

CHAPTER 2: INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION

*"The greatest problem with communication
is the illusion that it has been accomplished."
George Bernard Shaw*

Research objective to be addressed:

To discuss marketing, marketing communication, integrated marketing communication and OOH advertising media from a theoretical perspective, in order to identify and apply the key IMC principles that should guide the planning of OOH advertising media as part of an overall IMC campaign.

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The marketing mix management paradigm has played an influential role in the development of marketing theory and practice; and it has dominated marketing thought and research since its introduction (Goi, 2009:2). The initial four elements or 4P's of the marketing mix included: product, price, promotion (marketing communication) and place. Since its inception however, new forces in the environment have called for new marketing and business practices. Companies now need fresh thinking about how to operate and compete in the new marketing environment.

A more complete and comprehensive approach is needed, and the holistic marketing concept, with a broad integrated perspective, has been suggested. Integrated marketing entails the co-ordination of all the marketing activities, in order to maximise all the joint effects. An integrated marketing communication strategy (as part of integrated marketing) would thus involve choosing marketing communication options that reinforce and complement one another (Kotler & Keller, 2006:19).

Not only have the dramatic changes over the past years presented marketers with new challenges in their approach to marketing as a holistic concept; but they have also presented marketers with challenges on how to effectively inform, persuade, incite and remind consumers with the numbers and the diversity of communication

options available. During recent years, the marketing communication environment has experienced the fragmentation of traditional advertising media, as well as the emergence of new non-traditional media. As a result, modern marketing has had to employ a host of different communication options, in order to get the message to the target market. Researchers have traditionally studied the effectiveness of these different communication options or media types in isolation. This approach has, however, failed to recognise that potential interactions and synergy may exist between the various options that make up a communication programme.

These differences might have had an effect on the consumer's response. As a result of this oversight, it has been suggested that researchers should study the market better; and marketers should employ integrated marketing communication (IMC) methods, in order to support their brands (Keller, 2001:819). The emergence of IMC has been regarded as the most significant example of development in the marketing discipline; and since the 1990's, it has become a really hot topic in the field of marketing (Holm, 2006:23).

The changing media landscape also requires a rethinking of media planning; and media synergy is considered to be a key element in moving forward. The challenge for future marketers will be to have an understanding of all the interactions among and between all media forms, when processed by the consumer. The new approach to media planning should start with the consumer, where horizontal, not vertical media planning, is conducted – based on an understanding of how media forms interact with each other when consumed by the audience (Schultz, 2006:25).

Given the current focus on the study of the integration and planning of OOH advertising media (as one of the elements in an IMC mix) in South Africa, the basic features and principles of marketing, marketing communication, as well as IMC, need to be explored further, in order to gain an understanding of OOH advertising media in the context of the larger discipline.

2.2. MARKETING

Marketing is recognised by organisations as an important business function that plays a critical role in their effort to gain a competitive advantage in the market place. A number of interconnected basic features of contemporary marketing, namely: customer-centric, communication and long-term relationship focus on customers, as well as the inclusion of all relevant stakeholders, as often reflected in current paradigms of marketing theory will be discussed in order to contextualise the current study within the larger discipline.

The traditional definition of marketing was released by the American Marketing Association in 1985 and states that “marketing is the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion and distribution of ideas, goods and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organisational objectives” (AMA, 2007). This definition focuses on exchange as central concept. It suggests that the parties involved must have something of value to offer to the other party and must have the desire and ability to give it up and find a way to communicate with one another.

However the marketing discipline has changed and no longer focuses on short-term exchange or is not limited to consumers only. Contemporary consumers are far more empowered due to their ability to control information technology, access information, purchase products and services anywhere, anytime. Consumers decide what constitutes value and what relationships are important, needed and wanted and not marketers (Luck & Moffatt, 2009:314).

The traditional definition above ignored these marketing ideas and the central premise dominated by the customer, stakeholders, and global and interactive markets. Consequently, in 2004 the definition was revised to reflect these changes to: “marketing is the activity, set of institutions and processes for creating, communicating, delivering and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large” (AMA, 2007). Creating, communicating, and delivering value is thus the current focus. Marketing is regarded as an integrated

process through which companies create value for customers and build strong customer relationships in order to capture value for customers in return. Market-driven companies thus place the emphasis now on developing and sustaining relationships with their customers as well as other stakeholders.

Bearden, Ingram and La Forge (2007:6) affirm this relationship perspective to marketing by replacing the emphasis on short-term sales to focusing on the development, maintenance and growth of long-term and beneficial relationships with targeted customers. Relationship marketing orientation is a refinement of the marketing concept. Its implementation can foster customer loyalty and customer referrals – resulting thereby in increased sales, market share and profits (Lamb et al., 2003:10). Kotler and Keller (2006:60) explain the main goal of marketing is to develop deep, enduring relationships with people and organisations that could directly or indirectly affect the success of the firm's marketing activities. Thus, relationship marketing aims to build mutually satisfying long-term relationships with key constituents in order to earn and retain their business.

Duncan (2005:57) also emphasises the importance of building long-term relationships with customers and other relevant stakeholders. He notes that the primary relationship focus of a company is on its customers and internal employees; but a beneficial long term relationship with several other stakeholders – including suppliers, shareholders (from the financial and investment community), the broader community, government regulators, media and agencies (for those companies that use their services) and distribution-channel members is also important.

Lamb, Hair, McDaniel, Boshoff and Terblanche (2003:5) explain that marketing is a philosophy or perspective based on customer satisfaction, and a set of activities needed to implement this philosophy. Marketing is therefore more than a just set of procedures; it is rather a philosophy with customer satisfaction as the foundation or underlying principle driving the whole process. It is clear that the marketing-exchange process should lead to customer satisfaction, which underpins the contemporary marketing philosophy. This consumer or marketing orientation is also referred to as the marketing concept or orientation. Having satisfied customers

indicates that the marketing concept has been implemented successfully; therefore, this should be the main thrust of marketing.

Vargo and Lusch (2004:6) note that this customer-centric philosophy entails more than simply being consumer oriented; it means collaborating with and learning from customers and being adaptable to their individual and dynamic needs. It also means that value is defined by and co-created with the consumer, rather than being incorporated somehow in output. Customer experience is a logical extension of this customer centricity in the modern age of marketing. The focus on customer experience is a recent paradigm shift in marketing; and this accentuates the central role of the customers in the total experience. This is created from a set of interactions between a customer and a product, a company, or part of its organisation, which results in a reaction. This experience is highly personal; and it implies the customer's involvement at different levels – ranging from the cognitive, the emotional, the sensorial, the physical or tangible, to even the spiritual dimension (Gentile, Spiller & Noci, 2007:397).

The development of an overall marketing offer or marketing mix to satisfy the needs of selected profitable target market(s) or consumers forms the basis of marketing strategies. Decisions concerning the central marketing mix elements, specifically: product, price, marketing communication, distribution and providing people physical evidence and processes when dealing with services, are effectively combined into a consistent and effective marketing programme for a specific market (Bearden *et al.*, 2007:13). In this regard Duncan (2005:14) suggests that companies should be customer-centred and focus externally on the needs and wants of their customers (referred to as external or customer orientation), as opposed to focusing internally on the product, price, promotion and place (internal orientation).

Consumer or marketing-oriented companies concentrate on satisfying the needs and preferences of customers – by selecting one or more specific customer group(s) in the total market, and then developing a market offering for each target group. Marketing-oriented companies achieve their business goals by focusing on the needs and wants of their target market(s) (Lane *et al.*, 2011:126).

Furthermore, they should also deliver the desired customer satisfaction more effectively and efficiently than do their competitors (Kotler & Armstrong, 2001:137). Creating and maintaining a competitive edge is a critical part of the marketing process. This competitive advantage can be achieved in several ways. One way is by presenting the market with a superior or different offering; while creating communication that results in a strong relationship between the company and the customer is another (Duncan, 2005:14).

To deliver value and build long-term brand relationships, careful planning and integration of the marketing mix elements into a unified market offering to satisfy the needs of the customers is needed. The marketing mix elements that form part of an integrated marketing strategy will be discussed in the next section.

2.2.1 THE MARKETING MIX ELEMENTS

In order to facilitate the exchange process and build effective relationships marketers need to examine the needs and wants of customers, develop a product or service that satisfy these needs, offer it a certain price, make it available through a particular place or channel of distribution and develop a program of promotion or communication to create awareness and interest. These elements have traditionally formed part of the marketing mix that consists of product, price, place and promotion (Belch & Belch, 2012:7). The ingredients of a unified marketing offering are called the marketing mix, or the four P's of marketing. All the elements in the marketing mix contribute to the perceived value or usefulness of the market offering to the consumers; therefore, the interaction of product, distribution, price and marketing communication will influence marketing decisions, and vice versa (Du Plessis, Bothma, Jordaan & Van Heerden, 2010:3).

Some authors have claimed that this marketing mix is inadequate and should be reviewed or extended (Lauterborn, 1990:26; Yudelso, 1999:60). However the original framework of the 4 P's of marketing introduced by McCarthy (in Luck & Moffatt, 2009: 312) as customer-centric planning and implementation of the marketing mix – comprising product, distribution, price and promotion or marketing

communication with a relationship focus – is still widely accepted (Belch & Belch, 2012:8; Du Plessis *et al.*, 2010:1; Duncan, 2005:7; Katz, 2010:10; Koekemoer, 2005:2; Moriarty *et al.*, 2012:25; Shimp, 2010:8) and forms the basis of the current study. OOH advertising media, which is the focus of this study, forms part of the promotion or marketing communication element of the marketing mix.

In contemporary marketing, the boundaries of the marketing elements are blurred, as a result of the increase in the availability of information, and the technology that enables the processing and analysis thereof. The fact that these elements cannot be developed in isolation demands a more integrated approach. In order to appreciate the total market offering, the four elements of the marketing mix and their integration into a marketing programme will now be discussed.

Products consist of tangible goods, services or ideas that are offered to a market for attention, purchase, use or consumption, or for satisfying needs. Consumers perceive these products as an interconnected collection of benefits, which are communicated by the characteristics of the products, such as the quality, features, style, design, branding, packaging and support services (Kotler & Armstrong, 2001:327). Belch and Belch (2012:60) concur that a product as a marketing element comprises more than the mere physical object. It needs to include the overall needs-satisfying benefits and the values it holds for the customers. These values may be purely functional or symbolic, while the social value may even be more significant.

Brand building is essential – not only to recognise the product, but also so that it contributes to the symbolic value or features associated with the total market offering. Branding can help to communicate and maintain a distinctive brand image and brand identity; and it is a critical aspect to take into account when developing marketing strategies for targeted customers. Even the reputation of the company behind the market offering or the corporate brand can influence the consumers' perceptions of their brands. Constructive marketing strategies should ideally combine all the elements of advertising, branding and packaging, product design, price and value offer and distribution – in order to create a unique focus for the

product – and a specific image for the company that extends beyond the physical attributes and benefits of the product itself.

Another element of the marketing mix is price. This refers to the total monetary value and other sacrifices that consumers exchange and make for the benefits of owning and using the product or service. The pricing strategy is influenced by various factors, including the marketing objectives, the perception of the target market, positioning and communication objectives, the cost of and demand for the product, and competition, as well as any other marketing mix elements (Kotler, 2001:391). The price of a product should be consistent with the consumers' perceptions of the quality, and should support the brand image of a product and company (Belch & Belch, 2012:61). The price of the product may be only one part of the consumer's cost structure; so it is imperative to understand the consumers' monetary cost, as well as other sacrifices, such as time and discomfort required to satisfy their want or need by offering value that exceeds the total cost and sacrifice. For these reasons, it is imperative that marketers should consider all these factors, and align the pricing strategy with the other marketing elements.

Distribution or place refers to the way in which products are moved from the manufacturer to the final consumer. Manufacturers often make use of intermediaries, such as retailers and wholesalers, to distribute their products to the market (Bearden *et al.*, 2007:39). The distribution strategy of a company has an effect on all the other marketing elements, and vice versa. Pricing is influenced by the type and number of intermediaries, as well as by the level of support and motivation needed by intermediaries. Distribution has a bearing on the type and amount of advertising, in addition to the sales force needed for new and existing products.

The development of a superior product at a reasonable price, and then making it available to the market, is not sufficient. Marketers need to plan and manage communication with current and prospective customers carefully (Kotler & Armstrong, 2001:400). Competitors can emulate all the other marketing mix elements; but marketing communication can create a distinctive value in the mind of the consumer. Well-developed, well-priced and efficiently distributed products need

effective promotional strategies – to ensure a competitive advantage and unique position in the mind of the target consumer. This market-initiated communication aspect of the marketing mix element is known as promotion or marketing communication: a collective term used when referring to all the methods and techniques marketers employ to direct the consumers' attention to a specific target audience, with the aim of influencing their attitudes and behaviour. In order to inform, persuade or remind targeted consumers effectively, marketers rely on one or more of the elements of marketing communication (Du Plessis *et al.*, 2010:3).

These key features of marketing and the elements of the marketing mix reveal that it is essential for marketers to realise what their target market wants and needs are in order to match it with the total marketing mix. It has also revealed that there is an interaction between the elements. The holistic marketing concept recognises that “everything matters” with marketing; thus an approach is required that includes the development, design and implementation of marketing programmes, processes and activities, and one that recognises their breadth and interdependencies (Kotler & Keller, 2006:17).

The focus of this study is one of the marketing mix elements, namely: the marketing communication mix. It is however critical to keep in mind that the marketing communication mix, of which OOH advertising media is a part, should form part of a viable marketing strategy that is coordinated with other marketing activities. The elements of the marketing mix should thus be combined into a cohesive marketing strategy (Belch & Belch, 2012:7).

The focus of this study is, on the communication element of the integrated marketing mix. Communication is at the centre of marketing communication. Kitchen and Schultz (2003:66) suggest that organisations must regard communication as the key competitive advantage of marketing. Though, Duncan (2002:8) believes that IMC functions alone are not enough to give any company a sustainable competitive advantage, unless all aspects of an organisation are integrated. However, contemporary approaches to marketing, such as IMC, are evidence of the increased importance of communication in marketing. Not only does communication play a

crucial role in attracting and keeping customers, but with advances in new media and information technologies, the benefits of understanding and applying communication theory and strategies to marketing have never been greater (Duncan & Moriarty 1998:10). According to Shimp (2010:333), marketing is communication, and communication is marketing. All companies, whether they are business-to-business companies or service providers, employ different forms of marketing communication to promote their offerings.

Marketing communication, the nucleus of marketing and branding, will be used as the basis within which OOH advertising as a medium will be explored. Subsequently, the next part of the chapter will explore the concept of marketing communication and IMC further.

2.3. MARKETING COMMUNICATION

The main purposes of marketing communication are to inform, persuade or remind the selected target audience of the market offering (Lamb *et al.*, 2003:329). However, Bearden *et al.* (2007:403) emphasise that marketing communication's ultimate role is to influence the behaviour of the target market, and not only to inform, persuade or remind the consumers.

Communication objectives, such as creating awareness of or interest in the marketing offer, are certainly not enough. Marketing communication should, in fact, lead to changes in the behaviour of the target market in the purchase of products or loyalty towards the brand. Marketers can use the marketing communication strategy to convince the selected target market(s) that the products or services offered provide a significant and competitive advantage over those of their rivals (Lamb *et al.*, 2003:315).

Duncan (2005:15) acknowledges that marketing communication can add value for customers, because customers need to be informed on aspects, such as the features and potential benefits of a product, where it can be bought, and whether it is a well-known brand with a good reputation, or whether it has already formed a

positive association in the minds of the consumers. In other words, marketing communication can influence the target audiences' perceptions of crucial features and symbolic associations that are superior to those of the competitors.

Marketing communication can also add value for the company/advertiser by building brands and creating brand equity. Since marketing communication mainly occurs at brand level, it can be used by companies to create popular, well-known or valued brands. Branding can also bring in economic advantages for companies, because of the potential to produce in vast quantities and to create barriers for new brands trying to enter the market.

All advertising (including OOH advertising), public relations, personal selling, direct-response marketing and sales promotion, and all other communication elements are collectively known as the marketing communication mix. Dramatic changes in the marketing environment over the past decade have however forced organisations to adapt in certain ways to survive in this environment. The marketing communication manager of the 21st century has to keep in mind that there are multiple markets, multiple customers, multiple channels and multiple media. The focus is now on the retention rather than on the acquisition of customers and alongside this is media proliferation, audience fragmentation, advance of information technology, consumer empowerment, increased advertising clutter, shift in channel power and desire for more accountability – all considered to be driving forces leading towards IMC. (Kitchen, Schultz, Kim, Han & Li, 2004:1417).

Integrating the marketing communication elements has moved from being a planning process to a strategic process and is described by Schultz and Kitchen (2000:10) as a “strategic business process used to plan, develop, execute and evaluate coordinated measurable, persuasive brand communication programmes over time – with consumers, customers, prospects, and other targeted, relevant external and internal audiences.”

A more detailed discussion on what IMC entails, as well as the key principles applicable to this study, is necessary. This will be done, in order to position the study

within IMC, and to illustrate how the key IMC principles can be applied to OOH advertising media planning, as part of the overall campaign. It is, however, necessary to first provide a short overview of the marketing communication mix, before the integration of the mix elements can be discussed further. The next section will thus provide an overview of the marketing mix elements, where after the IMC concept and the implications for OOH advertising media planning will be further explored.

2.3.1 THE MARKETING COMMUNICATION MIX

The various elements of the marketing communication mix are the major techniques that marketers use to communicate with customers as well as other relevant audiences. A summary of the classification of the elements of the marketing communication mix over the past decade can be seen in Table 2.1.

This table shows that most of these authors agree on five of these elements, specifically: advertising, sales promotion, public relations and publicity, personal selling and direct-response marketing. These elements are all common to the marketing communication mix. Although these elements are regarded as the primary techniques or traditional elements of marketing communication, some additional elements, such as E-marketing, digital media, buzz-marketing, viral-marketing, guerrilla-marketing, event-marketing, product placements and branded entertainment are suggested by later sources. This trend of expansion of the marketing communication mix options is expected to continue in the future. This is evident from the ever-increasing number of new media options that are now available.

These elements will be discussed in the following sections.

Table 2 1: Elements of the extended IMC mix

Marketing Communication elements	Belch & Belch, 2012	Blakeman, 2007	Clow & Baack, 2010	Du Plessis, et al., 2010	Duncan, 2005	Lamb et al. 2003	Wells et al., 2006
Traditional Marketing communication elements							
Advertising (Traditional)	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Sales promotion	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Public relations or Publicity	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Personal selling	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Direct response marketing	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒		☒
Contemporary Marketing communication elements							
Digital /online	☒	☒	☒	☒			☒
Sponsorship			☒	☒	☒		
Packaging					☒		
Customer service					☒		
Viral marketing		☒	☒				
Guerrilla marketing		☒	☒				
Event marketing			☒		☒		☒
Branded entertainment / Product placements	☒		☒				
Word-of-mouth/ buzz-marketing			☒				
Mobile /cell phone marketing	☒			☒			
In store marketing/ promotion	☒		☒				

2.3.1.1 Traditional advertising

Traditional advertising, comprising television-, radio-, magazine- and printed advertising, can be defined as a paid form of persuasive communication that uses mass media to reach broad audiences in order to connect an identified sponsor with their target audience(s), provide information about their products and services, and interpret or covert the key features of their offerings in terms of the consumer's needs and wants (Moriarty *et al.*, 2012:7). These key dimensions of traditional advertising identified here are also reflected in the definitions of advertising in other sources (Arens, Weigold & Arens, 2008:7; Duncan, 2005:507; Lane *et al.*, 2011:41; Wells *et al.*, 2006:5).

Firstly, traditional advertising is paid for and has an identified sponsor. Advertisers or media buyers buy time or space from media companies, or directly from media owners; and consequently, the advertiser is able to create and control the message

that is communicated (O'Guinn, Allen & Semenik 2000:9). Secondly, traditional advertising is conveyed to a large audience by using different types of mass media, such as television, radio, magazine and printed advertising media. These advertising mediums are non-personal in nature, because they are not directed at a specific person, but at a larger group of people; and they use one-way communication from the advertiser to the audience via the mass media; while some of the contemporary interactive media, such as online media, social media and direct response marketing media tend to allow interactivity, two-way dialogue and personalisation (Wells *et al.*, 2006:5). Thirdly, traditional advertising is a persuasive strategy that aims to influence the attitudes and the behaviour of the targeted audience (Duncan, 2005:507; Wells *et al.*, 2006:5). The objectives of traditional advertising can be communicational – by creating brand awareness and by building or reinforcing the positive associations of the brand – or they can be behavioural, by increasing trials of the product, sales or requests for further information.

A core strength of traditional advertising as a marketing communication element is to build broad-based brand awareness through the use of various mass media (Duncan, 2005:509). Traditional advertising media are generally aimed at a broader audience compared with new interactive media types, such as digital, social and direct-response media. Another strong point of traditional advertising is the low cost input, considering the large number of people reached, as well as the complete control the advertiser exercises over the message and the media placement (Wells *et al.*, 2006:6).

The relation between advertising and the building of brand relationships with targeted audiences is pivotal in effective IMC strategies. One of the major reasons for the value of advertising is the key role it plays in the process of developing and sustaining brand identity and brand equity. Advertising adds value to a brand in various ways. By creating awareness of how a branded product can solve consumers' problems, it can serve as the trigger, thereby developing the main creative idea to be used in all the marketing communication messages. Furthermore, it can convey valuable information to consumers about the product features, its price,

and where it can be obtained, while creating and maintaining a position for the brand in the mind of the consumers (Belch & Belch, 2012:14).

The general nature of OOH advertising will now be reviewed as a marketing communication medium, while all the different formats and platforms will be discussed in more detail in chapter four. The term OOH advertising media will be used when referring to the overall media class comprising four major platforms: outdoor advertising media, transit advertising media, street and retail furniture advertising media, and alternative OOH advertising. The term outdoor advertising refers to more traditional outdoor advertising media, such as those found on billboards next to the roads.

2.3.1.2 OOH advertising as support medium for traditional advertising

OOH advertising media comprise a form of marketing communication that makes use of various OOH advertising media platforms, namely: outdoor advertising media, transit advertising media, street and retail furniture advertising media, ambient communication and digital OOH advertising. Most of these platforms, with the exception of ambient- and digital OOH advertising media, are not as personal or interactive as a one-on-one conversation, or some of the other marketing communication techniques, such as personal selling and direct-response marketing.

OOH advertising media are typically classified as support media to strengthen the message that is sent to the target audience through traditional advertising media specifically broadcast and print media (Belch & Belch, 2012:447; Du Plessis *et al.*, 2010:107; Moriarty *et al.*, 2012:364).

The different platforms and the role and purpose of OOH advertising media will be discussed in detail in chapter four. In this section, OOH advertising will be examined using a model of the communication process to provide some insight into OOH advertising media as a marketing communication instrument.

The basic communication model consists of two major participants, namely: a sender or a source who encodes a message, and a receiver who decodes or interprets it.

The main communication tools in this model are the message that contains the information or meaning that the source wishes to convey, and the channel used to convey the message. The model also includes four communication functions or actions, namely: encoding, decoding, response and feedback.

Encoding refers to the use of words, symbols and pictures to represent the meaning of the message, while decoding occurs when the sender interprets the message. Feedback involves monitoring the response of the receiver(s), while noise is the extraneous factor that can interfere with or distort the reception of the message (Belch & Belch, 2012:138; Wells *et al.*, 2006:97).

When OOH advertising media are used, as marketing communication media for a campaign, a variety of platforms and formats in different environments, and at specific locations, can be included to convey a commercial message from the advertisers to a large mass audience, or a local geographically targeted audience. OOH advertising media are typically a mass communication instrument that offers 24-hour exposure of the advertising message to a disparate number of people.

When advertisers or their advertising agencies create an advertising message for a marketing communication campaign, they encode it into some form of symbolic representation, using text, images, colours, sound and music (Yeshin, 2006:29). OOH advertising media messages are usually constructed from four fundamental elements: the logo, the image of the product, the visual elements, and the text (Van Meurs & Aristoff, 2009:83).

The majority of the OOH advertising media messages are aimed at moving vehicular or pedestrian traffic, which allows for only a few seconds to communicate the advertising message. Such OOH media advertising messages should not simply be an extension of their printed counterpart, as seen in the case of some elaborate billboards, with way-too-much text, as is often seen next to the South African roads. Consequently, OOH advertising media require a more disciplined and concise creative approach than do other media (Bhargava *et al.*, 1994:52; Donthu *et al.*, 1993:65; Van Meurs & Aristoff, 2009:1; Wilson & Till, 2008:68).

Communication can be effective only if the targeted receiver(s) actually receive the message and interpret (decode) the meaning of the message, as intended by the sender. However, there exist numerous possible barriers that could prevent the message from reaching the receiver in the way that the sender intended. Poor decoding occurs when the receiver processes the message in such way that it is not what the source intended. This differs from poor encoding, in that a particular receiver perceives a message in a different way from others, and from what the sender intended (Smith & Taylor, 2004:78). This misinterpretation can be the result of a receiver having a different frame-of-reference from the rest of the receivers when interpreting copy, images or symbols, not being interested in an advertisement, or driving too fast to see the message, or by advertisers attempting to convey too much information in an advertisement.

Poor encoding of OOH advertising media messages also results from symbols or images that have different meanings, or no meaning at all to the audience – as well as an inaccurate translation of copy – causing the receiver to decode the message differently from the meaning that was intended by the sender. This is especially true in a multi-cultural context, such as in South Africa. Pauwels (2005:337) explored the cultural implications of choosing a variety of visual and verbal design elements. This author formulated general principles to apply when developing outdoor-advertising messages for a multicultural audience. This study also confirmed the importance that a message should “talk the language of the receivers” in both visual and verbal terms. It emphasised that suitable images and symbols should be chosen to arouse the interest of the target audience.

Interference in communication occurs when external or unplanned factors affect the delivery of the message, by interfering with or distorting its reception (Belch & Belch, 2012:144). This includes any distraction to the sender or the receiver that is not planned, such as other outdoor advertising boards next to the road and the surrounding environment distracting the receiver’s attention. The effectiveness of OOH advertising media is thus also influenced by other aspects, such as the receiver’s attitude, frame-of-mind of the viewer when exposed to the message and the length of exposure to the message.

The attitudes towards this advertising media can be diverse. Sometimes commercial messages on outdoor advertising boards are regarded as socially unacceptable. For example alcohol and tobacco companies in America were criticised by the authorities and consumer groups for using OOH media advertising to target ethnic minorities/or lower-income groups (Lee & Callcott, 1994:85). Some environmentalists perceive OOH media advertising to be obtrusive, and are concerned about the serious visual pollution caused by excessive and or unregulated OOH media advertising (Shimp, 2010:583). However others maintain that such advertising enhances a city's image and properly controlled OOH media advertising can generate valuable revenue for both town and city councils (Mudeliar, 2008). Furthermore some people believe that tasteful OOH advertising media can contribute to the aesthetics and characteristics of business centres and cities. Some residents in townships or rural areas in South Africa describe billboards as the flowers of townships that add some colour to an otherwise dull environment (Jordaan, 2002:23).

The Leo Burnett Media Research group conducted research to assess people's attitudes towards OOH advertising, and how these attitudes would affect their behaviour. The study found that OOH advertising was often regarded as a timesaving medium for mobile people. It also confirmed the recognised characteristics of OOH advertising media: the context of viewing, such as driving, waiting or shopping influences the reaction. The medium is the message, implying that, processing by the viewer is more direct – without the intrusion of the media. The study also offered some original findings on the response to OOH advertising. The response is influenced by the type of OOH advertising media vehicle, the context (passenger or public transport users enjoy the entertainment and distraction of longer messages more than drivers during peak time), the type of product (the audience is more receptive to certain product categories, such as travel, fast food or motors), as well as the information needed by individuals (Leo Burnett Media, 1997).

Potential sources of interference, such as noise, poor encoding and decoding should be minimised, by eliminating any potential noise, or distorting factors, as far as possible. Previous research studies suggested this can be achieved when designing OOH advertising strategies by keeping in mind the level of message involvement of

the audience; the distracting clutter in the environment; the amount of dwelling time in different OOH environments; the exact locations of the advertising media; the activities or frame-of-mind of the target audience; the size and shapes of the advertising media formats, as well as the themes, number of words and size of text used in the message copy (Donthu et al., 1993:64; Turley & Shannon, 2000:323; Veloutsou & O'Donnell, 2005: 217; Wilson & Till, 2008:59).

Other elements in the marketing communication mix apart from advertising include sales promotion, public relations, personal selling, direct response marketing as well as contemporary marketing communication elements. A brief overview of all these elements will be provided next.

2.3.1.3 Sales promotion

Sales promotion is a direct inducement that offers extra incentives to channel members to enhance or accelerate the product's movement from manufacturer to consumer (Arens *et al.*, 2008:523). This definition embodies the key features of sales promotion. Sales-promotion techniques, such as free samples, competitions, premiums, coupons and price incentives provide extra incentives to achieve immediate sales. These are often referred to as value-added techniques, because they provide immediate and tangible added value to brands (Du Plessis *et al.*, 2010: 228). The purpose of sales promotion is to influence the purchasing behaviour of consumers by accelerating purchasing or consumption, thereby providing them with an incentive to react quickly to the promotional offer. These incentives are usually offered for a limited time only; and they thus create a sense of immediacy, where consumers have to make a decision quickly.

Advertising and sales promotion should be complementary activities to influence consumers' buying behaviour. Advertising creates awareness and interest, while sales promotion leads to desire and action. Advertising media are often used to inform customers of the sales promotion, sales promotion can provide additional contact with the brand – either at the point-of-purchase, or where the decision and evaluation take place (Duncan, 2005:566). Sales promotion can also be an effective

complementary channel when used with the other elements of the marketing communication mix (Blakeman, 2007:240). Sales promotion is also often combined with OOH advertising media in South Africa such as at sports stadia, shopping malls, in stores or commuter areas (OHMSA, 2012:1). Previous research has also proved that combining OOH advertising media with promotions offering some type of incentives are effective to increase sales (Donthu & Bhargava, 1999:7).

2.3.1.4 Public relations

Public relations may be defined as the “management of strategic relationships,” because this embodies the fundamental concepts of public relations. Management involves planning, control, evaluation and corrective reactions. Strategic refers to planning, prioritisation and taking action with regard to the company’s relationships with all its clients. Relationships imply effective communication, mutual adjustment and reliance, shared values, trust and commitment (Hutton, 1999:2008). The Public Relations Institute of South Africa (PRISA) defines this similarly as the “management, through communication of perceptions and strategic relationships between an organisation and its internal and external stakeholders.” This definition indicates that public relations constitute a form of communication that focuses on managing the perceptions or images, rather than dealing specifically with products or services. This suggests that merely to communicate with the customers of a business is not enough. Communication should rather be directed at all those with an interest or investment in the company, such as employees, investors, the broad public and the media.

Regardless of how public relations are defined, it can play an important role in marketing communication. Therefore the message delivered to the various “publics” or stakeholders must be consistent with the message delivered by traditional advertising and promotion. Public relations should work together with the other IMC components – to complement each other – and to work in concert to create as many as possible relevant and affirmative contact points between the brand or company and the consumers and other stakeholders. Public relations add credibility to a message and are ideal for creating immediate brand awareness, when introducing a

new product to the market, while advertising offers more control over the message and can be used to build longer-term brand loyalty (Lane *et al.*, 2011:42).

Contemporary marketers do not have to rely exclusively on the mass media any longer for publicity purposes; but they can now benefit from the advantages offered by new techniques, such as guerrilla-marketing, buzz-marketing, product placements on television shows or movies, event-marketing, company-sponsored blogs and social media to create two-dialogue and engagement with consumers (Lane *et al.*, 2011:41).

2.3.1.5 Personal selling

Personal selling may be defined as a person-to-person process, whereby the seller tries to determine the prospective buyers' wants, and seeks to satisfy these by offering suitable goods, services or ideas (Du Plessis *et al.*, 2010:6). While traditional advertising is non-personal communication using mass media, personal selling is interpersonal communication with a commercial objective. This two-way communication is one of the major strengths of personal selling. It enables a sales person to customise or modify the message, according to the buyers' individual needs and reactions, as well as to provide instant and precise feedback on customer requests or questions (Duncan, 2005: 624).

The direct contact of the sales force with the current and potential customers in the market allows them to provide the company with valuable feedback on the market, including customers' reactions and specific needs, market trends and competitors' offers (Du Plessis *et al.*, 2010:175). Personal selling is often more effective than mass advertising or publicity, due to the more intense personal involvement of the prospective buyer (Pitta, Weisgal & Lynagh, 2006:157). The accountability of personal selling is a further advantage, because sales generated by each sales person are directly quantifiable, as opposed to other marketing communication elements, where the effect is indirect (Duncan, 2005:624). The possibility of increased sales is enhanced by direct communication to qualified prospects,

because sales persons can then screen and select the most likely clients (Belch & Belch, 2012:24).

Personal selling has evolved from a short-term focus to convincing customers to buy a product, to building a long-term relationship and partnership between customers and sellers. The role of personal selling has changed from the traditional role of providing information and persuasion via personal contact – to providing solutions and relationship marketing, and thereby building long-term and meaningful relationships with clients. Data-base marketing, direct-response marketing and the tracking of marketing communications are techniques used in this process that require a wider perspective to integrate marketing and marketing communication in the implementation thereof.

2.3.1.6 Direct response marketing

Like personal selling, direct response marketing is interactive, allowing for customisation of the marketing message, and affording the potential to the customer of feedback. In direct response marketing, companies deal directly with customers without any retailers or wholesalers as intermediaries. Direct-response marketing, whereby an organisation communicates directly with its target customers, is an interactive system of marketing, which uses one or more media to achieve a measurable response or transaction (O'Quinn *et al.*, 2000:671). This definition suggests the key features of direct-response marketing. It is interactive because it allows two-way communication between the advertiser and the targeted consumer. Multiple media can be used in direct-response marketing, including direct mail, telemarketing, direct-response advertising (on TV, radio or in magazines or newspapers, telemarketing, internet sales, catalogues and shopping channels) (Belch & Belch, 2012:20).

Direct-response marketing aims to generate a measurable and immediate response from its customers. This could be in the form of a purchase, a request for further information, or a reply that offers specific information on the customers' needs or interests. Direct-response marketing does not require salespeople or a retail store;

transactions can occur at any physical or virtual location that is most convenient for the customers.

O'Quinn *et al.* (2000:690) suggest that direct-response marketing is used for three main purposes: to sell to targeted customers by employing direct-response marketing alone, or as part of an IMC strategy; to identify potential prospects, while providing selected customers with relevant and detailed information; and to initiate dialogue with customers by seeking their advice, providing users of the products with valuable product information or rewards – ultimately resulting in customer loyalty. Bearden *et al.* (2007:471) also appreciate the potential of direct-response marketing in building brand loyalty and when seeking to create a relationship with the targeted customers.

2.3.1.7 Contemporary marketing communication elements

Contemporary IMC elements include a wide variety of new options, such as online marketing, social media, cell phone marketing, buzz-marketing, viral-marketing, branded entertainment, product placement and guerrilla-marketing. These new marketing communication elements and online media have changed the interface between consumers and organisations, where there has been a shift in power between the media and the consumer, with consumer-generated media turning consumers into content creators. Consumers now demand greater control over what, when, where and how they are exposed to corporate communications, thereby blurring the traditional boundaries between public and private, producers and consumers.

These shifting power relations have not only changed consumer expectations and their experience of brands; but they have also changed purchasing decision-making and the way that business is transacted. These contemporary marketing communication techniques constitute more than just an innovative way of reaching consumers; they have changed many aspects of branding and marketing – from segmentation and targeting through to positioning, distribution and customer-relationship management (Higgs & Polonsky, 2007:1500).

Online media can be used to anticipate, identify and satisfy customers' needs online; and include various techniques, such as the Internet, emails, cell-phones and even interactive digital radio and television (Smith & Taylor, 2004:620). Other elements of marketing communication, such as advertising, public relations and sponsorships often integrate online- and interactive media, in order to promote a company's website address or online campaigns (Blakeman, 2007:247; Duncan, 2005:449).

Online marketing benefits marketers in several ways: it increases sales and generates enquiries from people who are searching and buying increasingly more online across the world. It provides value-added service to customers; it increases efficiency and decreases costs, by allowing interactive database-driven communication with customers, while improving their personal experience with the brand (Smith & Taylor, 2004:624). Internet advertising offers marketers the opportunity to customise messages and reach very specific interest groups by advertising on niche sites, sending customised emails based on the information in the databases, and encouraging the interactivity of the communication. Another aspect is the relatively low cost involved, since updates and changes are easier and less expensive than the production costs associated with other media – making these media thereby accessible to medium and small businesses. With all the new media now at their disposal, customers can access information and advertisements on the Internet at any time and place – resulting in a more favourable attitude towards the media, together with firmer control, when choosing and processing information.

In many developing countries, cell-phone marketing has been limited by widely varying device interfaces and capabilities, but as the audience base of consumers with “smart phones” and mobile broadband is increasing, the advertising opportunity has become more positive. Global cell-phone advertising is expected to rise from \$2.7 billion (R20.84 billion) in 2011 to \$6.6 billion (R50.94 billion) by 2016, an average growth of 19.4% each year. However, in South Africa the population with Internet access is still less than 10%, compared with other countries such as Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and the UK, where the penetration is more than 90%

and the internet is the medium capturing the largest share of advertising (Magna Global, 2011:7).

New alternative IMC options, such as buzz-marketing and viral-marketing focus on consumers' personal experience with brands and utilise their connections to other consumers to lead to brand advocacy, and to increase brand awareness. They also help to generate sales. These techniques attempt to make each encounter with a consumer appear to be a unique, unplanned personal exchange of information, instead of a planned marketing communication attempt by advertisers.

Buzz-marketing makes use of word-of-mouth between consumers; and it typically involves the use of initiatives conceived and designed, such as special events or product launches to be enjoyed and shared by consumers and the media. Viral-marketing is the use of interactive or Internet advertising, typically delivered via email or on a website, to inform or "infect" the receiver with enough interests about the product or services to share it with their friends, usually by email (Clow & Baack, 2010:313)

Branded entertainment, also referred to as branded content, is an extension of product placement. This is done either through product placement in entertainment sources, or through the sponsorship of events. When branded entertainment is placed in relevant content and entertainment sources, it can help to create or strengthen a brand image and positioning in a unique way. It can also be used to create stronger positive associations between the brand and the audience, and to build brand affinity with a desired target audience (Clow & Baack, 2010:301).

A classical South African example is the movie "The gods must be crazy", which is based on the story of a bottle of Coca Cola falling from an aeroplane into the hands of unsuspecting Bushmen. Some more current examples of branded entertainment include the appearance of local authors and their books in the local Soap opera, 7de Laan. Another is Pep Stores, which became part of the popular local soap opera, Generations' storyline. Some of the characters in the story were used as brand ambassadors by wearing clothing from Pep stores in each episode, and these outfits

would then be launched at stores across the country the following day. The storyline involved coming up with a new brand identity for the store, which engaged the target market by encouraging them to send SMS messages with some suggestions as the campaign evolved in the storyline. In addition, the interiors of all the Pep stores were completely revamped just like the launch, which featured on the Generations (Knowledge Resources, 2010).

Guerrilla-marketing is a technique in which low-cost unconventional unexpected means are utilised to convey or promote a product or an idea. Typically, guerrilla-marketing campaigns are unconventional and potentially interactive to target consumers in unexpected places (Blakeman, 2007:260). Guerrilla-marketing is a technique in which low-cost unconventional unexpected means are utilised to convey or promote a product or an idea. Typically, guerrilla-marketing campaigns are unconventional and potentially interactive to target consumers in unexpected places (Blakeman, 2007:260). Guerrilla-marketing is closely related to ambient OOH advertising media, which will be discussed in detail in chapter four, as one of the formats of OOH advertising media.

It is clear that the whole range of marketing communication options offers brands many communication opportunities to deliver a positive experience to consumers, while remaining true to contemporary marketing values, such as customer orientation, long-term-relationship focus, and extended stakeholder or multiple audiences. These elements should be combined and integrated together in a marketing communication campaign, in order to contribute to a consistent and synergised brand message. Integrated marketing communication will therefore be discussed in the next section.

2.4. INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION

Integrated marketing communication (IMC) is the combination of all marketing communications efforts in an integrated way, in order to maximise the communication effects that promote company goals. The concept of integrated-marketing communications has become well known on an international level, since the 1990's among practitioners and academia. IMC remains a popular and widely researched topic. However, its agreed-upon conceptualisation is still unclear.

The conceptualising of IMC will be discussed in the following sections – by defining the discipline, discussing the application of key IMC principles to OOH advertising media planning and integration, as well as the levels of IMC implementation.

2.4.1 DEFINING THE DISCIPLINE

An overview of some of the earliest to the more recent definitions of IMC is necessary, in order to establish the origins of this approach. The way that IMC has been conceptualised and developed – from the 1990's up to the present – should facilitate an understanding and application in the context of this study. Some influential descriptions and proposed conceptualisations of pioneers in IMC, driving the field from the 1990s to the present, will be presented – in order to understand the development of the discipline, while emphasising some of the key features of IMC.

Academics and practitioners still disagree on definitional issues concerning IMC, as well as the scope of IMC. Varying terminologies have been given to IMC, such as 'new advertising', 'orchestration', '360 branding', 'total branding', 'whole egg', 'seamless communication', 'relationship marketing', 'one-to-one marketing', 'integrated marketing' and 'integrated communications' (Kliatchko, 2005:7).

The core dimension of a discipline is agreement on its definition. Despite a lack of consensus over a definition for IMC, there has been no lack of suggestions. One of the first and most widely quoted definitions of IMC was proposed by the American Association of Advertising Agencies (AAAA) in 1989 (Duncan & Caywood, 1996:16):

“A concept of marketing communications planning that recognises the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of a variety of communication disciplines (for example, advertising, direct response, sales promotion, and public relations), and then combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency and maximum communication impact”.

In this definition, IMC is regarded as a theory or idea. It emphasises the added value aspect of a complete IMC plan, to combine, but also to integrate, the various marketing communication functions (tactics) and vehicles – in order to ultimately convey a unified and consistent message. This added value applies not only when integrating multiple marketing communication techniques (e.g., advertising is combined with public relations), but also when integrating multiple media (e.g., outdoor advertising is combined with transit advertising media). In other words, the combined effect of multiple activities exceeds the sum of their individual effects; this phenomenon is known as synergy.

This definition has viewed IMC from an agency perspective and referred to managing the traditional marketing communication mix in an integrated fashion, rather than seeing the whole as being constituted by separate practices. It does not, however, specify towards whom IMC should be directed, or what the intended measurable objectives should be.

During the early nineties, various definitions were developed to describe the relatively new concept of IMC. In 1991, Schultz (in Duncan & Caywood, 1996:15) put forward a definition, specifying that IMC should be directed at the customers, or at the prospects of the company: “IMC is the process of managing all sources of information about a product or service to which a customer or prospect is exposed, which behaviourally moves the consumer towards a sale, and maintains customer loyalty”. According to this definition, IMC is an on-going process that should be controlled and managed; it should bring about behavioural and long-term changes in the behaviour of consumers. It should also bring to the fore a cultivation of the relationship between customer and brands – aiming at loyalty.

The suggested objective of customer loyalty implies that this process should be long-term and customer-focused. It also includes all sources of information or brand contact points.

Several others have also adopted a more holistic approach to integration than simply the integration of the different marketing communication elements, as was suggested in some of the earlier literature on IMC. Duncan and Moriarty (1997:18) stated that: “IMC is the process of strategically controlling or influencing all messages, and encouraging purposeful dialogue to create and nourish profitable relationships with customers and other stakeholders.” This exceptionally broad definition of IMC recognises that is not merely a tactical, but rather a strategic process. This should promote the interchange of information when there is a need for it by the customers, as opposed to one-way communication from the company only.

The relationship should extend to customers, as well as to other stakeholders, such as employees, regulators or any other parties coming into contact with the company. A worthy contribution of this definition is the emphasis on the strategic aspects of IMC, regarding IMC as a business process, rather than its initial conceptualisation as the mere co-ordination of marketing communication techniques.

Schultz and Schultz (1998:10) redefined IMC and suggested that IMC is a “strategic business process, which is applied to all brand communication, with all kinds of consumers”. This definition still emphasises customer orientation, but it expands IMC from being only traditional techniques to brand communication programmes, including all other contact points between the organisation and its brands and the consumers or the prospects.

Duncan (2002:8) provided a broader definition of IMC that reads: “A cross-functional process for creating and nourishing profitable relationships with customers and other stakeholders, by strategically controlling or influencing all messages sent to these groups and encouraging data-driven, purposeful dialogue with them.” This definition suggests that it is a process for managing the customer relationships that drive brand value. It is a cross-functional process for creating and nourishing profitable

relationships with customers and other stakeholders, by strategically controlling or influencing all the messages sent to these groups and encouraging data-driven, purposeful dialogue with them. Cross-functional process means that all departments, as well as external agencies, should work together to plan and implement brand relationships. This definition is much wider than the previous definitions. Creating and nourishing stakeholder relationships involves attracting and retaining them by shaping all messages sent by everyone in the company.

The most distinctive feature of this definition is the specific requirement of two-way, data-driven communication. The use of databases and skilfully placed media efforts in an IMC strategy play a significant role in reaching the target audience and getting them involved in a two-way exchange of information or dialogue. This has surely been the result of an increasing amount of communication that has been taking place between organisations and stakeholders, based on the information obtained from and captured in new information technologies, such as the Internet, mobile phones and the abundance of computer software programs.

Schultz (2006:10) states that: “IMC is a strategic business process used to plan, develop, execute and evaluate co-ordinated, measurable, persuasive marketing communications programs over time with consumers, customers, prospects, employees and other targeted, relevant external and internal audiences.” This confirms that the goal of IMC is to generate both short-term financial returns and to build long-term brand and stakeholder value. This definition also recognises IMC as a business process, and the importance of stakeholders’ internal employees, as well as externally, such as customers, prospects, suppliers, investors, interest groups, and the general public.

A more recent and revised definition by Kliatchko (2008:140) states that: “IMC is an audience-driven business process of strategically managing stakeholders, content, channels, and the results of brand communication programs.” The emphasis is that IMC has moved from being perceived as a mere communication process, to developing into a strategic management process that is ‘audience-driven’, proposing

that this should be client-centred, and focusing on the relevant stakeholders including customers, and not inwardly on the company.

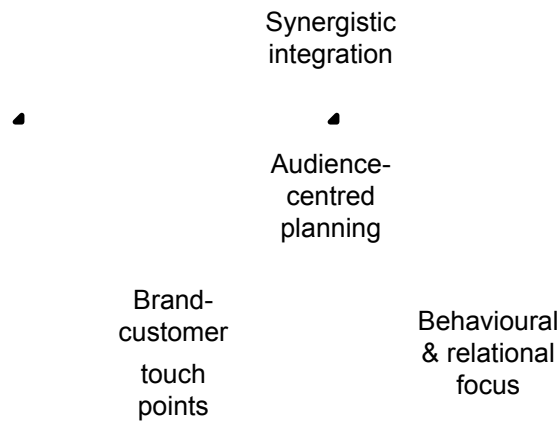
The discussion on these definition offerings demonstrates an evolution in the understanding of the concept of IMC, and collectively they express several key principles of IMC, including customer focused/audience-centred, recognising all brand contact points, integration to obtain synergy, a behavioural and relational focus by building relationships between customers and brands and other stakeholders, and a strategic business process. These principles should guide the planning of an advertising campaign (including the OOH advertising media part) as part of an overall IMC plan.

However, some crucial aspects, such as the implementation of IMC on corporate strategic level, the long-term relationship between a company and its customers, and external stakeholders, brand contact points that are not part of OOH advertising media, planning of the overall branding, marketing and IMC strategy, would all fall beyond the scope of advertising media planning and would not therefore be included in this discussion.

2.4.2 KEY PRINCIPLES OF IMC APPLICABLE TO OOH ADVERTISING MEDIA PLANNING AND INTEGRATION

The conceptualisation of as IMC discussed above illustrates that this concept, or rather process, is based on equally important and interdependent principles. These key IMC principles should also guide the planning of IMC campaigns, including OOH advertising media, as part of an overall IMC campaign, as illustrated in the figure below. In the following section, the application of these principles to the planning of an integrated OOH advertising media campaign will be discussed.

Figure 2.1: Key IMC principles guiding the planning and integration of OOH advertising media



Source: The researcher

2.4.2.1 Audience-centred planning

Initially, marketers controlled most of marketing communication tools and techniques, which enabled them to better target their messages, but the media landscape and -planning have changed substantially over the past few decades. New dynamic, interactive media; together with the combination of media proliferation, media fragmentation and audience fragmentation have given rise to major challenges and opportunities for marketers. Contemporary consumers are increasingly in control of when, how and what media or content they want to attend to and consume. Consumers are no longer captive and passive receivers of messages sent by marketers, but can now participate in creating messages, actively selecting the information they want to receive, and avoiding any unwanted and untimely messages (Higgs & Polonsky, 2007:1500).

This customer empowerment is driven by technological developments, such as mobile devices, social networking and consumer-generated content and virtual worlds, allowing consumers to control the communication process (Shimp, 2010:12). Increasingly, consumers are employing what is referred to as vendor relationship management, which simply means consumers now have access to and are

beginning to use technology in much the same way that marketers used it in the past – to identify, evaluate and build relationships with the suppliers they have identified as being the most relevant and practical for their needs. Thus, consumers can now engage in a dialogue with not only the organisation; but they can also connect and communicate with each other (Ewing, 2009:110).

Modern consumers might want and actively seek relevant information, but these same consumers would want to spend as little personal time as possible in acquiring such information. Consumers only have 24 hours available each day, with various media alternatives competing for their time and attention. They could select the media they want to use or access and for how long. Thus, consumers define the number of advertising messages to which they will be exposed, not the advertiser, no matter how large the budget spent, or how pervasive the messages might be (Schultz *et al.*, 2005:5).

Advertising and other brand contacts points, which have no value to an audience, or which are not delivered via relevant media vehicles would be filtered out, or ignored by consumers. The IMC planning approach, therefore, deliberately takes on the consumer's perspective in deciding which media would be most effective in reaching a specific target audience or audiences by delivering relevant messages via the most-preferred media (Kliatchko, 2008:149). Schultz, Tannenbaum and Lauterborn (1993:51) emphasised the importance of this audience's perspective, and noted that IMC is a communication system that understands and helps marketers establish a dialogue with a specific group of potential consumers. It therefore needs to be organised around the consumer by realigning communications to look at them the way the consumer sees them – as a flow of information from indistinguishable sources. In the context of IMC, this is known as an outside in planning approach or customer/audience-centred planning (Kitchen & Burgmann, 2010:5).

This audience-driven approach to IMC suggests not to bombard consumers at all possible points of contact with advertising messages, but rather to building relationships (Duncan, 2005:117). Furthermore, it entails moving away from aiming at mass, generic, unknown audiences to known prospects and consumers, and

moving away from using mass and shotgun messages to targeted communications (Kliatchko, 2008:142).

Audience-centred planning of OOH advertising media, therefore, entails carefully defining and selecting a specific targeted audience or audiences, and then delivering the most relevant messages via the most preferred media to them. The target audience should be selected and defined based on demographical, geographical, psycho-graphical and behavioural audience-segmentation criteria. This requires the use of audience profiling to reveal rich insights on the target market necessary to inform effective brand positioning, marketing and marketing communication strategy (Higgs & Polonsky, 2007:1500). Consumer-insight research and audience-media research on the customers, their wants and needs, and their media behaviour are essential, in order to compile audience profiling to guide media-planning decisions (Moriarty *et al.*, 2012:171; O'Guinn *et al.*, 2000:212; Sissors & Baron, 2010:410).

Audience segmentation criteria and as the role of research in the planning of advertising media in South Africa are discussed in more detail in chapter three.

Furthermore, OOH advertising media should no longer be employed just to reach a mass audience; but it should rather be employed to deliver a relevant message to targeted OOH audiences in the different environments when and where they are most likely to be receptive. These OOH audiences range from broad-based vehicular- and commuter traffic to more-targeted audience profiles at retail and leisure environments, such as those at cultural events (Berneman & Kasparian, 2003:40) and sport arenas (Turley & Shannon, 2000:323), or even very specific places or venues, such as at golf courses, festivals and events, health clubs, beaches, schools, public restrooms, doctors' waiting rooms, sports stadia and arenas (Gambetti, 2010:36; Lane *et al.*, 2011:374; Sissors & Baron, 2010:269).

To achieve this it is essential to consider the mobility patterns, lifestyle information needs and frame-of-mind of the targeted OOH audience when planning a campaign. For example, by placing relevant messages in airport media at the right location with context-related themes, such as destinations, or airport-related themes placed in

appropriate locations with longer dwelling times at airports would improve the level of processing of information by the travellers (Wilson & Till, 2008: 59). Alternatively, by placing interesting advertisements of new products or new product information inside minibus taxis where a captive audience could enjoy the messages, and might experience this as a past-time (Du Plooy & du Plessis, 2011: 764).

2.4.2.2 Brand-customer touch points

IMC requires that successful marketing communication needs to build a relationship between the brand and the customer (Kitchen, 2008:146; Kitchen *et al.* 2004:23; Shimp, 2010:18). Thus, all the aspects of a brand's relationship with a consumer must be considered; and both traditional marketing communication channels and non-traditional means of communication must be considered. It also requires that a consistent brand message must be integrated across the entire range of marketing communications elements – to allow for consistent clarity and reinforcement of the brand's or the company's main proposition.

Moving away from just aiming to reach as many potential customers as possible at as low a cost as possible cost, towards a more audience-centred view has led to the increasing realisation that besides traditional marketing communication techniques, there are a variety of alternative ways to communicate and build relationships with consumers. Brand-customer touch points are surely no longer restricted to mass media and traditional marketing communication elements, but include each and every potential experience a customer or prospect has to interact with, or see, or hear about the company and/or its brands (Belch & Belch, 2012:26).

Schultz *et al.* (1993:51) conceptualise the effect of IMC in terms of these contacts or brand-customer touch points. They explain that a contact is any experience that a customer or prospect has with a brand or company, including brand advertising messages, word-of-mouth, and using the product. All these potential contacts can influence a brand's relationship with its consumers.

According to Dunn and Davis (2004:300), it is vital to understand customers' different relationships with a brand, including the effect of traditional marketing communication media, as well as non-traditional contacts. Furthermore, marketers must analyse all potential touch points and their influence on consumers. Specific versions of contact points to particular consumers or target audiences can then be tailored to strengthen the relationship with a brand. Successful brand builders evaluate the influence of different touch points, and focus their resources on those touch points that create the strongest brand experience and make customers change their behaviour accordingly.

Keller (2001:819) proposes that different ways in which brands can now communicate with customers and prospects, should be regarded as additional opportunities, offering marketers valuable brand contact with their target audiences by adding value to product offerings and improving customers' brand experience, gathering feedback to monitor customer satisfaction, and delivering additional brand messages to increase brand knowledge and strengthen the client-brand relationship.

So, each experience of a customer either strengthens or weakens the client-brand relationship. Strong relationships lead to higher profits and sales, while weak relationships result in lost sales and customers, and undermine the brand equity (Duncan, 2005:20).

These brand-customer touch points can be categorised in a number of ways. Dunn and Davis (2004:241) classify touch points into three different categories, based on consumers' experiences during their decision-making processes. Pre-purchase experience touch points are of great importance, regardless of whether a customer will purchase the brand in question, or not. Purchase-experience touch points directly influence customers to purchase a brand, and not to just consider it. Post-purchase experience touch points influence customers after their purchasing.

The above classification can be exemplified in the context of OOH advertising media. Large outdoor advertising boards with high impact visuals next to busy roads aimed at commuters on their way to work and back, are likely to increase their awareness

of a brand before purchasing the brand. However, street and retail furniture advertising inside a shopping mall with a promotional message, is more likely to influence shoppers to actually purchase the advertised brand. During the post-purchase phase touch points, such as the satisfaction with the product of the service, billing, the maintenance of products, after-sales services would be the most influential.

However, continual advertising is also crucial after the purchase has been made, to maintain the top-of-the-mind brand awareness and image in the mind of those who have bought the product.

Meyer and Schwager (2007:118) distinguish between direct and indirect contacts with a company or its brands. Direct contact generally occurs in the course of purchase, use, and service; and the customer usually initiates it. These direct contact points include customer-initiated touch points, intrinsic touch points, and unexpected touch points (Duncan, 2005:119).

Customer-initiated touch points occur whenever a customer or prospect contacts a company, such as enquires or complaints regarding products and other contacts made directly with the company via telephone, website or emails.

Intrinsic touch points are interactions that occur with a company or brand during the process of buying or using the product or service, such as interactions with retail sales personnel or customer-service representatives.

Unexpected touch points are unanticipated references or information about a company such as word-of-mouth from friends, on-line and off-line expert reviews about the product, as well as information received through social media sites, and mobile-marketing applications, such as price comparison applications and social sourcing applications that help consumers get outside opinions and feedback on their mobile devices before purchasing.

Indirect contact or company-created touch points involve all encounters with the representatives of a company's products, service or brands, and include all forms of advertising and communication, publicity, and suchlike (Meyer & Schwager, 2007:118). These touch points account for a large part of the information disseminated by marketers, and have the advantage of being under the control of companies or their agencies (Duncan, 2005:117).

Company-created touch points comprise an ever increasing variety, ranging from traditional mass advertising to direct marketing, sales promotions, events and sponsorships, personal selling and more recently product placement, branded entertainment, viral-marketing, guerrilla-marketing, event marketing, mobile marketing, in-store marketing, point-of-purchase displays, the Internet, as well as OOH advertising media (Belch & Belch, 2012:26; Blakeman, 2007:260; Clow & Baack, 2010:313; Jurca, 2010:323).

All these potential brand contacts need to be planned and integrated properly by the companies and their agencies. The planning of some of these functions is often outsourced to specialist agencies, such as for example, OOH advertising media planning. This can be the responsibility of media-only agencies or OOH advertising media-specialist agencies.

It is clear that not all touch points are equally important or effective during different stages of the consumer's decision-making process, and they differ with regard to companies' ability to control or influence them. The primary focus of this study is on just one of these types of contact points: OOH advertising media, as some of the company-created touch points. All the OOH advertising media options in different environments can be used as urban touch-points to reach customers outside their homes in the streets where they traverse, the squares in which they gather, the places where they go to buy or consume at precisely those times when they are most receptive to brand messages, most laid-back, most open to new ideas, and most prepared to listen and interact (Gambetti, 2010:4).

This wide variety of OOH advertising media types in different environments and locations offers advertisers the flexibility to be used for different purposes in their overall IMC plan. For example, OOH advertising media can be effectively applied as support media to reach selected segments of the market that cannot be as effectively reached by traditional advertising media messages, because they can penetrate the selective perception barrier more efficiently than mass media messages (Belch & Belch, 2012:446).

Alternatively, they can be used to influence consumers at the point-of-purchase or close to where the purchase-decisions are made (Shimp, 2010:576). Thus, by identifying and utilising the most relevant out-of-home touch points between consumers and the brand, this can be strategically applied to increase the perceived value of the brand, to enhance the customers' total brand experience, to deliver additional brand messages to increase brand knowledge, and to strengthen the client-brand relationship.

When following the extended view to include all brand-customer touch points, this means to manage advertising and media as one of many possible types of contact points with consumers. Thus, it implies that advertising, as with any brand contact, can affect consumer experiences. Ideally, an advertisement should be created – not to merely inform consumers about a brand, but it should also engage consumers. However, the main focus of this study is not on creating effective OOH advertisements, but rather on the planning of OOH advertising media.

With regard to the role of advertising media as brand-contact points, Shimp (2010:16) notes that advertising media should no longer be treated merely as the passive vehicle through which consumers are exposed to advertisements, because both the advertising and the surrounding media context form the actual contact with the consumer. Lane *et al.* (2011:226) agree, and argue that only relying on numbers, such as reach and frequency, when planning media, would fail to give any indication of the communication impact of the medium on the audience. Hence, contemporary media planners should also consider qualitative media values, such as the target audiences' involvement and attitudes towards the medium, the media environment

where and when the message is to be delivered, and the fit between the medium and the creative approach required (Koekemoer, 2005:208; Lane *et al.*, 2011:226; Moriarty *et al.*, 2012:225).

As marketers have access to an increasing number of media options, it becomes more difficult to ensure that a focused message is presented and experienced by consumers through all brand-contact points. As all planned touch points contribute positively or negatively to building customers' brand experiences, they must be congruent with each other, because inconsistent messages sent lead to confusion and dilute the brand equity in the consumer's mind (Belch & Belch, 2012:300). This does not necessarily mean that the messages transmitted to various audiences or segments via different media must be completely identical, but rather that they must be complementary and non-contradictory (Yeshin, 2006:69; Torp, 2009:199).

Congruent and complementary messages are not only important when OOH advertising media is used together with other marketing communication elements as part of an overall IMC programme, but also when integrating different OOH advertising media platforms in a campaign.

2.4.2.3 Synergistic integration

IMC requires strategic consistency as well as message consistency. Strategic consistency implies that all core brand values remain the same, while the brand messages might vary by target market and the communication situation. For example a company may employ different messages for their various audiences and stakeholders. A strategic understanding of IMC implies that it must be based upon a rigorous planning process to identify the targeted audiences, set the objectives to be achieved, develop coherent marketing communication and find the best way to deliver these messages. Message consistency, also referred to as "one-voice" and "seamless" communications, involves maintaining a clear and consistent image, position, message and/or theme across all marketing communications disciplines or tools" (Percy, 2008:9)

Paramount to IMC, are the benefits of harnessing synergy across marketing communication elements and media. Kitchen and Schultz (2009:201) convincingly argue that one of the most critical issues in the on-going development of IMC is how communicators understand, explain or manage the perceived synergy between various communication alternatives and the media. According to Belch and Belch (2012:35) the IMC framework is built on the foundation that if multiple marketing communication techniques are deployed appropriately, they could enhance one another's contributions. Shimp (2010:17) explains that the reason for using multiple marketing communication techniques in conjunction with one another is to produce greater results or synergistic effects than if the techniques were used individually and in an uncoordinated fashion.

Kitchen *et al.* (2004:20) note that in its practical form, IMC attempts to combine, integrate, and synergise elements of the communications mix, as the strengths of one are used to offset the weaknesses of the others. Thus, these elements should not be considered separately or planned in isolation.

Synergy may be conceptualised in terms of the added value aspect of IMC. Thus, synergy is the combined effect of multiple media activities that exceeds the sum of the individual effects (Naik & Raman, 2003:375). Academic sources seem to agree that the basis of synergy is conveying messages through multiple-marketing communication media, to utilise the intrinsic strengths of each medium, as well as to reach different audiences (Clow & Baack, 2010:80; Du Plessis *et al.*, 2010:45; Duncan, 2005:349; Katz, 2010:33; Koekemoer, 2005:200; Lane *et al.*, 2011:219; Moriarty *et al.*, 2012:106; Shimp, 2010:327; Sissors & Baron, 2010:53).

Achieving synergy is implemented when applying media neutral planning. Media neutral planning is an unbiased approach to media selection that emphasises planning around consumer touch-points, instead of being biased to use traditional advertising media (Higgs & Polonsky, 2007:1501). Media neutral planning suggests that if the planning is truly audience-centric, any media alternative would be treated as potentially appropriate; and each media alternative would be chosen, based

purely on its ability to achieve the given objectives with no bias or preconceived ideas (Kliatchko, 2008:150; Tapp, 2005:133).

Media neutral planning implies that the selection of media do not privilege advertising or any one type of advertising medium. Anything that can affect the consumer's experience of a brand is considered to be a potential marketing vehicle. Thus, media neutral planning applied to OOH advertising media planning means that a fair and balanced mix of the available options must be selected – without any bias or preconceived ideas; but it should be based on an objective assessment of their strengths and weaknesses and their ability to achieve the advertisers' objectives. The full spectrum of OOH advertising media options and not only conventional outdoor advertising boards should be recognised and considered objectively, without being biased towards certain OOH advertising media platforms (such as outdoor advertising media), geographic locations (such as certain cities or areas) or OOH media providers (such as larger media companies).

In order to implement media neutral planning, the marketing communication objectives to be achieved should be determined before selecting media options. These objectives are based on consumers' decision-making and message processing – ranging from unawareness right through to action or behavioural responses. These issues will be discussed in the following section.

2.4.2.4 Behavioural and relational focus

Beyond the rhetoric, for IMC to have street credibility and genuine commercial impact, it needs to make business sense. For this to happen, a strategically selected combination of marketing communication media should ideally and demonstrably deliver a greater return, both in terms of attitudinal and behavioural impact, than any one of those techniques used in isolation (Ewing, 2009:107). Therefore, the ultimate goal of any IMC campaign should be to influence the target audience in such a way that the audience engages in a specific desired behaviour (Kitchen *et al.*, 2004:23; Shimp, 2010:18).

The ultimate goal might be a behavioural response; however, consumers respond to marketing communications stimuli on three levels: The cognitive, affective and conative levels (Belch & Belch, 2012:155; Moriarty *et al.*, 2012:107; Percy, 2008:174). The cognitive level involves conscious intellectual activity, while the affective level involves feelings and emotions. The last stage is the conative level, or behavioural response where consumers are inclined to take action. For that reason, marketing communication objectives for a campaign could be on a cognitive level, to increase brand awareness and knowledge, affective levels to increase positive brand attitudes, brand preferences, and on a behavioural level so that higher brand action intention and purchase facilitation are achieved (Belch & Belch, 2012:155; Moriarty *et al.*, 2012:107).

Furthermore, IMC campaigns are also typically structured in multiple strands by employing different media to influence the decision-making process of the different target audience members on all levels, such as awareness, perception, learning, attitude, motivation, behaviour and repeat purchase, thus moving them from lower levels to higher levels (Belch & Belch, 2012:155; Moriarty *et al.*, 2012:107; Percy, 2008:174).

Duncan (2005:90) and Shimp (2010:17) both proposed that IMC needs to go beyond these three levels. They emphasise the importance of IMC in building relationships, rather than just engaging in short-term relationships or sales. Thus, the IMC process is not necessarily completed once the behavioural response or the sales have occurred. A relationship with a brand typically begins with awareness, and can then move through to identifying with and feeling connected to a brand; but the ultimate aim is to build a long-term relationship and to uphold loyalty to the brand. If an IMC approach is used, message integration and consistency can be encouraged, which in return, helps to facilitate the interpretation of information for customers that would result in less confusion from the vast amount of information available today. If an IMC approach is not followed, then different messages may be delivered in unison. And that may lead to an incoherent brand image, which as a result, would influence buying and recall behaviour negatively, thereby affecting the relationship-building process.

A combined consideration of brand contact points should lead to an increase in awareness from the consumer's perspective, which in turn, would create a positive relationship. If a company thus invests in an IMC approach, the brand's reputation could be further strengthened, and loyalty among consumers and other stakeholder groups would be further enhanced (Kitchen & Burgmann, 2010:4). By employing an IMC approach when OOH advertising media planning is conducted, a better outcome can be achieved, where a more holistic picture would be delivered and better relationships built, which in turn, would lead to increased brand loyalty. This outcome must be kept in mind when planning an integrated OOH advertising media campaign as part of an overall plan. Long-term relationship building and brand loyalty, as a result of integrated media planning, however, needs to be measured as part of a future research study, since measuring these concepts specifically does not fall within the scope of this research study.

It is important to realise that the customer of today makes informed decisions and will make demands on all the information received. Marketers thus need to develop communication plans with the consumer as the starting point. During the planning process, it is consequently imperative to obtain information about the wants, needs and other background knowledge on the specific target group (Kitchen & Burgmann, 2010:4). Equipped with the knowledge of how the target audience would be likely to respond to marketing communications, marketers could then select the most effective media options to include in an IMC campaign.

This knowledge should guide marketers in identifying those touch points in the process where and when marketing communication is most likely to have a positive effect on the consumers in their decision on behavioural responses (Koekemoer, 2005:35; Percy, 2008:293). Furthermore, understanding the phases in consumers' decision-making processes could also be used in media planning models to determine the optimum frequency of exposure that would help consumers to yield and retain messages (Sissors & Baron, 2010:223; Belch & Belch, 2012:345).

Different OOH advertising media types have proven to be effective on all three levels; from the cognitive level to increase consumers' brand awareness and recall

(Bhargava *et al.*, 1994; Berneman & Kasparian, 2003; Donthu *et al.*, 1993; Turley & Shannon, 2000); to the attitudinal level to create favourable attitudes from consumers (Du Plooy & Du Plessis, 2011; Eun & Kim, 2009; Nagel & Louw, 2004; Veloutsou & O'Donnell, 2005), as well as to obtain the desired behavioural responses from consumers (Donthu & Bhargava, 1999; Taylor & Franke, 2003; Taylor *et al.*, 2006).

The focus of the current study will not be only on one OOH advertising media type in isolation, but rather on how these platforms can be integrated synergistically into a campaign to achieve objectives on all these levels, and ultimately to move consumers to the desired behavioural responses.

The relationship focus of a company does not only include its customers and internal employees, but several other stakeholders are also affected by IMC, including suppliers, shareholders, the broader community, government regulators, advertising- and media agencies and distribution-channel members (Duncan, 2005:57; Luck & Moffatt, 2009:319; Kliatchko, 2008:146). Companies using OOH advertising media must also realise that their relationships extend beyond their target market to include other stakeholders.

OOH advertising should be used that are socially responsible towards the broader community. For example, OOH advertising should not feature sexist representations of women, since these advertisements are similar to pin-ups (Rosewarne, 2007:313). Furthermore, OOH advertising does not have to be restricted to commercial messages; it can be used to serve the broader community, such as educational media in public campaigns on AIDS awareness, crime prevention, road safety, the responsible use of water and electricity, or to inform citizens of their rights and responsibilities (Davidson, 2001).

IMC can be explored and implemented on different levels. In the following sections, the current study will be contextualised within these levels, and the synergy as a result of integrating multiple media in an IMC campaign, will be discussed in more detail.

2.4.3 IMC IMPLEMENTATION FROM DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

Numerous studies have explored and recommended a number of levels of IMC integration from the perspective of companies, marketing communication practitioners, as well as that of consumers (Ehlers, 2002; Ewing, 2009, Finne & Grönroos, 2009; Grove *et al.*, 2007:39; Holm, 2006; Kitchen & Schultz, 2001; Kitchen & Schultz, 2009; Kliatchko, 2008; Naik & Raman, 2003; Nowak & Phelps, 1994; Schultz, 2006; Schultz *et al.*, 2009; Schultz, Tannenbaum & Lauternborn, 1993; Torp, 2009; Voorveld, 2011; Voorveld *et al.*, 2010).

The focus in the current study is on the integration of multiple media, specifically the planning and integration of different OOH advertising media platforms in the South African context, from a media-planning perspective. However, to contextualise the current study within the IMC literature, IMC implementations from the different perspectives and levels be reviewed briefly.

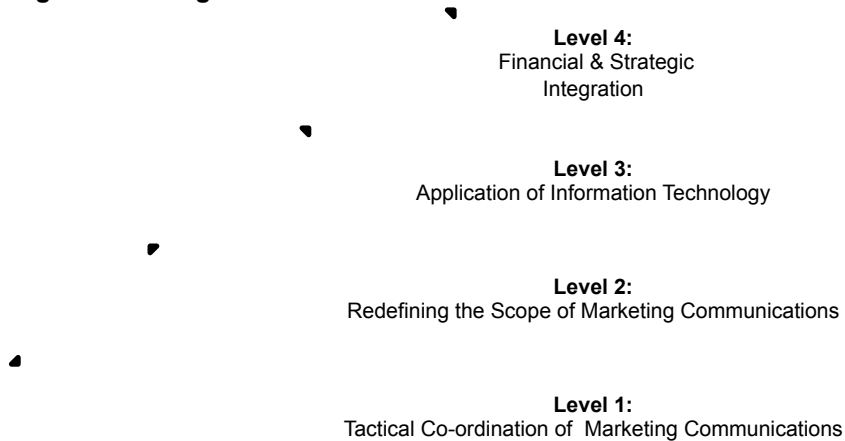
2.4.3.1 IMC implementation from a company's perspective

Kitchen and Schultz (2001) proposed a four-stage model, in order to understand the development of an IMC approach within organisations. These four stages include the tactical co-ordination of marketing communications, redefining the scope of marketing communications, the application of information technology, and lastly, the financial and strategic integration.

The first stage is co-ordination of IMC on a tactical level and means a one-sight one-sound approach, where the emphasis is on the external communication of the brand with the aim of creating harmony with all the various marketing communication techniques and the brand.

During the second stage, communications needs to be redefined to include all communication contact points that a customer or prospect could have with the company.

Figure 2.2: Stages in IMC



Source: Kitchen & Schultz, 2001:118

The third stage means that the increasing flow of information on consumer behaviour, attitudes and transactional data via a database should be turned into customer knowledge. New technologies should also be used to increase the information flow between employees, distributors and suppliers.

The fourth stage implies that IMC should be deployed at the strategic level. Marketing and finance should thus work together for the business, in order for it to become fully customer-centric, as a means of generating a measurable and behavioural return-on-investment.

When applying these stages as a guide for this study, the focus will be on studying the IMC effects from a more tactical point of view, by exploring the planning and integration of OOH advertising media platforms on the campaign level. This would be from a media-planning perspective, where the media plan should be aligned with the overall IMC and advertising plan.

Kliatchko (2008) propose that IMC is an audience-driven business process that instead of the inward-looking traditional mind set of the past, a more outward-looking orientation is now being followed, where IMC as a business process becomes more customer or audience-centric. This approach of the IMC business process starts with a deep understanding of the target audience that would be able to guide the marketing and branding objectives and strategies. The difference between the

traditional approach to marketing communication and the IMC audience-driven approach, as proposed by Kliatchko (2008) and applicable to this study, is summarised in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Traditional marketing communication versus the IMC audience-driven approach

<i>Traditional approach</i>	<i>Audience-driven approach</i>
Mass marketing and mass communication	One-to-one marketing
Transactional models of marketing	Relational models of marketing
Outputs of marketing communication	Outcomes of marketing communication
Advertising monologue	Consumer monologue
Mass, generic unknown audiences	Known prospect and consumers
Mass shotgun messages	Targeted communication
Bombarding audiences with advertising messages	Building relationships

Source: Kliatchko, 2008

As a business process, IMC should, therefore, involve the corporate, as well as the operational levels of the organisation. At the corporate level, a holistic view is needed, where senior management is held responsible for integrating all the functional levels in the organisation – with the intention of satisfying consumer needs. Senior management should view marketing communication as a strategic business tool that could help yield business results in the long term. IMC, at the operational level, involves the planning, management, implementation and measurement of the IMC planning process. This starts with a deep understanding of the consumer.

The current study focuses on the application of IMC on the operational or tactical levels, and specifically those components that deal with the alignment of the OOH advertising media campaign with the overall IMC/advertising plan, the planning of OOH advertising media, and the evaluation and research of OOH advertising media.

2.4.3.2 IMC implementation from a marketing communication

Another perspective comes from Novak and Phelps (1994). They have identified three broad concepts of IMC: 'one-voice', 'integrated communications' and 'coordinated marketing communication'. This conceptualisation of the framework was adapted mainly from practitioner-based literature and perspectives. The application of integration by marketing communication practitioners, specifically OOH advertising media specialists in South Africa, is also the focus of the current study. Furthermore, the framework applies to the implementation of IMC on the campaign level, and not on the broader organisational level, as in the current study.

The one-voice concept (also referred to as 'seamless' marketing communication) underlines unity among various marketing communication techniques used in a campaign, so that a clear and consistent image, position, message and/or theme is created across all marketing communications disciplines or techniques. The integrated communication concept is achieved by integrating both the brand image and the consumer behaviour – directly inspired by the marketing communication message. For example by combining brand advertising with sales promotion and direct marketing techniques in an advertisement to obtain direct feedback or information for consumers. The coordinated marketing communications concept emphasises the coordination and integration of the various marketing communications techniques, in order to achieve synergy.

A further comparison of these three concepts of IMC reveals that the one-voice concept and coordinated marketing communication entail integration on the campaign level, while the integrated–communication entails integration within the specific communication message executions, such as advertisements. Within this framework, IMC can thus be studied from a more tactical perspective (within specific communication message executions, such as an advertisement), or from a more strategic perspective (on the campaign level such as the combining of multiple media).

When using the Nowak and Phelps (1994) perspective as a guide for this study, the focus will be on studying IMC from a more strategic point of view, exploring the integration of different OOH advertising media platforms. The emphasis is thus on producing 'holistic' or integrated OOH advertising media campaigns that include various OOH advertising media types, in order to do whatever is necessary to identify, contact, activate, and cultivate the target audiences and the objectives specified in an overall IMC campaign. OOH advertising media options are, therefore, 'integrated' to the extent that they can create a 'synergism' that, at the campaign level, develops awareness, images or beliefs, while bolstering behavioural responses beyond those that would be attained with single media campaigns.

2.4.3.3 IMC implementation from the consumer's perspective

Finne and Grönroos (2009) proposed a holistic Relationship Communication Model (RCM), based on the consumer perspective that takes into account the impact of historical, future, internal and external factors on message integration.

Historical factors comprise all those messages from the consumer's past that could influence the consumer's creation of meaning. Future factors could include the expectations, goals, hopes or visions of the individual. These time factors represent a time continuum that ranges from the past to the envisaged future. Unlike traditional marketing communication that focused on the present only, the new proposed model would necessarily include the time factor as a crucial ingredient.

External factors would include culturally situated factors, or the personal context of the individual, including trends, traditions, economic situation, the family and the advertising originating from various sources. Internal factors are those life factors related to the self; these would include attitudes, capabilities, and identity, or personal interests.

This Relationship Communication Model can be used for understanding and managing marketing communication more effectively. It emphasises that a more consumer-centric approach to marketing communication is needed, where the

consumer is allowed to perform the integration: thus an outside-in focus, as opposed to an inside-out focus. Meaning becomes the focus where – instead of the traditional marketing communication concept, where a sender conveys a message to a receiver through coding, noise and decoding processes – the emphasis now falls on the receivers and the meaning created by the receiver in the communication process. Meaning is thus central to the model, with influences from historical, future, internal and external factors being integrated into the message – thereby creating a focus on the consumer, instead of on outgoing messages.

The need for audience-centred planning and the relationship focus, and how this applies to OOH advertising media planning have already been discussed earlier in this chapter.

The above discussion has conceptualised the focus of the current study as the implementation of IMC on a tactical level or the integration of multimedia in a campaign from a media-planning perspective. Consequently, the remainder of this chapter will discuss this in more detail.

2.4.4 MEDIA SYNERGY

Understanding how various marketing communication activities work together, or in combination, to achieve synergy, is one of the most critical issues facing IMC today. Media synergy has received increasing attention in recent years (Naik & Peters, 2009; Schultz, 2006; Schultz *et al.*, 2009; Tang, Newton & Wang; 2007; Voorveld, 2011; Voorveld *et al.*, 2010). However, despite synergy's importance in planning multi-media communications and all these research studies, it is still not well understood. Naik and Raman (2003:375) state that the interaction among marketing variables is a central theme in marketing. Indeed, it is interaction that provides a rigorous basis for the marketing mix concept, which emphasises that marketing efforts create sales synergistically rather than independently.

Several studies documented the joint effects of marketing communication variables on market outcomes. Notwithstanding this body of knowledge, and despite the

fundamental significance of interactions in the marketing communication mix, few studies have scientifically investigated the role of synergy in multi-media communications.

Some prominent theories explaining the potential processes that occur when consumers are exposed to multi-media campaigns and research on the synergy in multi-media campaigns will be discussed in the following sections.

2.4.4.1 Exploring media synergy from the consumer's perspective

A number of theories related to the psychological processes that occur when consumers are exposed to a combination of media have been proposed in studies – to explain why the integration of different media in a campaign results in more positive results than using single-medium campaigns. Knowledge on these consumer psychological processes can provide insight into the relative effectiveness of multi-media campaigns. These theories include the forward encoding theory, the image transfer theory, the encoding variability theory, the repetition variation theory, and the credible source theory. Each of these will be discussed in turn.

Forward encoding means that when consumers are exposed to a combination of media, the first medium may stimulate forward encoding. This means that an advertisement in the first medium can be used as a ‘teaser’ to attract attention to, arouse interest in, and increase curiosity – for an advertisement in another medium. The memory trace, as a result of the first exposure, stimulates deeper processing and easier encoding of the message during exposure to the advertisement, when this is presented in the second medium. The resulting multiple retrieval cues can then indirectly influence the attitudes toward the advertisements and the brand, as well as the purchase intentions of the consumers (Voorveld, 2011:2201).

Studies by Dijkstra (in Voorveld *et al.*, 2010:70) and Voorveld (2011:79) confirmed the positive effect of forward encoding in the processing of IMC campaigns, using online and offline advertising. In both these studies, the levels of forward encoding were found to be higher in cross-media campaigns, than in single media, with

repeated exposure to the message in the same media. It is interesting that when the second advertising message is an exact copy of the first advertisement, the audience was less motivated to process the second advertisement.

Forward encoding is typically applied in OOH advertising, when it is being utilised as a teaser campaign for launching new brands, and then followed up by other media. Heita or 8.ta (South Africa's fourth cellular provider) have utilised a combination of OOH media formats, such as large outdoor advertising, minibus taxi advertising, and bus advertising, for their two-week launch campaign in all the major cities across South Africa. For this campaign, eye-catching graphic illustrations coloured in white, pink and black were used. Only the name 'Heita' (a vernacular term used in townships meaning hello) appeared in the messages.

The actual product offering, behind the numerous OOH advertisements, was not disclosed. The campaign captured the nation's imagination and generated a huge excitement for the brand, as indicated by all the comments on the social media and enquires on search engines during this period. The successful launch resulted in increased receptiveness by the market for the launch of the product offering. During the following phase of the campaign, the brand name and the detailed offerings were revealed in a variety of other advertising media (Shirley, 2012).

Image transfer implies that consumers mentally replay or imagine parts of the advertisement in the first medium, when they are exposed to the advertisement in the second advertising medium. Some elements in the second advertisement are thus used as retrieval cues to aid memory trace from the first exposure, because of overlap between the advertising executions (Voorveld *et al.*, 2010:72). This principle might be applied in multi-OOH advertising media campaigns by using smaller street furniture advertising media (such as street-pole advertisements) repetitively, with a number of them in a row, so that the subsequent signs in a row tell an intriguing story.

Encoding variability theory proposes that when consumers are exposed to similar messages in a variety of media relying on different senses, this will be encoded in a

more complex way in the human brain, than if only one medium were used. This is because auditory, visual and sensory information signals or cues use different networks in the human brain to be processed. The result is more complex encoding, stronger and more accessible information network in the human brain, and increased probability that the information would be recalled accurately (Stammerjohan, Wood, Chang & Thorson 2005:56). Varying the modality of a presentation or message in the different media is also likely to improve the perceptions of the aesthetic value of a campaign.

The cosmetic (pre-cognitive) characteristic could positively influence attitudes to the advertisement, and ultimately attitudes toward the brand (Grimwood, 2010:37). So, if consumers experience and enjoy brand communication on different sensory levels, before actually processing the information on a cognitive level, this could positively affect their attitudes towards a brand.

Encoding variability can be applied by combining different OOH media platforms in an IMC campaign – to create a sensory experience, in which the consumer’s senses of sight, hearing, taste, touch, and even smell, are stimulated separately, or in combination with each other. The large size, colour and three-dimensional potential of outdoor advertising formats are ideal for communicating strong visual brand messages, such as brand colours, packaging, shapes or logo – to link the brand with the relevant icons and symbols (Graff in Moriarty *et al.*, 2012:366, Sissors & Baron, 2010:277).

The latest innovative forms of ambient OOH advertising media, such as perfumed, musical, or talking bus-shelter advertising with physical sensors or touch screens, take-away posters, or digital interactive messages, offer a two-way interactive sensory experience to consumers (Gambetti, 2010:39). The handing-out of samples, the demonstrating of products or advertising on large-screen televisions in minibus taxis is ideal for offering an engaging and personal experience to commuters in the transit environment (Provantage, 2010).

The repetition variation theory states that if consumers are exposed to a message in multiple media, instead of being exposed to a message in the same medium repetitively, this results in more positive affective reactions (Tang *et al.*, 2007:128). Repetition is an important aspect when the communication objective is to change attitudes; however, continuous repetition without variation, tends to cause boredom and message wear-out. This can be negated through a variation of the medium or the message, since consumers are more likely to pay attention to new information, than previously encountered messages or ways of presentation (Belch & Belch, 2012:345).

So, instead of just using only one OOH advertising media platform in a campaign, a variety and number of OOH media platforms and formats (such as smaller campaign outdoor advertising boards, street and retail furniture advertising media, transit advertising media and ambient OOH advertising media) can be placed in concentrated areas, such as in central business districts, or in transit areas, where the target audience congregates. Sales promotion activities and ambient media, such as live events and road shows, could also be added, to enhance the brand experience. This means that the target audience will be exposed to the message on different forms, shapes and contexts, to increase the likelihood that the message is noticed and processed.

The credible source theory suggests that when an advertising message is sent via multiple sources, it is more persuasive, because the audience sees it as more convincing or credible. These various media are regarded as independent sources and perceived to be more expensive than single-media campaigns. This perceived expenditure could serve as an indication of the company's confidence in the brand (Voorveld, 2011:80). This theory explains the higher perceived credibility in two studies on multi-media campaigns, specifically combining television and print-program promotions (Tang *et al.*, 2007:127), as well as for online and offline media campaigns (Voorveld, 2011:79).

Super-large OOH advertising media, such as building wraps, wall murals and very large outdoor advertising boards are ideal for adding importance or brand status by

projecting an image with authority for the brand that is being displayed (Bernstein, 2005: 114). When advertising on these huge formats, the brand literally becomes larger than life (Shimp, 2010:583). This phenomenon of using a super-large OOH advertising media format to create brand authority and impact was noticeable, especially during the 2010 World Cup Soccer in South Africa. Examples include the 30 storeys, or 138m high building wrap for Nikes (Graffiti, 2010), the soaring branded cooling towers seen from Soccer City for Coca Cola, the 300m² gantry spanning right across the highway at the entrance to Polokwane for MTN (Outdoor network, 2010) and the world's largest fully functional Vuvuzela for Hyundai on the well-known unfinished bridge in Cape Town (Jupiter drawing room, 2010).

2.4.4.2 Evidence of the impact of multi-media campaigns

Although integration across different media types may be considered by many as the cornerstone of IMC, the topic has received more frequent attention from researchers during the last decade or so. Ewing, du Plessis and Foster (2001) observed in their study that the significant growth of cinema advertising expenditure globally reinforces cinema's effectiveness in complementing other media, such as television, enabling it to produce higher brand recall. In other words, using both these media in combination is considerably more effective than using either in isolation. Naik and Raman (2003) identified and measured cross-media synergy between television and print advertising for a widely used fast-moving consumer brand. It was found that combining different media increases sales, as well as enhancing media effectiveness. It was also proposed that as synergy increases, advertisers should not only increase the media budget, but should also allocate more funds to the less effective media activities. Du Plessis (2005) verified this synergy between television media and print-advertising media. In fact, for most of the campaigns analysed in the study, the recall of television advertisements among Sunday newspaper readers was more than double that of non-readers.

Lately, there has also been a shift in the synergy between on- and off-line advertising media. In the experimental design by Chang and Thorson (2004) television and web advertising synergies were examined, and it was found that this combination resulted

in significantly higher attention, overall positive attitudes, as well as higher perceived message credibility. Lyann (2006) examined the synergistic effect of online print advertising and television advertising. It was found that the combination of media produced higher recall. However, no other significant effects, such as attitudes toward the brand or advertisement and behavioural changes were noted across these media combinations. Conversely, Voorveld *et al.* (2010) found that combining advertising on websites and television resulted in more positive affective, as well as behavioural responses. Interestingly, it was also revealed that in some cases a repetitive exposure to television advertisements performed just as well as in the cross-media condition.

The synergy between OOH advertising media and other advertising media has also been explored and confirmed. Donthu and Bhargava (1999) conducted empirical research into the effectiveness of combining outdoor advertising and newspaper advertising. It was found that utilising outdoor advertising as part of a multi-media campaign contributes significantly to the sales response received. Du Plooy and du Plessis (2011) proposed the integration of radio advertising, magazine advertising and minibus taxi advertising media in South Africa

However, the potential synergy when integrating different OOH advertising media platforms is still largely under-researched by academics, as most research focuses only the effectiveness of specific media in isolation, such as large outdoor advertising (Donthu & Bhargava, 1999; Bhargava *et al.*, 1994; Donthu *et al.*, 1993; Taylor & Franke, 2003; Taylor *et al.*, 2006), taxi advertising (Veloutsou & O'Donnell, 2005), airport advertising (Wilson & Till, 2008), street-pole advertising (Gombeski, Miller & Levine, 1990), poster advertising (Berneman & Kasparian, 2003), digital advertising signs (Turley & Shannon, 2000) and digitally interactive bus-shelter advertising (Eun & Kim, 2009). This study will thus focus on the potential synergy when combining different OOH advertising media platforms in an IMC campaign.

2.5. CONCLUSION

The relationship between the concepts central to the study has been discussed, specifically: marketing, marketing communication, IMC and OOH advertising media. The conceptualisation of marketing communication to IMC has evolved over the years, and IMC is no longer viewed as the mere tactical co-ordination of the traditional marketing communication elements; but it has now evolved to become a customer-centric process of planning all contact points between a company and its consumers. It is aimed at dialogue with all the stakeholders – with a behavioural and relational focus.

The key IMC principles applicable to OOH advertising media planning and integration in this study were discussed, and specifically: audience-centred planning, brand-customer touch points, synergistic integration, behavioural and relational focus. IMC can be explored on a number of levels – from the perspectives of companies, marketing communication practitioners, as well as that of the consumers. The focus of the current study is on the implementation of IMC on a tactical level, or the planning and integration of OOH advertising media platforms, as part of an overall IMC campaign – from the perspective of OOH advertising media specialists in South Africa.

A central tenet of the IMC approach, which distinguishes it from the conventional view, is that each medium enhances the contributions of all the other media. This distinction is driven by the potential existence of synergy, that is, the added value of one medium, as a result of the presence of another medium, causing the combined effect of the media to exceed the sum of their individual effects. Some theories explaining the potential processes that occur when consumers are exposed to multi-media campaigns; and research on the synergy in multi-media campaigns were subsequently discussed.

Chapter three follows, with a discussion of the major phases in the planning process of advertising media from an IMC perspective.