable time to ask whatever they wanted to see.”*

This answer demonstrates that YouTube achieves long-lasting communication with customers in order to maintain an active customer base. YouTube’s s24/7 availability for viewers has developed a sense of community across the world. Several answers were relatively similar, except one that is shown below.

*“We communicate with the users through the comments, report section, and the helpline. We are well aware of the fact that the users are able to maintain their entertainment desire by choosing the search engine for finding the best videos among the sea of them. However, certain videos are also reported by the users to us, which enables them to develop faith and loyalty because of our quick response. In a sense, our communication method involves a close connection with customers to answer their queries. One more thing: the customers also report hateful comments that are either blocked or removed by YouTube developers or from the permission of video uploader himself. If the particular section or video does not cater to our terms and agreements, we simply remove them. So yeah, the best solution we have observed includes the quickest response. This is the way our platform works.”*

As observed in the above, some employees commented that the communication technique involved a faster response, while others singled out the service’s speedier search engine. The company’s ultimate goal is to satisfy consumers by providing an engaging and interactive communication platform. In simple terms, the more the organization strives to promote a space for quality content and interaction, the higher the likelihood of customer satisfaction.

The response below elaborates on additional communication strategies employed by YouTube:

 *“Social media and official website. We like to communicate with the active users by regularly posting updates about the company.”* As it is determined in the above quote that companies are likely to connect with the users while posting updates about the company so that they can build communication links. The practice can be carried out using social media and official websites of the company; firms are more likely to hire a professional social media team to connect with users in benefiting their profits.

The following answers were given in response to the survey’s 4th question, ‘How do you communicate with the clients?’ This response specifically shows the organization’s utilization of advertising along with the regular updates, to support communication:

*“Communication is the most important asset when it comes to our clients. First, you should know who our clients are. They include users, advertisers, and premium members. We need money to function. That's why we use advertising techniques to bring better and innovative services to customers. But we are not talking about money here. The thing is, we communicate with clients depending on the means available to them. For example, the users are connected through the official website and the services provided to them. The advertisers are connected through emails, phone calls, and even meetings."*

The above reply clarifies aspects of the ways communication is handled between clients and organization members. The employee shared which platforms they use to communicate with each group of clients to enhance overall satisfaction.

*“We connect with our clients through many ways, such as Skype or emails depending on the client. We put their convenience first. Another thing is that Google is a tech company as a whole, and YouTube is one of the branches of it. Even if it might be falsely accused of being a monopoly, the company uses the strategic communication thing to avoid legal consequences."*

Here, the employees suggest that strategic communication methods can be used to help the organization avoid legal consequences. The organization can protect itself from such consequences by demonstrating the breadth of the services in which they are in engaged, such as broadcasting, self-driving cars, and biotech products (for instance, smart glasses), rather than simply providing a search engine.

One employee shared that he stays informed about current events by watching the news on YouTube. The channel RT America, as the employee says provides the latest news to the American population and even covers Russian events. Other than that, MSNBC and Fox news aim to provide both liberal and conservative commentary. These companies use strategic communication to ensure that customers are engaged and attracted.

## Section 1: Engaging the users

 This section includes the answers for the 2nd question (“What processes do you utilize for engaging the viewers on YouTube?”) and the 3rd (“Do you use advertisements for engagement as a critical procedure?”). Considering the strategic communication of YouTube, it is important for companies to make sure that it is following the queries of their consumers as it will support them to plan their strategies for the long term. The following answer presents the common methods that have been utilized by both YouTube and its parent company, Google.

*"We provide faster response to the customers, as I said earlier. The customers have a shorter attention span, and they are likely to go for another company or platform to watch their favorite videos. Therefore, we ensure that the videos do less buffering and provide more entertainment. We work to satisfy the customers more."*

This response provides a clear description of the utilization of quicker response time and appropriate strategies to ensure that customers are satisfied. If they become frustrated with the services provided by YouTube, customers can go to another source that can provide better services. This response shows that YouTube’s strategic communication is customer-centric. Below is another answer is given by an employee highlighting another point concerning the engagement of customers?

 *“One of the techniques we use to engage the consumer involves the option of suggestions based on individual clicks. After viewing the particular video, the viewers engage themselves in seeing another one. This way, YouTube always provides viewers relevant content by providing them unique options for the newest videos."*

In other words, customers’ access to more relevant content depends on the ability of the firm to create a search engine and harness viewer feedback.

*"One thing we use is advertisements for another video, movies, and even Netflix. Many users commented that they had found many websites just by looking at the advertisements presented by us during the videos. However, several viewers found it frustrating to view the unwanted ads in an ongoing video."*

Even though advertisements are one of YouTube’s primary sources of revenue, the company runs the risk of frustrating viewers. YouTube ran analyses to determine the number of ads that users can tolerate without becoming disengaged.

*"Advertisements are a unique method of communication for us, but it's not critical. They are meant to provide information to users about certain websites, businesses, and even shows that they are unaware of. But our main criterion is user satisfaction, and therefore we aim to provide the best service for free to the users. Therefore, you will never see many advertisements barging in a particular video. Therefore, we have presented the new member's section that can provide a completely new experience to the viewers."* Using the right advertisement techniques, firms are able to outline the areas of consumer satisfaction while proving the best course of services to customers. It supports to develop for the firm on every scale of business especially in building consumer loyalty.

## Internal and external communication tools

This section contains the employees’ responses to the rest of the questions in a defined flow. For the 4th question (Are emotions more important than messages in advertisements?), the majority of the employees, about 20 of them, stated that YouTube enhances the customers’ experience by using strategic communication. Internally, the organization uses improved search algorithms and artificial intelligence to sift through over 80 billion of feedback daily, enabling the right video to reach the right viewer at the right time. Externally, the organization provides avenues for reporting inappropriate videos and company contact information; it allows YouTubers to participate in official communication. Such efforts enable employees to achieve organizational goals such as customer satisfaction and thereby a higher income for the company. As one of the employees said, *“Efforts put on by the company such as better search engine, enable more customer engagement.”*

Internal communication is vital for the organization to meet the demands of viewers and clients. Ten employees commented that many employees enjoy working in the company, while others stated that colleagues are able to connect well to share innovative ideas. Twenty-one employees stated that managers communicate well with employees to provide support. Employees are even given the opportunity to share their innovative ideas with managers and other senior team members.

 The most important part of YouTube’s communication strategy is the viewers’ perception. As stated by one employee, *“the entire focus of maintenance of internal and external strategic communication is to enable customer satisfaction.”* Customers can be frustrated by an over-saturation of advertisements. Therefore, as another employee stated, the *“organization ensures that too many ads are not presented while the video goes on.”* The company has recorded viewers’ perceptions about advertisements through feedback sessions or via periodic surveys, discovering that some viewers feel frustrated and even disturbed because of the constant intrusion of advertising between and during videos.

A harmonious and flexible workplace environment is critical for the development of an effective communication strategy. One of the employees stated that *“among internal tools, effective communication and transparency is one of the ways that our leaders use to ensure that the customers are well received.* “About 20 employees stated that strategic communication includes the involvement of better professional relationships between the workforce and their superiors, and the willingness of leaders to give opportunities and freedom.

Almost all employees stated that strategic communication is one of the techniques the organization utilizes to ensure customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction depends on the superiority of services provided by the company; if internal and external communication aspects are handled clearly, the viewers will be satisfied at large.

## Summary of results obtained

YouTube's communication strategy is centered on customer satisfaction. Employees stated that better services in the form of faster-loading videos and a superior search engine are ways of enhancing communication, leading to a higher rate of customer satisfaction. Furthermore, provision of proper customer service via the report section and direct helpline number allows the company to practice effective means of strategic communication, along with direct communication with customers through the channel and social media.

Furthermore, clients (advertisers) are just as critical as customers (viewers). An employee provided the following response: *Clients provide necessary ratings or traffic that can be used to earn more income from companies seeking to buy advertising*. For this, the company uses advertisers in a variety of industries, including television channels, movies, musicians, and even Netflix all of whom pay the company to show advertisements. The company uses faster video loading, better suggestions, and many other facilities to engage the users. Viewers may also take advantage of premium membership, television broadcasting, gaming, and other features that engage them the most. Such aspects are involved in utilizing better strategic communication with customers. In these ways, the organization maintains effective internal and external communication to ensure that the consumers are satisfied and the firm achieves its objectives.

## Hypothesis analysis

*H0: Mass communication strategies align ideas and actions to facilitate breakthroughs that influence, persuade, and guide stakeholders towards desired outcomes.*

The first hypothesis was found to be true; the company focused completely on the satisfaction of consumers by utilizing communication strategies. Employees stated that the primary focus of the firm had been YouTube’s development through the fulfillment of viewers’ video-watching demands. To accomplish this, the organization ensures that customers can effectively communicate with the organization through the official website, toll number, and social media accounts. YouTube incorporates internal strategies, such as building good relationships between employees, and external strategies, like customer engagement through feedback sessions, to enhance the satisfaction of the customers. These strategies enable the firm to maintain a proper internal environment so that the entire workforce can focus on the advancement of techniques for customer satisfaction. The company’s focus on effective strategic communication techniques such as perfecting their search engine and fostering a solid relationship with clients to aid the quickened achievement of organizational goals.

*H1: Mass communication strategies fail to provide benefits to the organization concerning effective internal management.*

This hypothesis was found to be untrue, since, as stated above, the organization utilizes strategic communication as a means to advancement the organization both internally and externally. The firm utilizes many tactics to ensure that employees are satisfied with proper management techniques and tools to achieve success.

**Conclusion:**

This section provided an overview of the results obtained through the utilization of the methodology described in the third chapter. Qualitative analysis through the interview process enabled the researcher to obtain results and analyze them effectively. The discussions of the results were presented to inform the reader and contribute to the field at large. Due to spatial constraints, the presentation of all the answers was not possible in this dissertation; research was instead divided into several themes chosen after the answers were obtained. Finally, this chapter enabled the reader to understand present-day strategic communication techniques by showing a summary of all the results presented.

**Section 2**

This section provides the results of the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with the participants from Miami Dade College. The FGDs were conducted to investigate the effectiveness of advertising on YouTube.

**Demographics**

*The frequencies and percentages of the demographics are as follows (n= 25)*

Table 2

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Variable** | Male M (%) | Female F (%) | Total T (%) |
| **Gender** | 15(60) | 10(40) |  25(100) |
| **Age**  |  |  |  |
| 22 or below | 4(16) | 5(20) | 9(36) |
| 23 or above | 10(40) | 8(32) | 16(64) |
| **Discipline** |  |  |  |
| Television  | 5 (20) | 6(24) | 11 (44)  |
| Radio | 10 (40) | 4 (16)  | 14 (56) |

According to the table above, 60% of participants were male while 40% were female. The majority of participants (64%) was aged 23 or above while 36% of participants were 22 or below. 44% of participants were from the television broadcasting discipline, while 56% were from radio broadcasting.

**Qualitative Interpretation**

The qualitative interpretation follows the Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR) method (Hill et al., 2005; Hill et al., 1997).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Domains and Responses** | **Categories of frequencies** |
| **Introduction**  |  |
| * **RQ1: What cues are most effective in getting viewers to engage with the ads played before YouTube videos?**
1. The narration of the advertisement is the most significant cue that diverts the attention of the viewer. The video’s narration starts with the interesting caption: how what and when phrases make the viewer feel invested in the advertisement. A few examples include: How to clean a machine? What are the most effective ways to earn online? When will I get glowing skin or long and thick hairs? Advertisements that start with the”How to” statements get 70% more traffic than other advertisements. The interesting caption is also a source of engaging the viewer to watch the video.
2. According to some participants, repetition is important to produce an image of the product in the consumer’s mind. The use of specific images and logos creates a sense of familiarity with the product.
3. According to respondents, repetitive use of the same image may instill the feeling of boredom in the viewer; therefore, different visual representations for the same product may enhance the advertisement's attractiveness.
* **RQ2: What cues are most effective in making a YouTube advertisement memorable?**
1. Music imparts an emotional impact on the viewer’s memory and makes the advertisement attractive. It can evoke emotional responses to elicit positive or negative associations with the advertised product.
2. The physical appearance of the actors can also deliver a benefit. The audience may feel compelled to follow the actor’s advice to purchase the advertised product.
3. The scenery and background, utilizing an attractive color scheme, can also have an impact on the audience.
4. Advertisements that address the audience’s latest needs were found to be effective.
5. Advertisements that evoke the viewer's pleasant memories make the advertisement more attractive.
6. The advertisement’s color palette is important in influencing the buyer’s mood. Effective color combinations enhance the visual representation of the product. According to some participants, viewers prefer to watch a video or advertisement with color selection reported to be consistent with certain emotions: red evokes love and compassion, green represents life and black shows sexuality.
7. Non-verbal cues, such as standing posture, style, gestures, and confidence of the characters, enhance the effectiveness of the advertisement. The harmonious use of gestures, body movement, and facial expression compels the audience to watch the advertisement.
 | GeneralRareGeneralRare |
| **Effective message delivery**  |  |
| * **RQ3: What cues are most effective in communicating the advertisement’s message?**
1. According to participants, an effective way to communicate the advertiser’s message is by using customer- or audience-targeted language. If the message has been delivered in this way, the audience will show interest in the product.
2. Other respondents stated that an advertiser’s message effectively fulfills the psychological needs of the customer; for example, safety, a sense of belonging, self-esteem, etc.
3. Positive concepts in advertisements were reported to be more effective in communicating the advertiser’s message. A pleasant message attracts the audience more than a negative one.

**RQ4: Are emotions more important than messages in advertisements?**1. The majority of participants responded that emotions play a more vital role in the advertisement than the message. The emotional interplay between words, plot, and music can evoke particular emotions among viewers.
2. A few respondents stated that the messages are more important than emotion-evoking statements in the advertisement.

**RQ5: How does psychology work in making an advertisement effective?** 1. Participants responded that an advertisement that addresses psychological needs, such as a sense of belonging, enhances the self-esteem of the participants. Purchasing a product of the latest trend may also boost the buyers’ self-esteem.
2. According to other participants, effective advertisements play with the psychology of the targeted audience’s mind, causing the audience to be compelled to purchase the product.
3. A few participants responded that psychological suffering might also influence the advertisement’s effectiveness. For example, if a female is depressed due to acne issues, an advertisement introducing the acne solution may work very effectively. The effectiveness increases further if the woman in the advertisement with the same issue discusses her use of the product and happiness. Similarly, an advertisement related to career-conscious people or blog lovers may direct the audience to watch the advertisement relevant to earning.
4. Appealing to the viewer’s sense of self-worth is a very significant component of an advertisement. Products that enhance the self-worth of the participants, either physically or psychologically, work better.
5. Some participants suggested that story-based advertisement were more effective, as the audience wants to see the climax of the story.
6. Advertisements full of suspense, horror, or curiosity are also considered effective in promoting products.

**RQ6: Does symbolic advertisement get more attention?**1. According to the minority of participants, symbolism can distill a complex idea into a simple message for the audience. For example, diamonds and water suggest the concept of purity; a lion represents strength; wide roads symbolize freedom.
2. In contrast, a few respondents stated that symbolism is not as effective, as a majority of viewers will not understand the idea of the advertisement. Not all audiences are familiar with the same symbols. Instead, this approach can only be used in a higher-ordered advertisement.
 | GeneralRareGeneralRare |
| **Feedback Mechanism** |  |
| **RQ7: Does the feedback mechanism used by the organization to get information from the users increase the positive perception of the advertisement?**1. According to the majority of participants, feedback mechanisms increase positive perception of the advertisement, as the customer may share opinions with the advertiser.
2. On the other hand, a few respondents stated that feedback mechanisms might decrease the rating of the product if users post a negative comment. Sometimes consumers will reject that product after reading negative comments. **RQ8: Does YouTube advertisement feedback impart a positive impact on promoting the product?**
* The majority of respondents responded that YouTube’s feedback mechanism imparts a positive impact on the promotion of the product.
* A few respondents did not agree.

**RQ9: What is the best source for getting customers’ feedback?** * According to respondents, the symbolic method of feedback, such as a star-based rating system, is more effective than verbal or written feedback.
* In contrast, a few respondents stated that written feedback is better than symbolic.
* A few stated that verbal interviews or surveys are most effective.
 | GeneralRareGeneralRareGeneralRare |

**Interpretation of Responses**

The responses of the respondents have been sorted into the categories mentioned above in order to investigate the frequency distributions of the items. Various themes have emerged through analysis of the participants’ responses. The results of the qualitative interpretations are as follow.

**What cues are most effective in getting viewers to engage with the ads played before YouTube videos?** The first question posed to the students was with regard to getting viewers to engage with the ads played before YouTube videos. There was some diversity in the responses, but the majority of participants (68%) stated that interesting narration and repetition in the advertisement are the most effective cues for keeping the viewer engaged with the ad played before YouTube videos. The rest, 32% of participants stated that excessive repetition might develop a negative association with the product; instead, repetition with a different concept within the same product may develop a sense of interest among the audience.

**What cues are most effective in making a YouTube advertisement memorable?** According to the majority of the participants (60%), the most effective cues in making YouTube advertisements memorable are music, scenery, background, the physical appearance of the actors, and triggering the viewer’s memories. Visual cues were reported to be the most effective technique for holding the viewer’s attention. In contrast, the other participants (40%) stated that color schemes and non-verbal cues are the most significant elements in making a YouTube advertisement effective. According to the participants, non-verbal cues such as facial expression, body posture, gesture, style, and eye contact make a positive impact.

**What cues are most effective in communicating the advertisement’s message?** 65% of participants stated that language is the most effective cue in communicating the advertisement’s messages. Easily-understood vocabulary is more likely to get the attention of the audience. 20% of participants stated that advertisements that fulfill the psychological needs of the targeted audience are most effective.

**Does the feedback mechanism used by the organization to get information from the users increase positive perceptions of the advertisement?** The majority of participants (88%) stated that having a feedback mechanism for the advertised product increases positive perception. The feedback helps both in enhancing the satisfaction level of the participants and in evaluating the reception of the product. Secondly, the feedback gives way for product developers to enhance the effectiveness of the product. 22% of participants stated that the feedback mechanism could work negatively as well if fake or unauthentic statements are posted regarding the product’s alleged ineffectiveness. According to the participants, two types of people post a negative comment in the feedback section: those who want to spoil the reputation of the brand, weakening the competition for promoting their brands, and those who have no intention to spoil the product’s image but unnecessarily post the negative feedback.

**Are emotions more important than messages in advertisements?** According to the majority of participants, advertisement that evokes emotions among viewers may elicit particular responses if they feel an association with the product. According to the participants, people develop a strong emotional connection with the product if the advertisement describes their internal condition and satisfies their associated emotions. People do not skip these types of advertisements; sometimes they are watched repeatedly. A few participants reported using music in advertisements to evoke emotional responses. The advertisement is depicting maternal love and care, such as including diapers or cooking food and mother-child love oriented video, were also praised by survey participants, for their ability to produce an emotional attachment with the product. On the other hand, a few participants stated that the message is more important than the audience’s emotional response in creating an effective advertisement.

**How does psychology work in making an advertisement effective?** 60% of participants reported that addressing psychological needs, such as a sense of belonging, can boost the participants’ self-esteem. Purchasing the product gives the buyers a feeling of belonging, which further enhances their self-esteem. According to the participants, effective advertisements may manipulate the audience psychologically to cause the audience to feel driven to purchase the product. 30% of participants stated that psychological suffering could also influence the effectiveness of the advertisement; for example, a woman concerned with her skin issues would be excited to watch an acne solution advertisement.

Similarly, advertisements oriented toward the topic of employment may enhance the effectiveness of the advertisement among viewers concerned with their income. Participants stated that advertisements that create a sense of self-worth in the viewer could boost the sense of belonging and satisfaction with physical or professional life. 20% of participants found story-based advertisements or those filled with suspense, horror, or curiosity more effective.

**Does symbolic advertisement get more attention?** 60% of participants suggested that non-symbolic advertisements work better than then symbolic advertisements, for the reason that a majority of people do not understand the meaning of the symbolism. 40% of participants stated that symbolic advertising is more effective in capturing the audience's attention, and is, therefore, more valuable.

**Does YouTube advertisement feedback impart a positive impact on promoting the product?** 60% of participants suggested that the inclusion of a feedback mechanism imparts a positive impact in promoting the advertised product. 40% of respondents did not agree.

**What is the best source for getting customers’ feedback?** According to 28% of respondents, the symbolic method of obtaining feedback, such as star ratings, is more effective than verbal or written methods. In contrast, 72% of respondents stated that written feedback is better. A few stated that verbal interviews or surveys are the most effective way to get feedback from participants.

**Summary of Results**

The overall results of the FGDs suggest that YouTube advertisements are effective in promoting products or brands. The majority of participants stated that captivating narration and repetition are the most effective cues for keeping the viewer engaged. According to the majority of participants, the most effective cues in YouTube advertisements are music, scenery, color scheme, background, and physical appearance of the actors, verbal or non-verbal cues, and past associated memories. 65% of participants stated that language is the most important component in communicating an advertiser’s message. 20% of participants stated that advertisements that fulfill the psychological needs of the targeted audience by imparting a positive message are most effective.

88% of participants stated that having a feedback mechanism for the advertised product increases positive perceptions of the advertisement. 60% of participants reported that advertisements that fill a psychological need, such as a sense of belonging, are positively associated with the self-esteem of the participants; purchasing the product gives the buyer a feeling of belonging, further enhancing their self-esteem. Participants reported that the advertisement, which is designed according to the psychological needs of the targeted audience effect more. According to other participants, effective advertisements manipulate the audience psychologically, compelling the audience to purchase the product. 30% of participants stated that the audience’s psychological suffering could influence the effectiveness of the advertisement. 20% of participants found story-based advertisement more interesting; for some participants, advertisements full of suspense, horror, or curiosity are effective in getting good rates. 60% of participants suggested that non-symbolic advertisements work better than symbolic advertisements. 60% of participants suggested that the inclusion of a feedback mechanism had a positive impact on the product’s promotion. 72% of respondents stated that written feedback was better than symbolic.

**Conclusion**

The results of both sections the qualitative and quantitative study showed high inter-rated reliability as the results of section 1 revealed that effective advertising necessitates a strategy to promote the product in question. Similarly, the results of Section 2 suggest that utilizing effective advertising strategies can enhance viewer engagement.

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