UNIT 6 : MEDIA STRATEGIES

UNIT STRUCTURE

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6.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to

- indentify what is media planning and objectives
- describe the process of deciding on media
- have knowledge of different types of media and their advantages and disadvantages
- discuss the decisions to be taken in choosing among major media types
- explain what is media schedule decisions
- define the concept of space and time buying.

6.2 INTRODUCTION TO MEDIA PLANNING AND OBJECTIVES

Media Planning is the art of taking decisions on advertisements regarding the delivery of a message to the target audience. Whenever there is a new product to be launched in the market, there is a requirement of

creating an advertisement for the product. And to complete this task, there is a requirement to go through the media planning process. The process of media planning involved certain steps. The important steps in media planning includes;

(i) **Analysis of the market**: Market analysis basically deals with the determination of the nature of audience who is going to be the target for the product. In this step, the demographic profile of the audience is to be studied. Further information of the target audience in terms of psychographic variables may be collected to take important decisions related to cost and most appropriate media that is to be used for the advertisement.

(ii) **Establishing media objectives:** Media objective is the ultimate aim of the media planning. Here important decisions have to be taken in terms of media reach, frequency, cost, circulation and penetration.

a. *Reach* is the total number of people who will be covered by the advertisement.

b. *Frequency* is the total number of times the message is circulated over a period of time.

c. *Cost* is the amount of money incurred per thousand and the cost per thousand.

d. *Circulation* is the term used for printed advertisements that are developed and sent.

e. *Penetration* is the actual number of people who have been reached by the advertisements.

(iii) **Formulation of the strategies:** Formulation of the strategies involved taking decisions on the type of media that is to be used. Various modes of media are available and they include radio, television, internet, newspapers, multimedia, trade journals, lifestyle magazines and the like. Decision has to be taken for the right selection of media based upon criteria like total number of people it can cover, available budget, accessibility and availability.

(iv) **Implementation:** In the implementation phase decision has to be taken related to hiring of space in the selected media. Here commitment is

given to the media provider, submit the advertisement and make payment of the bill.

(v) **Follow-up and control:** This is the last task done in the media planning process. After the advertisement is aired or given in the selected media, it has to be evaluated. Evaluation is done in terms of whether the advertisements have been able to deliver what was intended. From follow-up if there is any deviation, corrective measures are adopted so that the things are on the right tract.

6.3 DECIDING ON MEDIA

The basic idea behind the development of a media plan is to decide on the best possible way to send across the message to the target audience. The media plan comprises of a number of individual elements that contribute to the successful implementation of the media plan. The entire media plan comprises of a total of five steps. They are analysis of the market, determining the market objectives, formulation of the media strategies, implementation and evaluation cum follow up.

Today in the modern world, there are various advertising media that are at the disposal of the marketers. Each mode of media has itheir own unique features and marketers have to take a judicious decision on the selection and use of the suitable advertising media that serves the specific purpose. In taking a decision, several factors are considered. They are

6.4 CRITERIA FOR CHOOSING MAJOR MEDIA TYPES

In any professional media plan decision has to be taken regarding the type of media that is to be selected. Today we have television, direct mail, radio, internet, newspapers, magazines, digital boards and the like. Important criteria have to be considered before choosing among major media type. They are;

Target audience media habits: Marketers have to take an important decision on type of media to be used. This is based upon the target audience

media habits. For promoting the product, the advertiser has to use that particular media which the target audience frequently uses. For instance if the marketer is promoting building material, it may use a magazine read by the architects.

Nature of product to be advertised: The nature of the product to be advertised also influences the type of media that will be used. If the advertisement is for the promotion of a financial instrument, the information has to be very exhaustive and for it print media may be an important option. If the product is washing machine, it required an audio visual media and for it television may be a suitable option.

The type of message to be conveyed: The type of message that is to be conveyed to the audience will influence the selection of the media. If the advertisement is to promote technical information, the marketer may choose a specific magazine. If the advertisement is for the promotion of special discount schemes of woolen clothes of the general people, the marketer may go for advertisement in the local newspaper.

Cost factor or the budget: The cost that will be incurred in the advertisement in the media will be dictated by the available budget. Different forms of media have different cost structures and tariff. Therefore while using the media for the product, the cost factor also has to be taken into account.

6.5 DIFFERENT TYPES OF MEDIA AND THEIR ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

Marketers have various types of advertisements media available through which they can advertise products and services. They include

(i) Newspapers
(ii) Magazines
(iii) Radio
(iv) Television
(v) Telemarketing
(vi) Specialty Or Surrogated Advertising
(vii) Social Media Advertising

(viii) Banner Advertising

(ix) Direct Mail Marketing

(x) Internet Advertising

Among the many some of the prominent ones are discussed below.

NEWSPAPERS

Newspaper is one of the most traditional and popular form of print media. This medium of advertisement is the most widely used print media and is used both by big and small houses for advertisements.

The use of newspapers has many advantages. It helps to cover a huge group of people in an identified geographical area. The marketer has the advantage to decide the size of the advertisement and placement in the newspaper. It is a cheap form of accessing information from the point of the consumer and easily available without any hassles. Photo and text quality of newspapers may be poor quality. It is a generalized form of advertisement and the real target may not be reached. With the growth of internet, a substantial base of previously avid newspapers has shifted to online version of newspapers that are available over the net.

MAGAZINES

The magazines are more focused and normally the focus on a particular area of interest to a group of people. Compared to newspaper advertising, advertising through the magazines are expensive. But it allows reaching very specific group of people with specially targeted messages. Good quality of paper and with good colour contrast provides advertisement that looks quite attractive.

Advertising through magazines has various advantages. It allows for the dissemination of customized messages to the intended group of people. With magazines there is normally high involvement of the people and therefore more attention is paid to the matter that is advertised through the magazines.. But magazines are by people who have patience and have adequate free time. It is a traditional medium of advertisement and today major part of the earlier customer base has shifted to online and web version of magazines.

RADIO

Radio is a highly popular medium of communication for the common mass. It is traditionally a universal medium that sends only verbal messages.

Radio advertising has a lot of advantages. It is a cheap medium of mass media and is accessible to anybody, if he or she has a radio set. Radio helps in the dissemination of information to specific targets. The rates of advertisement can be negotiated. It has varies types of program for all section of listeners. But radio listeners are spread across a lot of stations and therefore if the advertiser has to advertise something on a pan nation basis it has to approach each station separately. Pacing of radio advertisements are not at the control of the listeners and therefore the listener has to hear the message with undivided attention. Often people use radio program for background entertainment while doing some other major works. Therefore listener may overhear important messages.

TELEVISION

Television is the most popular medium of mass communication. In televisions, audio, visual and movement element is combined together. Therefore is evokes more sense organs of human beings and has the capacity to activate the viewers more.

Television has many advantages. It helps in the dissemination of information to a wider group of audience. Messages can be send at the local, regional, national or international level based upon the requirement of the advertiser. Local independent stations also help for sending targeted messages. But in television, the message is for a short period of time only because the message cannot be retained. It is an expensive medium for advertisement. The advertiser may not be sure whether the message has been seen by the target audience. This is because the message can seen only when the viewer switch on and sits before the television.

TELEMARKETING

Telemarketing is the process of using telephones for advertising and communication about product and services. Telemarketing is often used by sales people for the introduction of products and services to the prospects and taking appointments for product demonstration and clarifying queries

related to products and services.

Telemarketing has certain advantages. It provides the scope for deciding about the venue where one can interact with the prospect and answer to questions and clarify doubts. This method is cost effective when compared to direct sales and at the same time it saves energy and time. There can be instant feedback. Telemarketing helps in the generation of lot of information and also helps in meeting those who are physically inaccessible. But telemarketing has certain disadvantages. Lot of prospects reacts negatively to telemarketers. If telemarketing works are assigned to outsourced employees by the company, there is lesser control and it may be at the cost of company's brand image.

SPECIALTY OR SURROGATED ADVERTISING

Sometimes companies instead of directly advertising and communicating about its products and services use other promotional objects to tell indirectly. This form of advertisement is also sometimes known as surrogated advertisements. Companies circulate new-year calendars, pen stand, paper weight, diaries, key chain mugs and the like where the brand name of the company is printed with the logo. It basically creates a good impression about the company. Such kind of articles are distributed free of cost. Such kind of advertisement is known as specialty advertising or surrogated advertisements.

Specialty advertising has certain advantages. It is a flexible method and an indirect way of advertising that strikes the prospect at the cognitively level. If the free products are of quality, people keep the items and thus it promotes long retention and is an advertisement to others as well. Such advertisements generate goodwill of the company and can supplement other promotional efforts. But specialty advertisement has certain disadvantages. It cannot be used for target advertisements. It is not a suitable medium of promotion for all businesses. Further if the gift material used is of poor quality, it may create a poor brand image.

SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING

Social media are platforms by means of which information can be created and shared. The information may be related to ideas, issues and

matters related to the polity, economy, sociology, technology and the like which are shared and discussed by means of interactive computer-aided technologies through virtual communities and *networks*.

Social media has certain advantages. Social media is an important platform used by marketers through which customer relationship can be built. It enables wider reach on to a larger audience. It has the potential for viral marketing. Social marketing can be more targeted and they are less expensive. On the other hand, members of social media are spread across diversity and breadth of profiles. Here the messages may be a bit impersonal and the audience main goal may be to socialize rather than read advertisements.

BANNER ADVERTISING

Banner advertising is a method of advertising by which graphic display is made on rectangular surfaces that are spread across the top, bottom or sides of a website. They are also known as display advertisements and consist of static or animated images. It is normally placed in high visibility areas of websites. Banner advertising has the power to attract the attention of the audience in the sense that it creates brand awareness, provides better leads. It is a very attractive form of online advertising today. They are basically to entice the visitor of a host website to the advertisers' website to promote a brand. There are two forms of banner advertising. They are cost per impression and cost per click.

Banner advertisements have certain advantages. They are image based rather than text-based and therefore have a higher level of power to attract people. Banner advertising is a strong tool for brand building. It can help in targeted dissemination of information. It is also cheap cost wise. The disadvantage of banner advertising is that repeated advertisements may lead to clutter effect in the mind of the consumers. Poor banner advertisements may lead to lowering of interest for web users.

INTERNET ADVERTISING

Today internet advertising has assumed significant importance. It is a cost cost-effective medium for advertising the products and services of a company. In the internet, messages are easy to handle and the matter can

be advertised on a real time basis. It provides the scope to small and large scale businesses increase the visibility of products and consequent sales. It further helps in increasing the client base, ensure proper marketing reach, generation of fruitful lead, entice customers and further sales.

Internet advertising has many advantages. Through this platform, customers can be reached on a real time basis and available any time. It can target the customer effectively. It can very meticulously monitor advertisement spending and can also keep track of the results. But it has disadvantages as well. It is a complicated mode of communication and a lot of intricacies are involved. During internet advertising, if mistakes are commited, it can be very costly as the message goes viral. Further the competition is very high among competitors and sometimes it may lead to clutter effect.

DIRECT MAIL MARKETING

Direct mail marketing is also known as direct marketing or direct response marketing. It is a form of marketing procedure through which the seller sends messages pertaining to marketing of products and services directly to the consumers on a one to one basis. In direct mail marketing various forms are used like the distribution of catalogs or other forms of product literature with the scope ordering opportunities, circulation of sales letters with promotional materials, circulation of leaflets and other form of communication matter.

6.6 MEDIA SCHEDULE DECISIONS

Media schedule decisions is the art of deciding about the most suitable time at which the advertising is to be given in the selected media so as to get the maximum coverage and response from the target audience. It is the task of each marketer to judiciously decide on the media timings as it is an important component of any advertising programme. Media scheduling is basically the time frame which helps the advertiser to decide on three fundamental aspects. They are decisions related to;

(i) **Time frame** (i.e. when to advertise): Media scheduling decision tells us when to advertise in the media so that it can get the highest level of

mileage from the intended or target audience. The appropriate timing is determined based upon various considerations like seasonal variation of the product.

(ii) Duration of advertisement (i.e. time span for each advertisement): Media scheduling decision also tell the total duration for which a particular advertisement has to be aired or broadcasted in the selected media. Consequently the most effective time duration is determined for the most suitable media opted for.

(iii) Frequency of advertisement (i.e. how many times the advertisement is given in different forms of media throughout the year). Media scheduling decision further tell us the frequency of advertisement that is to be conducted through different media. In other words, how many times, the message has to be advertised in a year or at certain frequency.

The task related to determination to time frame is very important in the decisions related to media scheduling. When the decision related to time is taken, one has to consider various factors to set the most suitable timing of the media that is to be used. This is essentially due to the variation of demand for products and services throughout the year which may be cyclic or seasonal in nature. And in the process of taking decision related to the timing schedule the following factors are taken into consideration. They are;

(i) *Buyer Turnover*: It is basically the rate at which new buyers starts entering the market. The thumb rule is that if the rate of conversion is higher, the advertisement should also be continuous.

(ii) *Purchase Frequency*: Purchase frequency is the number of times during the identified time period, the product is purchased by the consumers. The higher the frequency of purchase, the more the frequency should be for advertisements.

(iii) *Forgetting Rate*: This is the rate at which buyers have a tendency to fail in recalling the brand. If the rate of forgetting is higher, the rate of advertisement should be consequently increased.

(iv) *Budget position*: Budget position is the financial position in terms of

amount allocated for advertisement. If the budget is quite big, so also the frequency should be increased.

(v) *Degree of Competition*: The degree of competition faced by the company in the market is also important in taking a decision on advertisements. The more competitive the environment is, the more amount of money can be invested for advertisements.

Consequently the people who are responsible in the task of advertising has to face two challenges in scheduling. They are macro-scheduling and micro-scheduling.

(i) ***Macro-scheduling***: The challenge of macro-scheduling arises due to the variation of demand for the products and services to be advertised. The variation is due to changes in demand on account of seasonal variations or business cycle fluctuations. Suitable time gap has to be identified in between variations of demand so as to create awareness of products and stimulate positive inclination towards products.

(ii) ***Micro-scheduling***: The challenge of micro-scheduling arises when the decision has to be taken in regard to the number of times the advertisement has to be given. The challenge arises basically with the task of decisions related to allocating expenditure and the frequency within a short time span for advertisement that is to be identified.

6.7 MEDIA BUYING PROCESS

Media buying is the process of buying the media space and specific time frame to put on show the creative advertisements of the identified sponsor. As there are multiple platforms for the display of advertisements, decision has to be taken for selecting the most suitable place, time and the contextual background against which the advertisement has to be delivered to the intended audience. Media buying is basically done with a series of objecties like creating awareness about the products and brands, add on to the conversion rates of customers, spread of relevant cum favourable information about the products and the like. The process of media buying in brief comprises of a set of futuristic and comprehensive ways of taking

decisions on the intention to purchase, making discussions for making the deal to procure and making arrangement with a view to find the right place of advertisement at the right price. The entire media buying process comprises of three broad steps or stages. They are;

(i) Pre-launching: This is the first stage in the media buying process. As an initial phase of the entire process, ground work is done on what is to be advertised and where it has to be advertised. For that decision is taken by keeping the objectives of the advertisement in mind with careful planning. In this pre-lunch phase the main thrust is to ensure that the media platform used is in total match with the objectives. And to execute this phase, quite a lot of initial research is required to execute is properly. Important steps in this phase are;

(i) Identification of the target audience
(ii) Study relevant policies of competitors
(iii) Design of the media buying plan
(iv) Media choice and price negotiation
(v) Budgeting decisions

(ii) Launching: This is the second stage in the media buying process. In this phase the task is to go for effectualisation of the first stage by launching the campaign. Here delivery of the advertisent takes place in a suitable media and ensuring steady observation of the performance of the advertisement campaign. Necessary care is taken to see that the advertisement takes as per plan in the right place before the right audience. Steps are taken to track the reaction of the audience critically when they see and hear the advertisement. In is also seen that customers could derive value from the advertisement. Consequently as per requirement modification may be also required to be done if any. Consequently if things do not go in the right direction, re-evaluate has to be done on the original plan. For that the advertisement plan has to be sometimes flexible enough so as to adapt as per requirement.

(iii) Post-launching stage: This is the third stage in the media buying process. In the post launcing phase a thorough analysis is done on the effectiveness of the advertisement and whether is has been able

to send across the message to the target audience in the way as was decided earlier. Here the target audience is studied to see whether they interacted positively or negatively on the product and consequently assess consumer behaviour in terms of their engagement with the advertisement. This is necessary so as to ensure that negative impact due to errors if any are not repeated in the future advertisement campaigns.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: State two criteria for choosing major media type



6.8 LET US SUM UP

- Media Planning is the art of taking decisions on advertisements regarding the delivery of a message to the target audience. The important steps in media planning includes analysis of the market, establishing media objectives, formulation of the strategies, implementation and follow-up and control
- Important criteria have to be considered before choosing among major media type. They are target audience media habits, nature of product to be advertised, the type of message to be conveyed and the cost factor or the budget
- Marketers have various types of advertisements media available through which they can advertise products and services. They include newspapers, magazines, radio, television, telemarketing, specialty or surrogated advertising, social media advertising, banner advertising, internet advertising, direct mail marketing and many.
- Media schedule decisions is the art of deciding about the most suitable time at which the advertising is to be given in the selected media so as to get the maximum coverage and response from the target audience.
- Media buying is the process of buying the media space and specific

time frame to put on show the creative advertisements of the identified sponsor.

- The entire media buying process comprises of three broad steps or stages. They are pre-launching, launching and post-launching stage.



6.9 FURTHER READINGS

1) Kotler, Keller, Koshy and Jha (2008),*Marketing Management*, 13th Edition by Pearson Education, 2008

2) Wells, Moriarty and Burnett (2007), *Advertising- Principle and Practice* Seventh Edition, Pearson education

3) Rajan Saxena (2007) *Marketing Management* 3rd Edition by , Tata McGraw Hill Publication



6.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Nature of product to be advertised and Cost factor or the budget



6.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A: Short Questions (answer in around 150 words)

Q 1: What are media schedule decisions?

Q 2: Discuss the concept of space and time buying.

B: Long Questions (answer in around 300-500 words)

Q 1: Define media planning. What are its objectives?

Q 2: What are the important decisions one has to consider while deciding about the media to use?

Q 3: What are different types of media available? Briefly discuss their advantages and disadvantages.

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