

Integrated Marketing Communication
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Lecture - 33
Media Planning – Part I

Welcome back, friends. After understanding advertising and support media, let us have a glimpse of media planning for two sessions. And this section, I will focus on the choice of media planning and not somehow take it as a redundant aspect of what we discussed in the integrated marketing communication plan. That is a more significant thing, basically, a very elaborate kind of document and a planning perspective.

This section would focus on the choice of media mainly because this element brings rationality to the costs we spend and the reachability we desire. Media planning concentrates on reach and frequency when discussing several modes. We have been talking about it briefly in different sections as well. Let us begin our journey to understand what media planning is.

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It refers to a series of decisions required to deliver the advertisement message to a large target audience in an effective manner at a low cost. As I said, it talks about cost and effectiveness. And then involves setting specific media objectives and strategies to accomplish the predetermined business or advertising objectives.

Please take it as a particular portion of what we discussed earlier in the IMC plan, but remember that while discussing this portion, we must agree with the complete IMC plan we discussed earlier. Here also, we would be referring to objectives; we will be referring to situation analysis, and to other elements, but here the focus would be on the choice of media.

Do not think that it is repetitive, but always while discussing in terms of the media plan, remember that we are focusing on a ready message with us a target audience in mind and imagination about several choices we have in front of us, which one to choose, how far to go with that choice, what kind of a combination with other media choices, to what extent.

That is how we have to think about this. Media planning aims to formulate a particular combination of media vehicles or means of message delivery systems that would enable the advertiser to communicate the message effectively. To what extent we would be using one particular available mode and vehicle within that mode. That is the point of concentration here.

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There is commonly called as 5 W's of media planning, when, what, whom, where and which. Now, these W's can be a part of other plans as well, which we have referred to, but as I said, focus on the elements of choice now.

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And here are some of the activities involved in media planning and media strategy. As I said in IMC planning, we were doing situation analysis with so many elements into consideration. Here, we focus on situation analysis concerning the carriers in front of us. And when we talked about the competition, we were talking about the kinds of messages the competition would be throwing at our target or this similar audience we are targeting.

And here, we would be referring to competition with the choice of this same media that is where the most important comparison comes in. After conducting a situation analysis, formulating a marketing and advertising strategy which broadly emanates from IMC plan and then we have specific media objectives.

And this is one of the essential elements of determination of media strategy, which yields the selection of media. Now, when we discuss determining media strategy, let me spend a few seconds on this. It is all about comparison, combinations, and, of course, with an objective perspective, you would gain the target customer's attention more through this media.

In the last section, when we talked about Head and Shoulders, and we discussed how the printed, a black page and a white page in a newspaper in print advertising, that suggests that the type of advertisement or the creativity associated with the advertisement also compels us to think in terms of what kind of media we would be choosing because there you want people to rub their scalp and see if dandruff is coming out on that black page.

You have to use print media, and that is where media strategy comes into play. We were referring to Amul using outdoor, where there a different kind of media strategy was associated with the time, the era as well as the kind of creativity associated with as far as Amul advertisement goes and in today's world, wherein lots of complementarity exist amongst the media, choices are there.

Hence apart from getting compelled by the creative elements, we have a comparison of our competitors' choices in terms of media. There are two elements. Should we be choosing the same media as our competitors too? And if not, then would we be losing something? Yes, of course, we might lose the target we focus on because one target simultaneously focuses on two

people.

Remember, we have talked about this earlier: Huggies, Pampers, Coke, Pepsi, Complan, Horlicks, and other. You might lose on something if you are not there where the competitor is. Competitor and then comparison in terms of size, if you are talking of print media in terms of time, if we are talking of television in terms of other elements if you are talking of internet and mobile. That is where media strategy comes in comparison and combinations.

One have to compare oneself and generate combinations simultaneously. How would you know to combine the available modes? We will keep talking about this further.

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While we should be looking at the factors affecting media planning, here also you will find some commonalities between integrated marketing communication plan and the factors, but let us look at these. For example, if we are talking about the nature of the product while thinking in terms of media planning, then definitely if it is a product which has a higher price, then definitely a particular kind of choice of a media which can gain more considerable attention for our product would be more critical for us at that point of time.

And cost considerations have to be there, but we want more significant attention to push up the sales, for example, cars in automotive. They utilize magazine spreads; companies use that space for automotive advertising, especially in targeted magazines, double spreads. Why? Because there you can watch the features of that car, you can read about that car at length.

If you print that advertisement in a newspaper, it will gain attention, but people might not stop that long to read about that particular car. It all depends. Now, if you have 5 rupees or 10 rupees per, you might not like to go for a double spread advertisement as far as magazines go, the nature of the product also is directive towards the choice of media, it directs it.

Nature of customers, obviously, we should not go for a deeper explanation. We have talked about this at length. Then the distribution of product. If you want to distribute your product to specific pockets, then going for a more significant mass media would be detrimental and might create a space for your competitor. I remember there was a detergent, which was still in the initial phase of its launch, wherein distribution was not so prominent. And the organization came up with a large mass media-based advertising, and chose almost every combination they had in their eyes, assuming that soon they would be producing a large quantum of detergent. They could not create the space for other competitors because demand increased, and they could not supply, which became detrimental to their product.

I remember one of the electronics companies, their marketing head, in the initial phases of the launch of their television when I asked them why they were not using mass media. He said that we are still not producing for the whole of the country as such, and that was early, as I think 2000 something when I was discussing this with him.

And he said that the day we produce for everyone we will go for mass media because otherwise, people would start asking for the product, and they would not find the product as such and those days online purchase platforms were not so common. Advertising objectives, we have talked about earlier as well. We will skip these for a while.

Next is nature of message. We have been pondering the ad budget's length and size. We have talked about this in detail. Media used by competitors, as I mentioned, comparison and combination. But as I said, should we be going for the same or not and this should always be the question.

Media availability is next and is very important when discussing media planning. Why is it important? Because during particular seasons, it is not up to your choice that you find space or time or when you book for that so, and if you are planning much, you do not know how the market situation would be. As I said, when you are planning integrated marketing communication at large, it has to precede media planning and is to be done within a suitable period.

You can easily book that space and time; otherwise, there would be price variation, or you might not gain that kind of space or time as per your requirement. Reach and coverage: what kind of media options would have a particular kind of reach. Language plays a particular kind of role. When we are talking of Hindi speaking belts, people focus on Hindi newspapers more than other options because people like to read those.

Frequency: should you be going for a short time, 10 second advertisements on television very frequently throughout the day? Should you be going for 30 seconds or 60 seconds clippings every hour or so? Should you be going for small space-colored advertisements on the third page of a newspaper every time you go for, every day, more or less?

Or you should be going for one full page or on a pseudo front page or, let us say, half-page advertisement on a third page or a back-page kind of and then stop for a while and then go back. What are the considerations you have in mind while going for this cost? It should be left aside because that is a primary consideration. But then what are the elements which compel you to think about these kinds of things, and that is where the frequency, reach, sizing those kinds of things they come in.

Discounts offered by media options on how well you negotiate about in terms of the price. The media planning process, market analysis, and IMC planning are also involved.

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There is a consideration in terms of market analysis. Still, when you say market analysis, you keep in mind that the choice of a particular media would support your distribution and your reach to the customer. That is the primary consideration, and definitely, it should gel with as far as your target customer goes. Every media plan begins with a market and environmental analysis.

And you might be wondering, at this particular stage, is it the same market analysis we do in IMC planning? It is similar to that, or I should say that when we are doing that market analysis or market analysis in consideration to develop an IMC plan, the same time we use similar kind of market analysis elements for developing the media plan as such. Here, I must tell you that several teams are working on an integrated marketing communication plan.

And media planning team is an expert team associated with the specific media vehicles or let us say several kinds of combinations and they know about the aspects of reach, they know about the aspects of effectiveness, have data related to how media vehicles or different media have been performing, especially in concerning the case in which they are dealing with the product.

They have all the intelligence associated with that precise performance. The team can utilize the similar market analysis we have been doing for a larger integrated marketing communication plan to use its elements here. I hope you would not take it as a redundant step, I am saying here. The market analysis includes the identification of the target audience; you have already done that.

Are you reaching the target audience now? That is the consideration. The choice of media can only decide if you are doing that and it is in terms of demographic characteristics. For example, you are targeting a particular kind of product targeted to youth. Now, that youth, as per the understanding of the surveys or the feedback, reads the newspaper. Which page might they be reading more, or which page they might be stopping at more? That is the point of consideration where media planning expertise comes in. We often realize that youth of a particular age spend more time on sports pages. If a product is targeted at them and a message is targeted at them while generating an IMC plan, we focus on the sports page, which is the job of media planners.

They must decide the sports page of which newspapers are what again. If the youth is related to Hindi speaking belt and they read Hindi newspaper, definitely sports page of Hindi newspaper that is how media planners would do things and then which kind of programs they are watching

and is there gender relationship associated with that. What kind of things they are focusing upon.

For example, advertisers of particular newspapers like iNext, India's first bilingual daily. The iNext audience or readership is focused, and the advertisers wait for that readership to focus upon iNext as their media choice. That is how things are done. The media planner must consider internal and external factors affecting media planning, as we have discussed, while making a media plan.

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This is essentially the picture we referred to in market analysis, target audience, factors affecting media planning, and geographical area.

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Then there is an element of consideration in terms of message distribution. Distribution of message to the audience in media planning process includes the decision upon the number of messages and the frequency as we have discussed earlier. Media planners should decide whether a single message is sufficient or there should be several repetitions of the message.

I talked about this in terms of size or time of advertisement to elaborate upon the reach, frequency kind of a combination which one generates to media planning. This particular thing which I am mentioning here in terms of message distribution is one message should be enough that it encompasses the creativity associated with that message or the requirement of the message in terms of the kind of period you want to address that message.

For example, you have a special 3-day sale. You are going through an extended waiting list of admissions into a particular course by a university or a college. One message would be enough, and there are several such kinds of things which are related to the choice of one message or multiple messages. Media planners also have to calculate the total message weight of the campaign.

That is again what we had discussed when we were talking about the evaluation, and we will also be mentioning that here. The evaluation criteria has to be fixed because, by every choice, you want a particular kind of a return, and that has to be associated with the weights you locate to your objectives and the fulfillment of those objectives as far as the choice of media goes.

Some media are chosen just because you want to generate awareness; some media are chosen because you want the sales to move ahead; some media are chosen for other reasons.

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Further, for selecting appropriate media, different media are compared based on cost per reader, viewer, media image, etc. Now, we must understand that, in the case of newspapers, it is not just purchase or the sales of newspaper which matters, it is also the readership of the newspaper.

And here I would mention 1 or 2 essential elements for you to further ponder upon. Indian Newspaper Society are one of the organizations who work upon generating data on this. Audit Bureau Circulations is also one of those organizations that generate data and conduct surveys on the generated data and conduct surveys on how print media or different media are working related to them.

And several surveys are being conducted in the case of different media by different organizations, and those surveys are taken very seriously by advertisers because those surveys have that kind of intensity and depth, and are done meticulously. For example, National Leadership Surveys done primarily in urban parts have a particular frequency. A particular sample level is chosen, and the survey looks into what readers are reading, how many readers are reading one copy of the newspaper in urban areas, and which newspaper is performing or which magazine is performing in what way. Indian Leadership surveys are done in rural and urban areas and are one of the most extensive surveys for media worldwide.

It gives very important information about; which kind of reader is sticking to which kind of a page to what extent. One gets an excellent insight to position your particular advertisement because the more significant the readership and the longer the time you retain the readership on a particular page or a particular number of pages, better the reach to your audience.

This will return your money in terms of the sales or the objectives you have decided. These surveys or other evaluative methodologies give us a powerful perspective on the cost element of readership or viewership. It is essential for us to realize that messaging or communication, especially in terms of mass media, which we are referring to here in terms of television or newspaper is important.

I have been talking about this earlier that it is more or less a one-way process and is directed towards generating recall. However, it is not always easy to analyze what kind of a recall and awareness it has generated unless we talk to the customers or readers. Hence, these kinds of surveys enable you to assess what one should focus on to an extent.

Then we have the elements where the advertisers should ensure that media matches with the features of the target audience, selected media should match with message requirements and while selecting suitable media available medias should be kept in mind. We have talked about that earlier as well.

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There are some pertinent aspects of combining different media advertisers that can increase coverage and improve the chances of achieving advertising goals through comparison and combinations. Next, I will be taking you towards particular elements of scheduling and the rest we have already touched on.

Do send in your queries if you want further details about media choices. Scheduling includes decisions regarding date or time. We have partially touched upon this, but why a specific mention because, when you are developing a media plan, you have to be very precise. In June, one could be analyzing Diwali. Hence Diwali is a date-specific event.

What would be the kind of a message one sends in for Dhanteras, and what kind of a message would one send for Diwali precisely. What kind of shoppers would go shopping only during Diwali. Would they be going online or offline? Should one be thinking in terms of pre-Diwali only? And should they also focus upon post-Diwali as well.

Thus, whole lot of scheduling is significant because then only you would be able to book that space or time, or you would be able to be in time in front of the customer when they have that particular requirement in mind. Hence, scheduling is done to mark the whole thing, and that enables you to avoid any confusion from your part and avoid redundancy.

Scheduling is also the only tool that effectively avoids cost escalation because it brings in the rationality of media choice as far as the whole scenario goes.

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Media scheduling aims to issue advertisements at an appropriate time and frequency so that an organization can contact that target audience at minimum advertising cost.

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When discussing media planning broadly, we must evaluate how effective our media plan is. As I said, effectiveness is associated with the returns against the cost we have allocated regarding the media choices. Still, there is one thing apart from that media planners keep on focusing on time and again. The combination factor on how much to increase as far as the way to one particular media goes.

Is it a formula that sustains itself? Or it is related to time season and behavioral change of customers, or it is associated with the product life cycle, or it is related to the seasonal or demographic or any other sort of effect on the media itself. This kind of a particular thought

process, wherein several combinations are being made, partially tested, retested, reconfirmed, or are reshaped at the end of the day.

That is, a complete combination is reshaped. That is what evaluation is all about because at the end of the day, it is always the rationality that would derive the best out of a media plan. Keep your focus on this keyword rationality. And I will discuss other elements of media planning, especially some critical concepts associated with media planning, in the subsequent session. Thank you. Goodbye for now.