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**New Ways of Promoting and Reaching the Hearts
and Minds of Stakeholders**

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Abstract

Companies and organizations want and try to reach their stakeholders by means of interesting and more intriguing ways and channels. No matter if we speak about the four mass media communication channels, like the TV, internet, radio and written press, or through social media networks, different apps and even games. Their purpose is to raise awareness and interest towards their ideas, products or brands. In addition, even to determine the stakeholders to change their behaviour, or the way they think and act in relation to an organization. In the today's noise, it is more than difficult and challenging for a company to reach its desired segment market. An analysis of several successful case studies used by organizations to reach their wanted target audience will be conducted in this article. The strategies revealed can also be applied by other organizations, but paying much attention towards the certain traits and peculiarities of the audience. Therefore, an ad can be considered to be very successful and intriguing in a country on the one hand, but on the other hand, in another country, the same ad can be categorized as being vulgar, thus resulting instead in an unwanted behaviour.

Keywords: communication, interesting, intriguing, marketing campaigns, promotion, ads.

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1. Promotion and Communication, New Trends and Obstacles

Nowadays, organizations are finding it increasingly difficult to reach the desired market segment and we can refer here not only to the actual customers, but especially to the potential customers. For instance, in the case of the actual customers, the company can obtain the contact details relatively easily (Bodislav, A. et al., 2019). This can be done in several ways; either the purchase takes place from the company website and the customer must register by revealing the ways in which he/she can be contacted, or by organizing different promotional campaigns, where the participants are asked for such information (Rădulescu et al., 2018). Of course, in the context of the new regulations in the field of direct communication and especially of the GDPR, without the prior approval expressed by the customer, it would be quite difficult to achieve this communication in compliance with the law (Alpopi et al., 2018). The problem raised by the multitude of media channels and the possibilities of transmitting the message consists not only in the legal ways to transmit the message, but also in the abundance of messages with which they are “bombarded”, and the company is unable to transmit the desired message. Because of this, organizations are trying to differentiate themselves from competitors, with VIPs, with elements that shock the audience, precisely to draw their attention to the brand, to change the behaviour, as Sandy Hook Promise non-governmental organization is trying to achieve. The main purpose is to attract the interest and, at the same time, to raise awareness, so that the audience and the stakeholders change both their consumption behaviour and the attitude, the way of looking at certain aspects of daily life, as we will present in the case studies analysed (Burlacu, 2015) (Carra et al., 2016). The strategies and campaigns used can be considered successful and intriguing in some countries, and thus achieve their purpose, but on the other hand, in other countries they can be considered vulgar, taboo and even result in unwanted behaviours.

Although the communication model is considered to be only linear by some academics, it is considered by other researchers to be much more complex and even circular, as can be seen in figure 1. Schramm model (Blythe, 2009) demonstrates that the process for transmitting the message is circular and it is also affected by factors such as interference or noise that may result in diminishing or even not transmitting the message desired to be sent by organizations. The message is transmitted through the media and channels considered most appropriate to reach the desired audience, and more specifically the internet, television, radio and print media. The order of enumeration can also be justified by the fact that the Internet can also be used as a means and medium for transmitting the other three mass communication channels (Pricop et al., 2016). Nowadays, there are many radio stations, but also newspapers, magazines that transmit news, information or entertainment programs exclusively online, taking into account the costs, but also the ease of reaching the target audience (Faggianelli et al., 2018). The message, after it is encoded (Hackley, 2005) by the transmitter and transmitted, it is decoded by the receiver, which in some cases can even provide instant feedback. This helps companies, because in some cases where sensitive topics are touched, the company

does not have to wait to analyse the reports on the marketing of products and more specifically, the increase or decrease in sales, as in the past (Carra et al., 2017, 2018). Most organizations are aware that communication is no longer one-way, but two-way (Bran et al., 2018). The recipient of the message is no longer influenced exclusively by his/her experience, but also by the level of education and intelligence. Often, some commercials are very technical and explanatory, trying to demonstrate certain processes of how to reach a certain result, using the product of the company brand; an edifying example can be given by the advertisements for detergents (Bran et al., 2018). The feedback received by the broadcasters is in turn influenced by their experience.

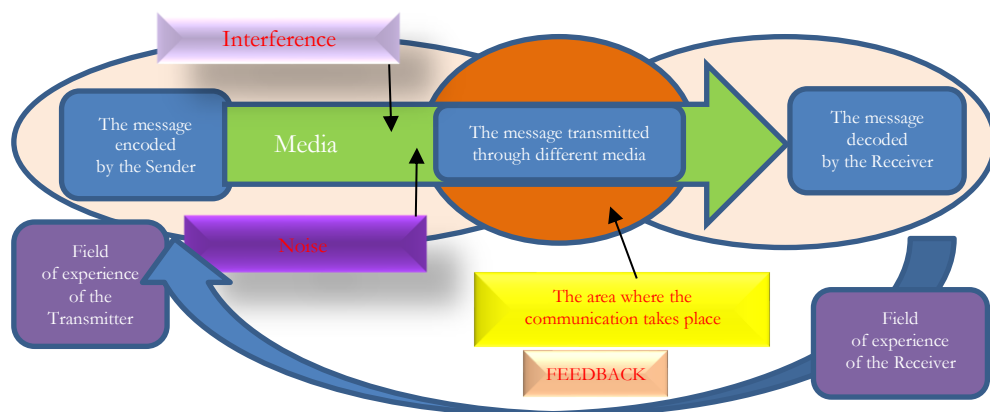


Figure 1. Schramm's model of communication

Source: Blythe, J. (2009). Key Concepts in Marketing, London: SAGE Publications Ltd

2. New Ways to Send Messages and Change Customer Behaviour

Marketing communication tools (Hackley, 2005) should portray brands, and besides that, they should get together to transmit the logo, brand name, advertising and other communication methods so that the promotion becomes as suggestive and powerful as possible. When using innovative and sometimes even shocking ideas, taking into account the fact that you have to differentiate yourself from the competition, the result may not be the expected one.

The first promotional campaign taken for analysis is the campaign created by Mars company together with the advertising agency BBDO, Snickers brand - "You're not you when you're hungry". The campaign was launched (Keane, 2018) on the occasion of the Super Bowl in 2010, although the chocolate bar has been introduced to the market since 1930, it has managed to increase sales by about 15.9% globally, and with the help of this campaign it is used even in 2019, simultaneously on several other markets worldwide. The main messages to be transmitted are the fact that you cannot react in the best way when you are hungry, and the feeling of hunger leads to embarrassing situations. Since the very first

advertisement, they hired VIPs, actors, singers, comedians, sportsmen such as: Betty White and Abe Vigoda, Richard Lewis, Roseanne Barr, Mr. Bean, Joe Pesci, Liza Minnelli, Aretha Franklin, Don Rickles, Robin Williams, Bobcat Goldthwait, Danny Trejo, Steve Buscemi, Wiliem Dafoe, Joan Collins, Mickey Rourke, Elton John and even Ronaldo Luís Nazário de Lima. Even more than that, in different countries they have used nationally renowned VIPs in markets such as China or Russia. This campaign has well been used so far; it has expanded and even addresses new issues.

In Australia in 2016, the BBDO advertising agency, along with MediaCom Melbourne, came up with the idea of creating an algorithm whereby the price of a Snickers stick (Green, 2017) fluctuates depending on the stress and irritation level of the Internet users on social networks. Thus, the company has tried to solve two problems that the contemporary society usually faces namely the daily stress and the feeling of hunger. In 2016, they created an algorithm (Stanley, 2017), “Hungerithm”, by which the reaction of people on social media networks such as: Facebook, Twitter and YouTube was analysed and interpreted, and as negative emotions increased in number and intensity, the price for a Snicker stick decreased. Although, at first glance, (dtcollective.org, 2017) the mechanism seems quite simple, it also involves the interpretation and the conversion of sarcasm, the jargon words used in the posted comments, so as to be as accurate as possible while the analysis is performed. Every 10 minutes in a day, the price of the Snickers stick was changed, adding up to a total of 5,000 price changes over a five-week period. Those who wanted to get a low price of the Snickers stick (Macleod, 2016) had only to access the website www.snickers.com and click on the “Get a Snickers” button, thus generating a unique code that they were able to use at any store in the 7-Eleven chain of stores throughout Australia. The price could not fall (Pearce & Derepas, 2017) more than 82% of the price displayed on the shelf, because there were even attempts when the Internet users tried to artificially reduce the price, although they had not been stressed by political, economic or even by the news related to the weather. But still the campaign did a roaring trade (Lewington, 2017), over 6,000 coupons were activated, and in terms of media coverage, over 30 million posts, the traffic in social media increased by 1740%, and the sales increased by over 65%. The success of this campaign (Shaw, 2018) prompted Mars to adopt it on the American market, even two years in a row.



Figure 2. Hunger^{ithm} Campaign

Source: <https://www.mediacom.com/en/work/hungerithm>

Another edifying example is the campaign initiated (Marc, 2019) by Walmart, which was also launched on the occasion of SuperBowl, but which did not appeal to famous actors, as most companies resort to and which involves huge budgets just for using the VIP image only for the famous and iconic cars (Sanjoy, 2019) from older or newer films. Although most of the advertisements made and launched (Redfern, 2019) by the big retail chains are usually boring and they mainly convey the same messages such as the most diversified offer and the lowest prices, Walmart has tried and managed to get out of the ordinary patterns and to differentiate and even more to address a much broader market segment, that is, starting with those in the Baby Boomers generation, continuing with the X generation, millennials and even ending with the Z generation. The battle (Benjamin, 2019) is for shopping online for groceries and bakery products, considering that in the last 5 years it has doubled and it is estimated that by 2023 it will grow even 4 times.

The advertising campaign was designed by Publicis Groupe, resulting in a wonderful 90-second spot that can be considered both magical and nostalgic, even for the future. As of January 2019, (Sweeney, 2019) it gathered over 6 million views on YouTube. The brilliant marketing idea (Weiss, 2019) was the use of these generic vehicles that were to be instantly recognized by the audience, presenting an existing service, through its ease, speed and convenience, even why not, a new way of shopping on the way home, to work, or when taking children to or from school. The following vehicles can be listed (Capparella, 2019): “Tour Jeep” from the movie “Jurassic Park”, the famous “Mystery Machine” known both from the Scooby Doo cartoons and from the two films, “Mutt Cutts van” used in the movie “Dumb and Dumber”, “Wagon Queen Family Truckster” family car that appeared in the feature film “National Lampoon’s Vacation”, the unreleased “The Batmobile” from the Batman movie series, “ECTO-1” which was the preferred means of transport for the “Ghostbusters” team, “KITT” from the series “Knight Rider” in which the main role is played by David Hasselhoff, “Flintmobile” the vehicle that can be seen in both cartoons and the movie “The Flintstones”, the fantastic “The DeLorean” car. Which has the ability not only to fly, but also to

travel in time in the “Back to the Future” hit series, and even the “Bumblebee” friendly bus from the series of very successful films “Transformers” can be seen. Although it has not appeared in any series or film, the car of the Walmart founder Sam Walton, the Ford F-150, could not be missed.

What is even more interesting is that this campaign is targets both adults and children, since they use vehicles or cars that can be Seen in movies or serials, in cartoons or stories, such as the buggy in the cartoons “Cinderella”, which is prepared by a Walmart employee who places a pumpkin on a parking lot and it turns into a wonderful coach. In the Disney / Pixar films, we find the “Lightning McQueen” in the feature film and also in the “Cars” series. All of these film productions were mostly Box Office movies. The message that was wanted to be transmitted is that no matter the model or type of car you drive, you can do online shopping, and after placing the order, you can come by the car to pick them up, thus easing and reducing the time spent in the store and among the shelves. A kind of drive-thru is a concept that was launched in 1930 in the United States and has since been adapted and adopted by other countries. In Romania too, there are hardware stores as well as hypermarkets such as Cora.ro that have implemented such a system.

The third case study presented has as central theme (Clayton, 2019) not the launch of a wonderful new product or service, traditional or unconventional, but especially the awareness of parents about the dangers their children are exposed to when they go to school, especially in America and more precisely, it was intended to sound an alarm signal for changing the attitudes toward violence and gun control. The scenes are filmed in a school where different children are happy to start the new school year. A boy is proud of the new backpack purchased by his parents; a girl is very excited about the new folders that will help her stay organized. A boy enjoys listening to new headphones, and when he puts them over his ears, he does not hear how other colleagues scream and run out of the room. A boy, running down the hall, is fascinated by the new shoes that are exactly what he needed for the new school year, and in the next sequence, he rushes when he hears a gunshot behind him and a colleague falling on the floor.

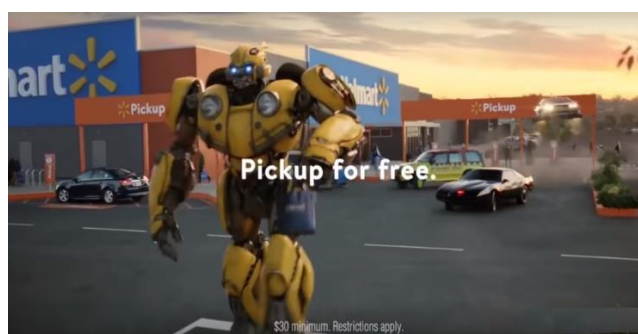


Figure 3. Walmart campaign

Source: <https://www.ispot.tv/ad/Iq7E/walmart-grocery-pickup-famous-cars-bumblebee-song-by-gary-numan>

A schoolgirl ties the handles of a door with her jacket, stating that it is an object you must have. A red-haired boy praises his new skateboard, which is beautifully painted, but he uses it to break a window through which he can jump with his colleagues. In another room, you can see two children holding something in their hands, the girl, a pair of scissors and the boy, two pencils, and the two have adopted an attacking position, saying that these objects are very useful when it comes to fine arts. The most explicit framework is given by two girls hiding behind a wall, as can be seen in Figure 4, in which one of the girls pulls out a sock to use it as a tourniquet to cover the wound and stop the bleeding in her colleague's leg. The ending can be considered triumphant, where a little girl uses the phone to communicate with her mother, from what seems like her last moments she tries to convey that she loves her, and after this moment, the door opens and then it is quiet...

This spot was aired (Ross, 2019) along with the message: “What Objects Do You Need to Have to Survive this School Year #BackToSchool Essentials?”



Figure 4. #BackToSchool Essentials

Source: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-09-19/sandy-hook-foundation-releases-survive-the-school-year-ad/11528356>

The ad was created by Sandy Hook Promise and its director, Nicole Hockley, is the mother of a boy who was the victim of the gunfire in Newton when 20 children were killed. Although the advertisement was criticized even by a boy whose brother was killed by gun violence in a school, a question that arises is that whether the problem is or not presented and shown in its purest form, it does not mean that it has disappeared or does not exist.

3. Conclusions

Organizations, whether they are profit or non-profit, in order to get the message transmitted in the form of a spot to be viewed and to lead to a change in behaviour, must have recourse, as we have presented, not only to the VIPs, or the cars they drive in feature films, or launch campaigns on the occasion of SuperBowl, but also send impact messages that reflect the reality on which some do not want to raise awareness. The spot created by Sandy Hook Promise managed to gather, in just a

few days (Graham & Pramuk, 2019), over one million views on YouTube alone. In 2016 (Bellware & Spectator, 2019), a spot titled “Evan” was released, which had over 11 million views on YouTube and won numerous awards including the Cannes International Festival of Creativity award, with a similar message. And the way the message is presented, once again, demonstrates that organizations need to get out of routine if they want to be successful and raise awareness, change attitudes, behaviours and why not, even organic or perhaps fundamental laws. Good intentions are not always considered and accepted by users. The organizations, most of the times, have noble goals, besides the increase in sales and the incorporation and elaboration of elements of corporate social responsibility, as was the case of the Gillete brand of the P&G company, which wanted to launch a #MeToo campaign. But sometimes good intentions can have an unwanted setback, and they can even lead to a drop in sales.

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