THE DEVELOPMENT OF A FRAMEWORK FOR STRUCTURING INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION IN SOUTH AFRICAN ORGANISATIONS.

by

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**This thesis is dedicated to my husband, Tienie
and my daughters, Chanté and Marli.**

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SYNOPSIS

Organisations need to re-evaluate the way in which the communications function was previously organised and structured, and focus on a more integrated approach that will ensure maximum effectiveness. No framework exists which incorporates all communication in an organisation as no research has been done and published that investigated organisations in South Africa with regard to the integration of communication. It was therefore necessary to investigate the concept of integrated communication further and propose a framework for structuring integrated communication that can be applied by different organisations.

The primary objective of this study was to investigate empirically how successful South African organisations are addressing the issue of integrated communication in terms of organisational structures. This, together with an extensive investigation into the relevant literature, was used to develop a framework for structuring the communication function within South African organisations to encourage integration and enhance organisational effectiveness.

Some of the secondary objectives included in this study pertained to the relationship between the marketing and public relations function in successful organisations as well as the integration of dialogic public relations through organisations' websites.

This research study is exploratory in nature to gain insight into the research problem. The measuring instruments consisted of a self-administered questionnaire, selected in-depth interviews and a content analysis of participating organisations' websites. The population selected comprised of the top 250 South African organisations.

The major findings included: marketing and public relations are mostly considered to be equal and separate but with overlapping functions with marketing being the dominant function; and successful South African organisations do not integrate dialogic public relations through their websites.

A framework for structuring integrated communication was developed and it was recommended that the validity of this framework be tested in future research.

It was, inter alia, recommended that South African organisations familiarise themselves with the two-way symmetrical model of communication and apply appropriate strategies in their communication function; strategise their communication functions and activities as an integrated function to address stakeholders' needs; and organisations should use the full potential of the Web to enable its integrative communication efforts.

Synopsis

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