PECULIARITIES OF MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS
IN CULTURAL MARKETING

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Abstract
Extending the application of marketing science specific concepts and principles in various sectors would not have been possible without their gradual evolution, in terms of customization and differentiation tailored for a specific field. This phenomenon regarding marketing evolution in terms of both extensively and intensively way, led to the emergence and consolidation of a set of concepts adapted also for cultural products and services market, or in other words for culture "consumption".

This article highlights a number of marketing communications specific elements, derived from the peculiarities of modern culture consumer and the latest technologies interference in the creation and delivery of cultural products and services.

Given the high degree of consumer involvement in relation to the needs that underlie consumption of cultural products and services, as well as the dimension specific for an artistic act in some cases, marketing communications has to respond to particular challenges in the process of building customer-provider relationship.

Keywords: *cultural marketing, mobile media marketing, marketing communication, cultural industries, postmodern consumer*

JEL Classification: M_{31}, M_{37}

Introduction

The need for culture represents a feature of human communities. Whether we talk about popular, cult or mass culture, the individuals have always become involved in a complex exchange process aiming at developing this social dimension the consumption of culture.

The deep changes of the last half-century have decisively influenced the coordinates where present consumers manifest such complex needs. There have been complex and substantial modifications in information technology, telecommunication, electronics, etc.; actually, there is no major area of industry applicable in our daily life to have been avoided by the speedy technical progress. These technological modifications have intertwined with changes in the political, economic and consumer habits orientation. One could easily talk about a new consumer "culture" and the birth of new true social and economic trends with profound cultural mutations – the postmodernism.

On these conditions, the consumption of cultural products and services has also profoundly changes. There has been an unprecedented growth of cultural industries, or mass cultural consumption, together with the media blowout of cable TV, digital cinema, e-books and, last but not least media consumed over the internet. Due to the easier access to information and thus, to some cultural products and services, communication in cultural marketing is, in turn substantially transformed, as the marketing communication techniques develop together with the new information technologies.

Brief literature review

The expansion in the application of concepts and principles specific to marketing in different sectors of activity was not possible without a gradual evolution, i.e. differences adjusted to that particular field.

This evolutionary phenomenon of marketing, both extensively and intensively, resulted in the rise and consolidation of a set of concepts adapted to the market of cultural products and services as well, or to put it otherwise to culture "consumption".

The activity meant to satisfy the cultural needs of the individuals is extremely complex, being tributary both to the production of cultural goods and to the provision of services to meet these needs.

A whole series of such products and services meant for cultural needs will get to consumption by means of processes not aimed expressly at gaining profit but at the integration in an ampler social process.

Such a series of institutions and organizations will operate the market of cultural products and services and also the specific mission of providing social services (museums, institutes, etc., operated by the state or various NGOs which do not charge for their services).

The application of marketing in culture appeared as a natural consequence of the development of the marketing specific theory at first and subsequently corresponding to social marketing domain. In the field of service marketing, the first conceptualizations appeared in the 1970's, growing in the 1980's, becoming clearer in the 1990's. Similarly, social marketing started to assert after 1971, especially through the contribution of the well-known specialist Philip Kotler and Gerard Zaltman, in the subsequent years there being a continuous growth of the concept with sub-specialties "preparing" the field for cultural marketing, as well as for educational marketing.

The first paper laying down the principles to be subsequently found as part of cultural marketing is the article published in 1969 by Philip Kotler and Sidney J. Levy – Broadening the Concept of Marketing, where the authors challenge the specialists of that time saying that: 'marketing is a pervasive societal activity, going beyond the sale of toothpaste, soap and steel, (...). The question considered is whether traditional marketing principles are transferable to the marketing of organizations, persons and ideas." (Kotler, Levy, 1969, p. 10)

Subsequently the idea is taken over, developed and nuanced in the 1975 paper, Marketing for Non-profit Organizations, work where Philip Kotler, says

that: "artistic organization produce "cultural goods" and compete amongst themselves to draw the attention the consumers and a part of the national resources" (Kotler, 1975).

From this point of view, specialty literature devoted marketing applied in non-profit organizations, including institutions or organizations providing or producing cultural goods and services.

Marketing and culture

In order to set forth accordingly the framework necessary for the development of marketing in the cultural field, it is necessary to define at least synthetically the term "culture" and "subculture", respectively.

The term "culture" is a complex concept who has been defined an impressive number of times. The word culture comes from the Latin word "cultura" – term referring directly to farming being used for the first time by Cicero and sub-sequently by Voltaire, both using it in valuing the human spirit, not only as the mere operation of "growing" or "cultivating" agriculture products.

The definitions of culture start from a general wide dimension – the culture representing a product of human thinking and activity – all human material and nonmaterial products – culture represents a whole including the sciences, beliefs, arts, moral, laws, customs, as well as other skills and habits acquired by the members of the society, up to more synthetic definitions to catch the essential in different authors – culture is the set of material and spiritual values created along human history.

From the point of view of marketing optics, culture was received as a special dimension of the factors influencing the consumers' behaviour. The variety of definitions catches the universal character, including different and diverse social and economic contents.

Thus, culture was defined as the "set of symbols, concepts, beliefs, behaviours and material activities, characterizing the lifestyle of a social group" (Dima, 2007, p. 487).

Figure no. 1. *Interaction culture – institutions – social environment – individual*
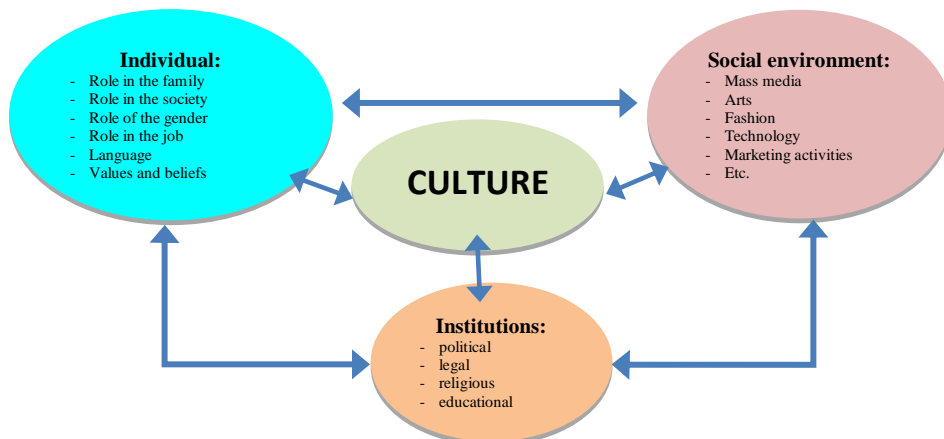
Source: Brassington Frances, Pettitt Sthepen, *Principles of Marketing*, fourth edition, Pearson Education Limited, Harlow, 2006, p. 111.

Culture will include a "complex set of values, standards and symbols developed in a society along a period that all members share." (Cant, Strydom, Jooste, Du Plessis, 2009, p. 85)

Culture includes abstract and material elements. It influences attitudes, values and typology of personalities, religious choices, etc. It traces a series of wide boundaries where individuals will act and think – the cultural standards.

Culture supposes the involvement of individuals in an education process – it is frequently a voluntary act, motivated by social requirements. Thus, each individual will acquire a set of values, perceptions, preferences and behaviours through the interaction with groups and social institutions.

From the point of view of cultures defined in a national framework, the individuals will comply to a specific set of standards accepted and developed under the respective national circumstances.

Culture is induces, transmitted from one generation to the next, as well as adaptive. Cultural values, both tangible (clothing, art objects, consumer products, etc.) as well as intangible ones (education, language, folk customs, etc.), are in a continuous process of evolution, transforming themselves (Cătoiu, Teodorescu, 2003).

As culture evolves, it may translate in the way in which a product or service may benefit from new values, and in case the value of benefits is no longer appreciated, the product or service in question may change completely.

Culture interacts both with the individual dimension and the dimension of the group as well as to the social environment and of institutions, thus the mediating function between these dimensions represents probably the most important feature of the culture as it determines changes in the consumers' behaviour.

The contents of culture will materialize as **material culture** (real and tangible creations), and **nonmaterial culture** (abstract creations, such as: ideas, knowledge, opinions, values, norms, symbols – conventional signs or verbal terms, visual images, etc.).

The typology of culture forms will include **popular culture, cult culture** or high culture and **mass culture**. Each form of culture will have specific features deriving both from its own contents and from the different mechanisms transferring the set of norms, values, symbols, etc.

In the context of defining cultural marketing, it is necessary to define **the notion of subculture**. This does not refer to a term to define the lack of culture or "lower culture" – a non-culture, a kitsch, etc. It is a subdivision of culture from the perspective of the set of standards shared by one or another social group.

The global system represented at the level of the company by the culture in its wider aspects will contain the corresponding and adequate subsystems. Thus, the subculture will be associated to an individualized social group complying with some standards, values and symbols of their own.

The major criteria to distinguish among the subcultures are represented by nationality, religion, race or geographical characteristics of a residential area. In turn, the groups identified based on these criteria may divide into cultural subgroups, based on common traits with an even higher degree of individuality, such as: linguistic dialects, age, interests and occupations, local traditions and

customs, etc. Actually, any type of criterion, which may individualize a social group sharing common standards and values, may function successfully as a criterion to individualize a subculture.

In any case, regardless of the number or the diversity of the criteria used to identify different subcultures, the consumers may share the statute of members of several subcultural groups simultaneously, depending on the complexity of their personality and the involvement in the activity of such subgroups.

Main assumptions and conclusions

The new forms of communication at the social level, developed with the introduction and the evolution of the Internet – the communication of the type one-to-many or many-to-many, resulted in the development of the intensity of inter-cultural exchanges among individuals, thus in the modification of the consumer habits as far as cultural products are involved.

Particularly, the development of social media, of social networks allowed different users to transfer experiences of cultural consumption easily from one individual to another or from one group to another.

The consumption of cultural products or services was often considered as having a hedonist character, especially if we consider the cultural products associated to a high artistic value.

In the same time, the experiential dimensions of this type of consumption it is very well defined also.

As we analyse the consumption of cultural products, a few important characteristics arise, that gave them a unique profile as in comparison with other consumption acts (Molteni, Ordanini, 2003):

− Quality uncertainty (the value of cultural products is derived from sub-jective perceptions based on socio-cultural values of every consumer).

− The presence of socio-network effects (the tastes expressed in association with cultural products are an expression of a group affiliation – the individuals seek the approval of different social groups as a mean to compare the „quality" of cultural products).

− The existence of demand reversal (when the number of „followers" it becomes too big, the demand becomes low – so the cultural products tend to have a cyclical consumption pattern, influenced by „fashion").

The consumption of such products will be charged with the need to express personality traits, aspirations, goals for each individual separately. That is why the exchange of opinions, beliefs, experiences, etc. eased by the communication by means of social networks is an efficient modality of sending promotional messages to support marketing communication regarding cultural products and services. The integration in the promotional mix of providers of this type of communication becomes, thus, a conditions and, without exaggeration, an express recommendation.

In the table below one may find the versatility of the social medial techniques from the point of view of functions they may offer:

Table 1

Social media functions and possibilities

Affordances and Examples	Author
Connectivity and Social Rapport	
- Network/pervasive/mobile connectivity and interactions - Social and communicative tools - Profile management tools - Community influenced participation - Informal learning - Creative expressive forms of behaviour and identity seeking - Public & private messaging tools - Visibility of action & connections	Boyd & Ellison, 2007; McLoughlin & Lee, 2007; Agichtein *et al.*, 2008; Russo & Peacock, 2009
Collaborative Information Discovery and Sharing	
- Data/content/knowledge sharing - Building/classifying/organizing web resources/ bookmarking and folksonomy tools - Metadata creation/tagging - Contribution to web-based content and knowledge - Content/Photo/Video Sharing capabilities - Blogging tools	Agichtein *et al.*, 2008; Boyd & Ellison, 2007; McLoughlin & Lee, 2007; Cha *et al.,* 2009; Russo & Peacock, 2009
Content creation	
- Personalized content creation/assembling/organizing/sharing (UGC) - Knowledge creation	Agichtein et al., 2008; McLoughlin & Lee, 2007; Russo & Peacock, 2009
Knowledge and Information Aggregation and Content Modification	
- Metadata and information aggregation for personalized needs - Content remixing - Content reformulation	McLoughlin & Lee, 2007

Source: O'Riordan Sheila, Feller Joseph, Nagle Tadhg, The impact of social network sites on the consumption of cultural goods, ECIS 2011 Proceedings, p. 3.

The rapid diffusion of social media along with digital technologies lead to the development of consumption opportunities and increased level of uncertainty, and in the same time this process has accelerated the production and consumption cycle and so the above described phenomenon of "demand reversal".

In present the evolution of internet and social media as means of communication have led to the evolution of creative industries (term that encompass the cultural industries) regarding the greater connectivity of the consumers to an information technology era and the knowledge society.

As we describe briefly above the complex mechanism that influenced the consumption of cultural products related with the influence of social media and other digital technologies it becomes clearer the fact that at the level of communication strategy of cultural products and services providers all the related means and instruments of communication have the great impact ever.

Generally speaking, the integration of social media, mobile media and internet in the communicational submix of different organizations become nowadays a true

condition of success. For the most products and services, these channels have become efficient modalities for companies to augment the impact of certain promotional messages delivered until recently through traditional channels as TV advertising, print or radio.

But, speaking of cultural products and services, we have seen that because of their consumption characteristics and the complex way of consumers co-participation and co-creation, the social media have a greater impact as a strategic communication tool because of their innermost characteristics.

Social media provides the perfect environment for individuals to share their experiences and also their beliefs, motivation, emotions and other behavioural characteristics that accompany the choice and consumption of cultural goods and/or services. Social media also can enhance the capacity of co-participation of the consumers in case of some cultural services, the integration into different social groups dynamics and processes that enhance the role of the consumers.

The future of actual trends at the level of social networks incorporation in society and economy may be developed around the idea that the boom of digital and internet related technologies can provide to the consumers the means to co-create cultural content in a more and more complex manner.

To be fully prepared for such an evolution, cultural organizations would have to develop a proactive strategy relying on modern type communication channels and a innovation policy opened for the consumer predisposition for co-creation of cultural goods and services.

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