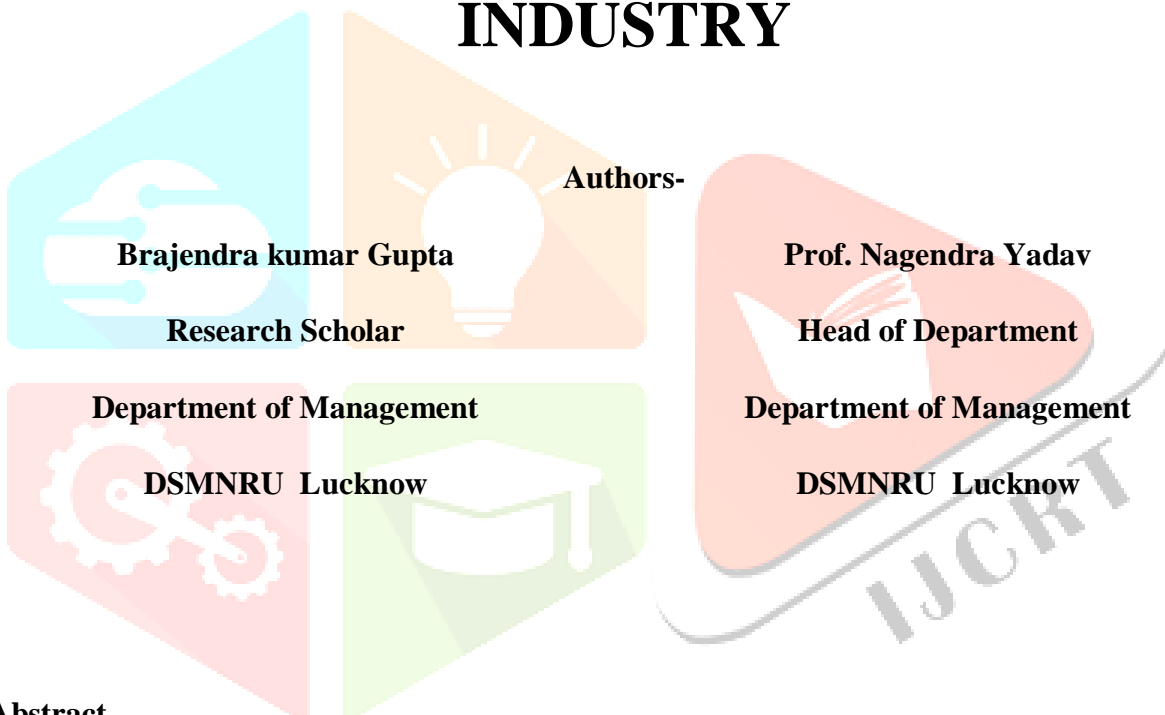




# IMPACT OF INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION ON RECENT MARKETING TRENDS WITH REFERENCE TO APPAREL INDUSTRY



## 1.0. Abstract

**Purpose:** Due to rapid and unexpected changes in the preferences of the customers, it has become essential to preserve customer loyalty in the long run. With traditional marketing techniques, companies find it hard to tackle technology-driven customers. Thus, the emergence of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) has gained immense popularity. The companies are readily adopting IMC to gain customer loyalty and build brand image. The rapid changes in fashion have made it essential to understand the impact of IMC trends with reference to the apparel industry.

**Design/methodology/approach:** The researcher adopted a descriptive research design. With the help of random sampling, a sample of 50 respondents was chosen from Noida. The data collected through a structured questionnaire was analyzed using t-test and ANOVA. The variables considered were social media marketing, advertisement, and customer loyalty.

**Findings:** The findings of the study stated that social media marketing, as a part of the IMC tool, was comparatively highly effective than advertisement on customer loyalty. It was concluded that IMC has a positive and significant impact on customer loyalty with reference to the apparel industry.

**Keywords:** Integrated Marketing Communication, Customer loyalty, Advertisement, Social Media Marketing, Apparel industry

## 2.0. Introduction

Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) is an emerging concept of marketing communications. It has gained immense popularity in a short time because of its integrated approach, its characteristic of channelizing the company's message in one direction through different mediums. This not only enhances the communication between the company and the customers but also helps in building brand image and customer loyalty. Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) refers to the process of integrating different marketing communication efforts so that communication between the company and customers maximizes and the company goals are achieved.

Though there are a number of IMC tools, the most important ones are Advertising, Social Media Marketing, Viral Marketing, Mobile Marketing, Direct Marketing, Personal Selling, Sales Promotion, and Public Relations.

IMC has influenced the apparel industry when it comes to the promotion of brands and communicating with customers. An apparel brand needs to deliver a high-end communication strategy to the audience to gain profit. They need to tell the customers about the opening of new stores or what other activities they will perform so that the customers do not lose interest in their brand. Thus, by investing in the IMC strategy, they can cover their brand via press coverage, organize different events to make people aware, can make use of videos and images, and publish them online. The way it works giving organizations various means to display the same message through advertisement, pop-ups, direct interaction with the end-user, thus creating a trust factor among the consumers, making sure to buy their brand only. Many of these services cost less than the traditional method of conveying brand messages. Thus, IMC has emerged as a useful promotional tool in the apparel industry. The present study deals with the impact of IMC on recent marketing trends in the apparel industry.

## 3.0. Literature Review

Rachmadhian and Chaerudin (2020) analyzed the impact of event marketing as a tool of IMC to build brand awareness among customers of the apparel industry in Bandung. The findings stated that the top five indicators of event marketing that influenced brand awareness were enterprise, entertainment, individuality, innovation, and integrity. Thus, it was found that event marketing had a positive impact on brand awareness for fashion customers.

Ngamsutti et al. (2019) investigated the effects of an integrated marketing communication strategy on marketing competitiveness and marketing survival of the fashionable apparel business in Thailand. The research showed a positive effect of IMC on brand trust, customer loyalty, market acceptance, and market competitiveness.

Boonyasana et al. (2018) studied the impact of IMC in online social networking on the purchase of clothes of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) market. It was found that the consumers were influenced by advertisements, sales promotion, public relations, and direct marketing on the online platform. It was found that IMC positively influenced the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia and Singapore in clothing.

Henninger et al. (2017) analyzed integrated marketing communication (IMC) on micro-organizations of the UK dealing with the fashion industry. The findings of the study stated that these micro-organizations had limited knowledge of properly implementing IMC. Though various social media tools were used to reach the target customers, there were barriers between reaching the target customers and catering to their needs.

Godey et al. (2016) investigated the impact of social media marketing, as an IMC tool, on brand equity creation and customer behavior. The brands considered for the study were Burberry, Louis Vuitton, Dior, Gucci, and Hermes. It was found that social media marketing had a positive impact on brand equity and customer loyalty towards brands.

#### **4.0. Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study are:

1. To study the impact of Advertisement on customer loyalty with respect to the apparel industry.
2. To study the impact of Social Media Marketing on customer loyalty with respect to the apparel industry.
3. To study the impact of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) trends on customer loyalty with respect to the apparel industry.

#### **5.0. Hypotheses of the study**

The hypotheses formulated for the study are:

H1: There is no significant impact of Advertisement on customer loyalty with respect to the apparel industry.

H2: There is no significant impact of Social Media Marketing on customer loyalty with respect to the apparel industry.

H3: There is no significant impact of IMC trends on customer loyalty with respect to the apparel industry.

#### **6.0. Research Methodology**

The research design adopted for the study is descriptive in nature. A sample of 50 respondents was chosen from Noida with the help of random sampling. The data collected through a structured questionnaire was

analyzed using t-test and ANOVA. The selected IMC tools for the study were advertisement and social media marketing. For studying the impact, customer loyalty was chosen as the variable.

## 7.0. Findings

**Table 1: Impact of Advertisement on Customer Loyalty with respect to the apparel industry**

### ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Its brand greater effort to customize delivery of the message in terms of culture, feature, and age length	Between Groups	11	4.983	67.558	.000
	Within Groups	38	.074		
	Total	49	57.620		
You can see the advertising of the product brand clearly in common area	Between Groups	11	4.857	60.108	.000
	Within Groups	38	.081		
	Total	49	56.500		
You are already interested in product and, when you see brand advertise, it will stimulate your needs.	Between Groups	11	3.261	33.965	.000
	Within Groups	38	.096		
	Total	49	39.520		
Advertising is important for informing a brand	Between Groups	11	4.344	61.133	.000
	Within Groups	38	.071		
	Total	49	50.480		

According to Table 1, Advertising has a significant and positive impact on Customer Loyalty. The parameters (in descending order of their importance) taken into consideration with respect to Advertising are:

- “Its brand greater effort to customize delivery of the message in terms of culture, feature, and age length.” (ANOVA being 67.588)
- “Advertising is important for informing a brand.” (ANOVA being 61.133)
- “You are already interested in product and when you see brand advertise, it will stimulate your needs.” (ANOVA being 60.108)
- “You can see the advertising of the product/brand clearly in common area.” (ANOVA being 33.965)

**Table 2: Impact of Social Media Marketing on Customer Loyalty with respect to the apparel industry****ANOVA**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
You are influenced by design and quality of content while checking the product through social media marketing channels like YouTube, Facebook, blogs, and online forums	Between Groups	11	4.902	89.743	.000
	Within Groups	38	.055		
	Total	49			
You find information through social media marketing misleading	Between Groups	11	4.885	31.562	.000
	Within Groups	38	.155		
	Total	49			
You would use people's recommendations, ratings and reviews to buy a product	Between Groups	11	3.459	27.572	.000
	Within Groups	38	.125		
	Total	49			
You would search information of a product which is marketed with social media marketing channels like YouTube, Facebook, blogs, and online forums	Between Groups	11	5.042	62.986	.000
	Within Groups	38	.080		
	Total	49			

According to Table 2, Social Media Marketing has a significant and positive impact on Customer Loyalty. The parameters (in descending order of their importance) taken into consideration with respect to Social Media Marketing are:

- “You are influenced by design and quality of content while checking the product through social media marketing channels like YouTube, Facebook, blogs, and online forums.” (ANOVA being 89.743)

- b) “You would search information of a product which is marketed through social media marketing channels like YouTube, Facebook, blogs, and online forums.” (ANOVA being 62.986)
- c) “You find information through social media marketing misleading.” (ANOVA being 31.562)
- d) “You would use people’s recommendations, ratings, and reviews to buy a product.” (ANOVA being 27.572)

**Table 3: Impact of IMC trends on Customer Loyalty with respect to the apparel industry**

**One-Sample Test**

	Test Value = 0					
	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Social Media Marketing	12.457	49	.000	.760	.64	.88
Advertisement	3.934	49	.000	.240	.12	.36

According to Table 3, IMC has a positive and significant impact on Customer Loyalty. It was found that Social Media Marketing (t-value being 12.457) is more effective than Advertisement (t-value being 3.934). Thus, the results of hypothesis testing obtained through the data analysis conducted are shown in Table 4:

Hypothesis No.	Hypothesis	Accepted/Rejected
H1	There is no significant impact of Advertisement on customer loyalty with respect to the apparel industry.	Rejected
H2	There is no significant impact of Social Media Marketing on customer loyalty with respect to the apparel industry.	Rejected
H3	There is no significant impact of IMC trends on customer loyalty with respect to the apparel industry.	Rejected

## 8.0. Conclusion

Integrated Marketing Communications has emerged as the most effective promotional tool. As compared to the traditional tools, it has set the standards higher due to its proper channelizing strategy of the message from the company to customers. Though there are many IMC tools, each industry needs to personalize them according to the situation of the market and the target customers. With the rapid involvement of technology in our daily lives, the taste and preferences of the customers are continuously changing in terms of fashion. Thus, IMC in the apparel industry tends to create a positive impact on customers. With the right message being communicated to the target customers, IMC has contributed to increasing customer loyalty.

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