Chapter 16
Digital Demands Convergence of Strategies, Media, and Messages:
Firms Mix Content, Social, and Native Marketing

Kenneth E. Harvey

Xiamen University Malaysia, Malaysia

Luis Manuel Pazos Sanchez

Xiamen University Malaysia, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

Even before the world wide web, integrated marketing communications (IMC) was gaining acceptance across all fields of business and industry. However, the explosion of online and mobile marketing has caused a convergence of marketing strategies at the same time that all forms of media are converging onto digital platforms. This has become more than just a "Digital Age." For marketers it is the age of multimedia, the age of coordinated omnichannel communications with an increasing emphasis on mobile, the age of personalization, and an age that blends free and friendly inbound marketing with paid advertising that looks more and more like the organic content that surrounds it. This chapter explores the ongoing impact of the convergence of media, strategies and technologies on the 4 P's of the traditional marketing mix.

INTRODUCTION

Professionals understand that advertising is only one part of marketing. They understand the important role of public relations and branding. They understand that the marketing mix even includes important elements of the products, their pricing and the place where they are sold. Nonetheless, advertising seemed

to be the driving force behind marketing as long as traditional media were the dominant channels for promotional messages. All that has changed in the Digital Age.

One of the biggest sources of sales leads now is so-called content marketing or inbound marketing (not exactly synonymous but largely overlapping). Because this marketing is free (not counting labor and other in-house expenses), this would have certainly been part of many PR Department's responsibilities 10 years ago. But those working on content marketing must also be involved, almost by definition, with native advertising. Native advertising is created to look like organic content around it but requires payment to achieve greater reach. Indeed, on Facebook if you have a business site and begin making regular posts, you will be asked if you want to promote your free post. That means you will pay to have it placed on people's timelines who are not among your organization's friends and followers. That immediately makes it native advertising. A BI Intelligence report estimates that native ads will make up 74% of all U.S. digital display ad revenue by 2021 – bringing in, as illustrated in Figure 1, an estimated $36.3 billion, compared with $12.6 billion for non-native advertising (Boland, 2016), and the trend is growing almost as fast internationally. With these major opportunities taking place largely on social media, many organizations have a separate team to oversee theses promotional activities under the Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) umbrella.

Figure 1. Native display advertising (advertising created to look like the organic content that surrounds it) is growing rapidly while non-native advertising has gone stagnant
Source: Boland, BI Intelligence (2016)
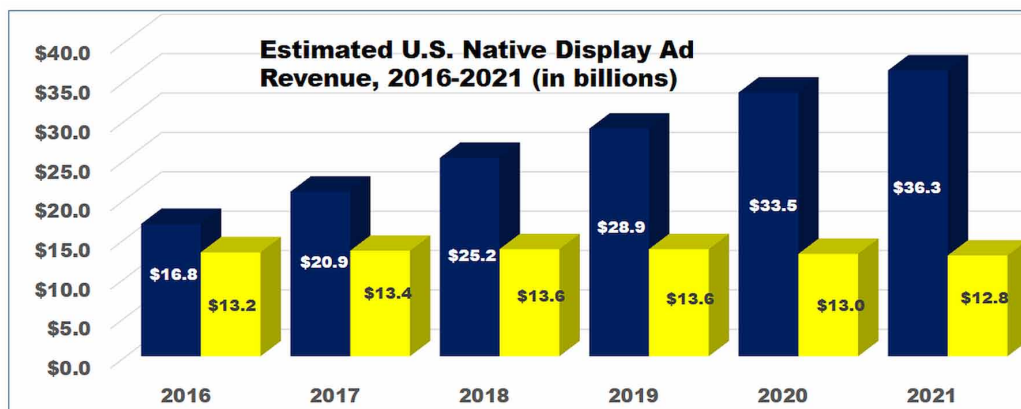
The IMC concept of placing marketing, advertising, branding, public relations, direct sales, and other promotional messaging all under one marketing executive in order to coordinate these activities began before the World Wide Web. But even though digital marketing almost demands an integrated approach, adapting IMC to the digital world still requires some effort. The *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing* asked Payne, Peltier, and Barger (2017) to provide some insights, suggestions and research topics required to help make this transition. They felt that digital communications enhance organizations' ability to engage consumers with a unified message across channels. The intersection of IMC strategies and tactics with effective omnichannel marketing could allow for a more profitable relationship, they said. The authors noted that this is a new area of academic research and proposed an omnichannel version of

Related Content

Food, Photography and the Indian Pastoral
Aileen Blaney (2016). *International Journal of E-Politics (pp. 1-15).*
www.irma-international.org/article/food-photography-and-the-indian-pastoral/152820

Tweeting Negative: Determinants of Negative Campaigning in the 2011 Gubernatorial Elections
Marija Anna Bekafigoand Allison Clark Pingley (2015). *International Journal of E-Politics (pp. 30-41).*
www.irma-international.org/article/tweeting-negative/124891

Effects of Perceiver / Target Gender and Social Networking Presence on Web-Based Impression Formation
Leslie Jordan Albert, Timothy R. Hilland Shailaja Venkatsubramanyan (2011). *International Journal of E-Politics (pp. 55-73).*
www.irma-international.org/article/effects-perceiver-target-gender-social/53539

A Survey of Research in Real-Money Trading (RMT) in Virtual World
Mohamed Nazirand Carrie Siu Man Lui (2017). *International Journal of Virtual Communities and Social Networking (pp. 34-53).*
www.irma-international.org/article/a-survey-of-research-in-real-money-trading-rmt-in-virtual-world/180674

The Impact of the Internet in Twenty-First Century Addictions: An Overview
Shilpa Suresh Bisenand Yogesh Deshpande (2019). *Internet and Technology Addiction: Breakthroughs in Research and Practice (pp. 436-454).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/the-impact-of-the-internet-in-twenty-first-century-addictions/228872