

**THE ROLE OF ALTERNATIVE BRAND CONTACT PLANNING IN THE SOUTH
AFRICAN MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION INDUSTRY**

by

Carla Enslin

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

PHILOSOPHIAE DOCTOR (MARKETING MANAGEMENT)

in the

DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT

FACULTY OF ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

at the

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

PROMOTER: PROFESSOR E J NORTH

PRETORIA

NOVEMBER 2003

This study is dedicated to Marieke and Albert Enslin

My gratitude to:

My parents, Japs and Erna, for your limitless love and support

Professor North, for your guidance

The Veganites, for your wisdom and magic

Gordon Cook, for your brand passion and leadership

SYNOPSIS

This study explores the nature, role and planning of the alternative brand contact. The concept of alternative brand contact is embedded in integrated brand contact management. Based on the outside-in and zero-based planning philosophy of integrated brand contact management, the alternative brand contact is defined as a planned point of contact with the brand that is experienced by consumers as unexpected and unconventional. The alternative brand contact is thus media neutral. It is the unexpected and unconventional appeal of the alternative brand contact that defines its status and not the use of one medium as opposed to another.

The study of literature explores the nature, role and planning of the alternative brand contact to deliver a central research proposition and primary research objective, namely:

The unconventional and unexpected point of planned brand contact can break through commercial clutter barriers to impact on consumers and communicate or reinforce the single-minded positioning of the brand.

The literature study furthermore identifies a myriad of barriers and requisites to the alternative brand contact and the planning thereof. These are evolved into integral research propositions and related supporting research objectives.

A qualitative exploratory research study is conducted to engage the opinions, attitudes and motivations of the South African marketing and communication industry on the defined central and integral research propositions. For motivated reasons, exploratory focus groups are conducted with senior account teams in a sample of Integrated Communications Agencies. This first phase of research is followed by two further phases of research namely, semi-structured depth interviews with key clients of the senior account teams and semi-structured depth interviews with key players within the senior account teams.

Thus depth of thought and opinion is gained on the nature, role and planning of unconventional and unexpected points of brand contact.

The qualitative exploratory research study produces one primary and fifteen supporting key findings. The key findings are employed, in conclusion to this study, in the design of a Conceptual Model to Alternative Brand Contact Planning.

It is envisaged that those agencies and clients that are responsive to the explorative and experimental nature of alternative brand contact planning will find the proposed conceptual model to be of immediate strategic value. Companies and agencies in need of empirical evidence can apply the key findings of this study in the development of hypotheses for future research.

Table of Contents

A. Chapters and Headings

Chapter 1

The Focus and Architecture of the Study: An Introduction

1.1	Introduction	1
1.2	The Focus of the Study	1
1.3	The Architecture of the Study	2
1.3.1	Chapter Two – The Outside-in Approach to Brand Contact Management	3
1.3.2	Chapter Three – The Alternative Brand Contact	7
1.3.3	Chapter Four – The Research Methodology	10
1.3.4	Chapter Five – Research Implementation, Results and Interpretation	17
1.3.5	Chapter Six – Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations for Future Research	18

Chapter 2

The Outside-in Approach to Brand Contact Management

2.1	Introduction	20
2.2	Marketing Communications in Context	22
2.2.1	Advertising	24
2.2.2	Personal Selling	26
2.2.3	Direct Marketing	27

2.2.4	Sales Promotions	28
2.2.5	Public Relations	30
2.3	Brand Building and the Concept of Brand Contacts	33
2.3.1	The Value of the Brand and Elevated Role of Marketing Communications	33
2.3.2	From IMC to Managing Brand Contacts	36
2.4	The Need for Integrated Brand Contact Management	41
2.4.1	Brand Positioning in Developing an Integrated Brand Identity	43
2.4.2	Brand Contact Integration requires a Focussed Brand Positioning	47
2.5	The Nature and Scope of Integrated Brand Contact Planning	49
2.5.1	The Sources of Brand Contact	49
2.5.2	The Integration of Sources of Brand Contact	52
2.5.3	Cross-functional Management in Brand Contact Integration	53
2.5.4	The Zero-based Mindset of Integrated Brand Contact Planning	55
2.5.5	The Brand Contact Audit as Foundation	56
2.5.6	Appropriation of the Process of Integrated Brand Contact Management	62
2.5.7	The Need for a Brand Charter in Integrated Brand Contact Planning	62
2.6	The Role of the Communications Agency in Integrated Brand Contact Planning	64
2.6.1	The Integrated Communications Agency	65

2.6.2	Introducing Cross-functional Account Teams in Tandem with the Brand Contact Task Team	67
2.7	Conclusion	69

Chapter 3

The Alternative Brand Contact

3.1	Introduction	72
3.2	Defining the Alternative Brand Contact	74
3.3	The Growth of Alternative Brand Contacts	76
3.3.1	Client Demand for Innovative Contact Planning	77
3.3.2	Breaking through Commercial Clutter Barriers	80
3.4	The Planning of Alternative Brand Contacts	87
3.4.1	Creative Strategic Thinking in Alternative Brand Contact Planning	91
3.5	Alternative Brand Contact Planning and the Agency Structure	95
3.5.1	The Value of the Integrated Account Team in Alternative Brand Contact Planning	98
3.6	Barriers to Alternative Brand Contact Planning	102
3.6.1	The Departmentalised Agency Structure	103
3.6.2	Inside-out Thinking in Brand Contact Planning	103
3.6.3	Media Biased and Commission-based Brand Contact Planning	104
3.6.4	Total Reliance on Message Creativity	105

3.6.5	Reliance on Media Planning Systems and Measurement Data	106
3.7	Requisites to the Alternative Brand Contact and the Planning thereof	109
3.7.1	The Alternative Brand Contact Planning Mindset	109
3.7.2	Impact and the Novelty of the Alternative Brand Contact	110
3.7.3	Impact and the Communication Effectiveness of the Alternative Brand Contact	113
3.7.4	Impact and Communicating a Single-minded Brand Identity	114
3.7.5	Impact and Target Audience Relevance	116
3.7.6	Continued Impact of the Alternative Brand Contact	118
3.8	Conclusion	121

Chapter 4

The Research Methodology

4.1	Introduction	129
4.2	Defining the Research Problem	131
4.2.1	The Central Proposition and Integral Propositions in Context	134
4.3	The Research Objectives	139
4.4	The Research Design	144
4.4.1	Exploratory Research	144
4.4.2	Formal Research	145
4.4.3	Quantitative or Qualitative Research Design and Output	146
4.4.4	The Research Design of this Study	147

4.5	The Research Method: The Selection of Data Sources	149
4.5.1	The Self-report Data Method	150
4.6	The Individual Depth Interview	153
4.6.1	Types of Depth Interviews and Related Procedures	154
4.7	The Focus Group	156
4.7.1	Types of Focus Groups and General Procedures	158
4.8	The Depth Interview and Focus Group in Application	161
4.8.1	The Exploratory Focus Group in Application	161
4.8.2	The Semi-structured Depth Interview in Application	163
4.9	The Interview Guides	168
4.9.1	The Interview Guide to the Exploratory Focus Groups	170
4.9.2	The Interview Guide to the Semi-structured Depth Interviews	173
4.10	The Sampling Procedure	183
4.10.1	The Population of Interest	184
4.10.2	Sample Frame, Size and Method	186
4.10.3	Drawing the Sample	198
4.11	Conclusion	202

Chapter 5

Research Implementation, Results and Interpretation

5.1	Introduction	209
5.2	Research Implementation Dynamics	210
5.2.1	The Exploratory Focus Groups with Senior Account Teams	210

5.2.2	The Semi-structured Depth Interviews with Key Clients	212
5.2.3	The Semi-structured Depth Interviews with Key Players in Interviewed Account Teams	215
5.3	The Research Results and Interpretation	217
5.3.1	Introduction	217
5.3.2	The Research Propositions and Related Objectives	217
5.3.3	The Application of Thematic Content Analysis	221
5.4	Exploratory Focus Group Analysis and Results	223
5.4.1	The Nature, Role and Planning of the Alternative Point of Brand Contact	225
5.4.2	Requisites to the Alternative Brand Contact and the Planning thereof	234
5.4.3	Barriers to the Alternative Brand Contact and the Planning thereof	247
5.4.4	Conclusion to the Exploratory Focus Groups with Senior Account Teams	253
5.5	The enriched Interview Guide to the Semi-structured Depth Interviews with Clients	255
5.5.1	The Enriched Research Propositions and Related Objectives	257
5.5.2	The enriched Interview Guide	259
5.6	Analysis and Results of the Semi-structured Depth Interviews with Clients	263
5.6.1	The Nature, Role and Planning of the Alternative Point of Brand Contact	263
5.6.2	Requisites to the Alternative Brand Contact and the Planning thereof	271
5.6.3	Barriers to the Alternative Brand Contact and the Planning thereof	279

5.6.4	Conclusion to the Semi-structured Depth Interviews with Key Clients	286
5.7	The Interview Guide to the Semi-structured Depth Interviews with Key Players in the Senior Account Teams	293
5.7.1	The Enriched and Newly Identified Integral Research Propositions and Related Supporting Objectives	299
5.7.2	The newly designed Interview Guide	300
5.8	Analysis and Results of the Semi-structured Depth Interviews with Key Players in the Interviewed Senior Account Teams	301
5.8.1	Conclusion to the Semi-structured Depth Interviews With Key Players in the Interviewed Senior Account Teams	309
5.9	Conclusion to the Primary Research Study	313

Chapter 6

Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations for Future Research

6.1	Introduction	314
6.2	A Reflection on the Focus and Architecture of the Study	315

6.3	The Key Research Findings	322
6.3.1	The Primary Finding	323
6.3.2	The Supporting Findings	323
6.4	A Conceptual Model to Alternative Brand Contact Planning	334
6.4.1	The Mindset of the Integrated Cross-Functional Account Team and Client	337
6.4.2	The Process of Creative Strategic Planning	341
6.4.3	The Assessment of Unconventional and Unexpected Planned Brand Contact Points	343
6.4.4	Branded Impact and the need for ongoing Proactive Innovative Thinking	345
6.5	Conclusion and Future Research Recommendations	348
	Reference List	351

B. Appendixes, Diagrams, Models and Tables

Appendix A: Diagrammatic Summary of the Research Process as depicted by Cooper and Schindler (1998:57)	363
Appendix B: Alternative Brand Contact Examples presented to Respondents	364
Appendix C: Interview Guide to the Exploratory Focus Groups with Senior Account Teams	366
Appendix D: Financial Mail AdFocus (2002:30-31) Survey of Major League Agency Rankings by Income from Fees, Commission and Mark-Ups	367
Diagram 1: Research Method Process	168
Model 1: Conceptual Model to Alternative Brand Contact Planning	336
Table 1: Identified Integrated Communications Agencies	199
Table 2: The Sample of Integrated Communications Agencies in rank order	200
Table 3: A Frequency Summary of Responses of the Exploratory Focus Groups with Senior Account Teams	254
Table 4: A Frequency Summary of Responses of the Key Clients of the Interviewed Senior Account Teams	287

Table 5: Correlation in Senior Account Team and Key Client Responses regarding the Enriched Integral Propositions	296
--	-----

Table 6: A Frequency Summary of Responses of Key Players in the Interviewed Senior Account Teams	310
---	-----