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0152	Analysis of Media Reporting of President Jokowi on the Issue of the Rise of Oil Price	Prayudi
0163	DOCTOR-PATIENT'S DIALOGUE	Puri Kusuma Dwi I
0352	The Development of Model on English Ads Text Construction for Export Products in Sukoharjo Regency	Purwani Indri Astu and Betty Gama
0113	Visual communication Cyber in building the perspective of islam in indonesia	Rama Kertamukti
0170	INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION (IMC) STRATEGY TO PROMOTE MEDIUM ENTERPRISE IN SERVICES BUSINESS	Rahma Santhi Zin
0171	Indonesian Moslems Women's Fashion: Dress and Hijab in Television Advertisement	Rika Lusri Virga
0511	Comparative Study of Local People and Tourist Perception through Developing Thematic City Park in Bandung and Surabaya	Rini Andari, HP Di
0431	THE REFLECTION OF INTEGRITY ON DISPLAY WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESS ONLINE	RINI SUDARMAN KURNIAWATY YU
0442	COMPARISON OF THE RELATIONSHIP MARKETING DIMENSIONS BETWEEN MANUFACTURING AND SERVICES COMPANY	Rizal Ramdan Pac

# INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION (IMC) STRATEGY TO PROMOTE MEDIUM ENTERPRISE IN SERVICES BUSINESS

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## Abstract

Marketing and corporate communications are the main persuasive element the organization can use to connect with its markets by communicating ideas and seeking to impart particular perceptions of brands, products and services to customers, consumers and stakeholders. Nevertheless, the increasingly wider variety of communication and promotional tools together with the modern-day array of on- and off-line channels and media forms can widely disseminate messages. Since the mid-1990's, the concept of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) has come to the fore and attracted considerable attention in the literature. IMC is a combination of various communication and marketing strategies that can be used by small and medium-sized businesses to develop and sales promotion techniques. in this study only discuss about the IMC strategy to support the promotion of the entrepreneurs in the city of Palembang. Using the Qualitative approach method, the author tries to describe how the concept of IMC works to help the promotion of a business process. For this research, case study to review is services business in Palembang city named "De Sun Fitness". As a part of services business, De Sun Fitness being a role model for success business for services area. Locating in the heart of Palembang city, De sun Fitness will be the example of success full business model using IMC strategy.

Keywords : Integrated, Marketing, Communications, IMC,

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Since the mid-1990's, the concept of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) has come to the fore and attracted considerable attention in the literature. IMC is a combination of various communication and marketing strategies that can be used by small and medium-sized businesses to develop and sales promotion techniques. in this study only discuss about the IMC strategy to support the promotion of the entrepreneurs in the city of Palembang. Many company or business industry doesn't aware in choosing promotional tools or strategy. After that, Use the Qualitative approach method, the author tries to describe how the concept of IMC works to help the promotion of a business process. For this research, case study to review is services business in Palembang city named "De Sun Fitness". De sun Fitness located in central town Palembang city, near one of public place 'Palembang square mall' and already have more than a three hundred member.

The owner of De Sun is origin from local people of Palembang. He started a this business since 2008. Initially, De Sun using the conventional strategy for the promotion and the results are pretty good, although not reach on the target that he wants. After applying the concept of integrated marketing communication (IMC) in 2011, De Sun Fitness achieve the target market and even more

As a part of services business, De Sun Fitness being a role model for success business for services area, after that, a lot of companies that went bankrupt because they use promotional and communication strategies that are less precise and not use full. so, it must have a good planning and marketing concepts that will be appropriate and efficient so company dose not spend substantial funds for promotion and marketing.

## **2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1. Literature Review**

#### **2.1.1. Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC)**

Before explain about integrated marketing communication, we must to know first first what is marketing and what is communication. Marketing Successful marketing is about having a business that is flexible enough to respond quickly to changing demands. And a workforce that is willing to co-operate with your customers, not treat them as if they were public enemy number one.

*“Marketing is the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements profitably.” (Pauline, 1999:11)*

Definition for integrated marketing communication by the [American Association of Advertising Agencies](#) (also 4A's) in 1989, defining IMC is "an approach to achieve objectives of a [marketing](#) campaign through a well-coordinated use of different promotional methods that are intended to reinforce each other." The 4A's definition of IMC recognizes the strategic roles of various communication disciplines such as advertising, [public relations](#), sales promotions, etc. to provide clarity, consistency, and increased impact when combined within a comprehensive communications plan. This is the full sentence about 4A'S (Caywood, Et.all, 1991) :

*“A concept of marketing communications planning that recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluated the strategic role of a variety of communications disciplines, e.g. general advertising, direct response, sales promotion and public relations- and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency and maximum communications impact.”*

Basically, it is the application of consistent brand messaging across both traditional and non-traditional marketing channels. *The Journal of Integrated Marketing Communication* from the [Medill School of Journalism](#) at [Northwestern University](#) refers to IMC as "a strategic marketing process specifically designed to ensure that all messaging and communication strategies are unified across all channels and are centered around the customer. " IMC is used practically to allow one medium's weakness to be offset by another medium's strength, with elements synergized to support each other and create greater impact

A more contemporary definition states, "True IMC is the development of marketing strategies and creative campaigns that weave together multiple marketing disciplines (paid advertising, public relations, promotion, owned assets, and social media) that are selected and then executed to suit the particular goals of the brand. " Instead of simply using various media to help tell a brand's overall story, with IMC the marketing *leverages* each communication channel's intrinsic strengths to achieve a greater impact together than each channel could achieve individually. It requires the marketer to understand each medium's limitation, including the audience's ability/willingness to absorb messaging from that

medium. This understanding is integrated into a campaign's strategic plan from the very beginning of planning - so that the brand no longer simply speaks with consistency, but speaks with planned efficacy.

Promotion is one of the Ps in the marketing mix. Promotions has its own mix of communications tools. All of these communications tools work better if they work together in harmony rather than in isolation. Their sum is greater than their parts - providing they speak consistently with one voice all the time, every time. This is enhanced when integration goes beyond just the basic communications tools. There are other levels of integration such as Horizontal, Vertical, Internal, External and Data integration. Here is how they help to strengthen Integrated Communications.

Horizontal Integration occurs across the marketing mix and across business functions - for example, production, finance, distribution and communications should work together and be conscious that their decisions and actions send messages to customers. While different departments such as sales, direct mail and advertising can help each other through Data Integration. This requires a marketing information system which collects and shares relevant data across different departments. Vertical Integration means marketing and communications objectives must support the higher level corporate objectives and corporate missions.

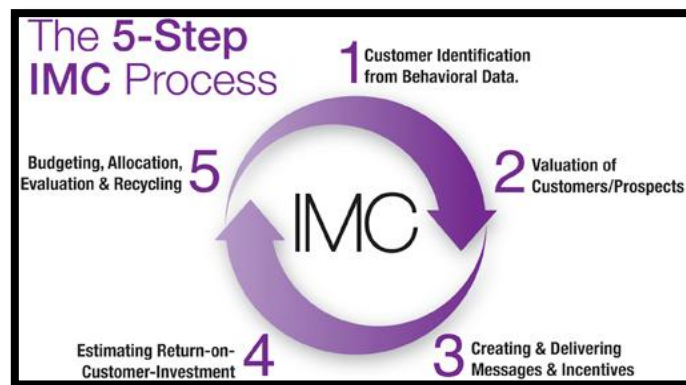


Figure 1. The 5 Step of IMC Process

Source : <http://jimc.medill.northwestern.edu>

### 2.1.2. Benefits of IMC

IMC wraps communications around customers and helps them move through the various stages of the buying process. The organization simultaneously consolidates its image, develops a dialogue and nurtures its relationship with customers. This 'Relationship Marketing' cements a bond of loyalty with customers which can protect them from the inevitable onslaught of competition. The ability to keep a customer for life is a powerful competitive advantage.

IMC also increases profits through increased effectiveness. At its most basic level, a unified message has more impact than a disjointed myriad of messages. In a busy world, a consistent, consolidated and crystal clear message has a better chance of cutting through the 'noise' of over five hundred commercial messages which bombard customers each and every day. At another level, initial research suggests that images shared in advertising and direct mail boost both advertising awareness and mail shot responses. So IMC can boost sales by

stretching messages across several communications tools to create more avenues for customers to become aware, aroused, and ultimately, to make a purchase

### **2.1.3. Part of IMC**

#### **A. Advertising**

Advertising is one of the most effective ways of brand promotion. Advertising helps organizations reach a wider audience within the shortest possible time frame. Advertisements in newspaper, television, Radio, billboards help end-users to believe in your brand and also motivate them to buy the same and remain loyal towards the brand. Advertisements not only increase the consumption of a particular product/service but also create brand awareness among customers. Marketers need to ensure that the right message reaches the right customers at the right time. Be careful about the content of the advertisement, after all you are paying for every second.

#### **B. Sales Promotion**

Brands (Products and services) can also be promoted through discount coupons, loyalty clubs, membership coupons, incentives, lucrative schemes, attractive packages for loyal customers, specially designed deals and so on. Brands can also be promoted effectively through newspaper inserts, danglers, banners at the right place, glorifiers, wobblers etc.

#### **C. Direct Marketing**

Direct marketing enables organizations to communicate directly with the end-users. Various tools for direct marketing are emails, text messages, catalogues, brochures, promotional letters and so on. Through direct marketing, messages reach end-users directly.

#### **D. Personal Selling**

Personal selling is also one of the most effective tools for integrated marketing communication. Personal selling takes place when marketer or sales representative sells products or services to clients. Personal selling goes a long way in strengthening the relationship between the organization and the end-users.

#### **E. Public Relation Activities**

Public relation activities help promote a brand through press releases, news, events, public appearances etc The role of public relations officer is to present the organization in the best light.

## **3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Analysis De Sun Fitness element of IMC can explain in briefly as:

#### *A. Advertising for De Sun Fitness*

De Sun fitness gym promotes its place through advertisements in various media, either in above the line nor below the line. For above the line as electronic media (TV and radio) local TV station that they choose is Pal TV and Sriwijaya TV. For media below the line De Sun Fitness using brochures, leaflets, posters and more. Advertise through this media is

effective because it is supported by other IMC component that engages the sales promotion campaign in various advertising materials used by De Sun Fitness.

#### *B. Sales Promotion for De Sun Fitness*

Brands (Products and services) can also be promoted by De Sun Fitness through discount coupons, loyalty clubs, membership card “friend get friend or member get member” or members can enjoy the membership card for special discount or offer in all merchant members who have worked with De Sun Fitness (ex. Restaurant, café, salon, etc), attractive packages for loyal customers ex. If member pay the membership fee for one year upfront, member will get exclusive merchandise like towel or jacket, and so on. Brands can also be promoted De Sun Fitness effectively through newspaper inserts, danglers, Banners at the right place such as mall, school, university, public place, and hospital. for IT based promotion, De Sun Fitness also maintaining their website ( <http://desunfitness.com/>), social media such as twitter ( @desunfitnes link : <https://twitter.com/desunfitnes>), Facebook (Desunfitnes). to maintain brand awareness, De Sun also doing a joint promo with big brands such as milk, health supplements, vitamins and others. For ex. De Sun Voucher bundling with a purchase milk or supplements in supermarket.

#### *C. Direct Marketing for De Sun Fitness*

Various tools for direct marketing are emails regular for all member and friend suggestion by member, text messages for promotion or just an awareness, brochures update for every month, and so on. Through direct marketing, messages reach end-users directly.

#### *D. Personal Selling for De Sun Fitness*

Personal selling is also one of the most effective tools for De Sun Fitness, the owner has a good communication skill to promote and to maintain the marketing team in order to promote and persuade peoples to be a member. De Sun Car Branding also being one of effective brand awareness and support promotion tools.

#### *E. Public Relation Activities*

Public relation activities help promotion through press releases, news, events, public appearances etc. De Sun has a god relations ship with media and news about de sun were often published in local news paper and radio. PR activities also maintain some event, one of the best hits event that ever done by De Sun Fitness is Ade Rai sharing session about gymnastic and body builder. Ade Rai is an icon in icon of Indonesian bodybuilder. Besides, De Sun also give support to some events related to sports, and follow many competition relating to gymnastics, aerobics and bodybuilder contest. This activities will also made a positive impact for De Sun to be more recognized by the public so it can increasing the number of members

## **4 CONCLUSION**

As a conclusion, De Sun has been running all over integrated marketing communication (IMC) functions which will facilitate De Sun Fitness in the promotion, sales and brand imaging and its services to the target market. By using the IMC strategy as a reference promotion and sales De Sun Fitness can save time, effort and money in the process of promotion and sales.

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