



Unit 38: Marketing Communications in Business

Delivery guidance

Marketing communication is central to the overall marketing strategy of an organisation. This unit looks at the ways in which businesses communicate with their customers in order to persuade them to buy products and services.

Approaching the unit

Learners will already have direct experience of marketing communications as consumers. This experience will be a useful resource throughout the delivery of the unit since learners will have their own views of the effectiveness of marketing communications strategies which are aimed at them.

As an introduction to the unit, you could ask learners to comment on the effectiveness of different marketing communications aimed at them. They could start to draw up their own criteria for determining the effectiveness of a specific marketing communication technique – for example, advertising.

Learners may have been introduced to the marketing mix in other units on the programme. For example, *Unit 2: Research and Plan a Marketing Campaign*, covers this aspect of marketing. It would be useful to consider marketing communications in relation to the marketing mix, since every aspect of the marketing mix can influence a marketing communications plan. Learners could identify aspects of the extended marketing mix used in a marketing communications strategy employed by a specific business.

You could ask learners to identify the features of the marketing mix which are emphasised in certain marketing campaigns. They could consider how the marketing communications mix can be adapted to meet the particular needs of specific marketing campaigns. For example, one influence on the marketing communications mix is the position of the product in its product life cycle. Learners may have been introduced to this model in other units. It would be useful to show the links between the marketing mix, the product life cycle and the marketing communications plan.

When completing the two assessments for this unit, learners should be encouraged to identify the key features of the overall strategy of the business. They should show how the various features of the communications marketing mix are adapted to maximise their contribution to the organisation's overall business strategy. Learners will need to exhibit both analytical and evaluation skills, as they analyse the aims of a business's marketing communications plan, evaluate its impact and assess its overall effectiveness.

The aims and priorities of a business's marketing communications plan will not always be explicit. Learners may need to analyse the full range of marketing communication techniques used by a business in order to identify what they consider to be the business's aims and priorities. They will need to do this in order to evaluate the impact of a business's marketing communications plan and to assess its effectiveness.

Given the need to present their assignments using appropriate business terminology, learners should be encouraged to maintain a glossary of useful terms as they work through the unit. It would also be useful for learners to maintain an ongoing portfolio of marketing communications literature used by businesses, for example, advertisements, sales promotions and direct marketing. Learners could then annotate this literature, highlighting good practice points and common features.

Learners could refer back to this portfolio when they start to prepare their second assessment; this requires them to make a presentation for a client, in front of an audience, that outlines all elements of the marketing communications plan for a specific product or service, including timelines and costs.

You can use a range of delivery methods for this unit, for example:

- discussion – class and small group discussions looking at examples of marketing communications techniques
- individual and/or paired completion of marketing communication plans
- case studies and scenarios on successful and unsuccessful marketing communication strategies and techniques.

Group work is an acceptable form of delivery for aspects of the unit, but you must ensure all learners individually produce evidence that is sufficient for assessment.

You can involve local employers in the delivery of this unit by inviting them as:

- guest speakers who have been involved in marketing communications
- providers of work experience for learners
- providers of business materials as a basis for case studies and exemplars
- mentors for learners.



Learning aim	Key content areas	Recommended assessment approach
<p>A Explore the purpose of marketing communications in achieving marketing aims and objectives</p>	<p>A1 Purpose of marketing communications A2 Effective communication A3 Choice of media A4 Ethical issues</p>	<p>A marketing communication plan that details the purpose of marketing communications in achieving increased awareness and compares the marketing communication techniques used by two contrasting businesses.</p>
<p>B Investigate marketing communications techniques used to raise awareness and boost revenue</p>	<p>B1 Advertising B2 Sales promotion B3 Public relations B4 Direct marketing B5 Personal selling B6 Communication tools</p>	
<p>C Present a marketing communications plan to a client for a specific product or service</p>	<p>C1 Plan a marketing communications package C2 Present a marketing communications package</p>	<p>A presentation to a client containing all elements of the marketing communications plan for a specific product or service, including timelines and costs.</p>

Delivering the learning aims

Learning aim A explores the purpose of marketing communications in achieving marketing aims and objectives. It provides the background that must be considered by learners when completing assignment 1. Learners will explore the purposes of marketing communications, including the need to inform, secure sales and react to the behaviour of the organisation's competitive rivals. Ensure learners understand that, for well-known and established brands (such as those produced by global multinational corporations), maintaining market share and strengthening the brand may be of greater strategic importance to the business than securing increased sales. It would be useful, therefore, for learners to compare the marketing communications strategies of:

- a large multinational car or drinks manufacturer, and
- a national supermarket chain which is struggling to maintain market share as a result of the entry of a grocery discounter into the market.

In both instances, the learners can apply the principles of the AIDA model (awareness, interest, desire, action) to show how promotional activities are geared towards increasing consumer desire for a particular product.

Learning aim A highlights the growing influence of social media as a way of communicating the marketing message. Learners should be encouraged to research creative ways that social media and other online platforms are incorporated into a marketing communications plan. Learners may find it difficult to understand the concept of ethics in relation to marketing communications. Most learners will understand that a business cannot tell lies about its products but, increasingly, consumers are not supportive of marketing communication techniques which promote social stereotypes, whether directly or indirectly. Indeed, in these instances, social media can have a damaging impact on the brand and learners may wish to explore situations when advertisements have been withdrawn due to the reactions of consumers and pressure groups.

Learning aim B gives learners the opportunity to explore the features and application of a wide range of marketing communication techniques. Learners need to be able to distinguish the application of different techniques in different scenarios, since in assignment 1 they are required to compare the plans of two contrasting businesses. Learners need to be able to analyse the potential impact of different marketing communications techniques in different business scenarios. They also need to be able to suggest the most appropriate and effective communication tools for different scenarios, and to apply these tools to the features of the extended marketing mix which form the basis of the marketing message. In other words, if the marketing message is about value for money, learners need to determine the best marketing communication techniques to use in the marketing plan. Similarly, if the marketing message is about strengthening the brand, rather than emphasising any price differences compared with business rivals, learners would have to consider whether other marketing communication techniques would be more effective.

Learning aim C requires learners to present to an audience a marketing communications plan for a client for a specific product or service. The presentation should be formulated using the section headings identified in the specification (C1). You could produce business scenarios describing a range of client needs in contrasting circumstances and then allocate these scenarios to individual learners.



The presentations prepared by learners should:

- be no more than 6 slides long
- be produced using presentational software
- incorporate speaker notes.

When assessing the presentations, it is suggested that the teacher-assessor is joined by another member of Centre staff or, if it can be arranged, by a guest from the business community, with experience in marketing communications. Both the teacher-assessor and the guest should ask learners questions about their presentations to ensure the validity and veracity of the final assessment outcome.

Assessment guidance

This unit is assessed internally. The recommended assessment is through two internal assignments, one for learning aims A and B, and one for learning aim C.

An assignment is a distinct activity, completed independently by learners, that is separate from teaching, practice, exploration and other activities that learners complete with direction from tutors. All learners must independently generate individual evidence that can be authenticated.

The unit specification suggests a report for learning aims A and B and a presentation of a marketing communications plan for learning aim C.

The first assignment requires learners to write a business report that provides evidence that the learner understands the essential principles of marketing communications and their application in a business setting in relation to two contrasting businesses. For example, one business could be engaged in car manufacturing and the other in the sale of fast food products. Alternatively, one business could be a clothes retailer, and the other could be involved in selling technology products. Whichever two business are chosen, learners must be able to access information which enables them to compare and contrast the differences in their marketing communications approach, including advertising, sales promotions and public relations.

The second assignment requires learners to give a presentation to an audience, containing all elements of the marketing communications plan for a specific product or service. This could be a product at the introductory stage of the product life cycle or a more established, high-end product which is about to be re-launched to strengthen brand recognition. A key feature of the presentation and the supplementary evidence will be for the learner to explain how their application of marketing communication techniques meets the needs of the client. The learner will need to show both analytical and evaluative skills in reaching their conclusions.

Suitable forms of evidence for a presentation include slides, preparation notes, a script, cue cards, peer assessment records and an observation record. BTEC assessors can complete observation records, while learners' colleagues in placements or part-time work can complete witness statements. Records of activity alone are not sufficient sources of learner evidence; the original learner-generated evidence must also support them. Assessors should remember that they are assessing the content of the presentation against the learning aim and not the skill with which the presentation was delivered.

Learners should ensure that all research is fully referenced with a bibliography.

Getting started

This gives you a starting place for one way of delivering the unit, based around the recommended assessment approach in the specification.

Unit 38: Marketing Communications in Business

Introduction

Introduce the unit by discussing learners' experiences as consumers and 'receivers' of marketing communications. What types of marketing communication influence them the most in their purchasing decisions and their loyalty to particular brands? Ask learners to provide examples of both effective and ineffective marketing communications.

Explore how the effectiveness of marketing communications may change over a range of different consumer groups, differentiated by characteristics such as age, gender, social class, ethnicity and income level.

Outline the content of the unit, the learning activities in which learners will be engaged and how the unit will be assessed.

Learning aim A: Explore the purpose of marketing communications in achieving marketing aims and objectives

- Give a presentation on the purpose of marketing communications, including:
 - achieving objectives of an overall marketing strategy
 - raising awareness and reaching new customers
 - removing the barriers to communication
 - generating sales and revenue
 - building long-term relationships with customers
 - providing a consistent message using a coordinated marketing mix
 - protecting and enhancing brand image.
- Ask learners to work in small groups to research examples of different purposes of marketing communications for a range of companies. Case study materials can be used. Ask learners to reflect on the choice of fonts, colours, music, images and animation.
- Ask learners to write a short report that evaluates how far the examples they have considered meet the perceived purpose of the marketing communications plan. Their reports should identify good and poor practice from the perspective of the targeted consumers.
- Lead a group discussion, recapping the marketing mix and its features (previously covered in *Unit 2: Research and Plan a Marketing Campaign*).
- Learners work in pairs to research how different features of the marketing mix could be used in a marketing communications plan. As a class, discuss the outcomes of this research and how the product life cycle (introduction, growth, development and decline) can influence marketing communications.
- Give a presentation on effective communication to include the AIDA (attention, interest, desire, action) model.
- Using case study materials, learners apply the AIDA model in marketing communications and discuss their findings with the class.
- Give a presentation on ethical, legal and cultural issues.

- Ask learners to work in small groups to research examples of marketing campaigns which have included marketing communications and associated messages that were deemed inappropriate or unethical. Case study materials may be used. Learners share their findings with the class.
- Lead a class discussion considering the implications to a business of unethical marketing communications. Encourage learners to think about the best way for a business to prevent these implications or respond to criticisms.
- Give a presentation on how and why businesses choose traditional and social media for marketing communications.
- Ask learners to research how traditional and social media are used in marketing communications. They then write a short report that assesses the influence of each type of media on certain social groups and markets.

Learning aim B: Investigate marketing communications techniques used to raise awareness and boost revenue

- Give a presentation outlining the promotional mix and the different marketing communications techniques represented within it (to include direct marketing).
- Learners collect examples of promotional activities and materials for three different businesses and compare and contrast the marketing communications techniques used by each one. They share their findings with the class.
- Give a presentation on types of advertising (print advertising, broadcast advertising, internet advertising, outdoor advertising, covert advertising). Learners work in small groups to research advertisements from different businesses and determine the aim(s) of each one – does it aim to inform or to persuade? Learners should analyse the use of images, graphics and colours in each advertisement and report back to the class.
- Give a presentation on sales promotions (incentives to purchase). Lead a class discussion about the types of sales promotion that would be appropriate for different types of business – for example, a food retailer, a car manufacturer, a smartphone retailer, a furniture retailer etc. Learners work in pairs to research and make notes on examples of sales promotions.
- Give a presentation on public relations (PR) (to include special promotions and digital public relations practice). Learners work in small groups to research the importance of public relations in marketing communications. They should consider public relation events such as familiarisation trips, corporate hospitality, desktop tours, new product launches, media relations, etc.
- Ask learners to write a press release on behalf of a business which has recruited a celebrity as one of its brand ambassadors. They then share their work with the class.
- Give a presentation on personal selling (telemarketing, face-to-face selling, retail sales, point of sale merchandising) to include short video clips demonstrating personal selling. Ask learners to make notes identifying the characteristics of effective and ineffective personal selling shown in the videos. They should also consider how such selling methods contribute to marketing communications.
- Give a presentation on communication tools used in marketing communications. Consider how companies use websites, search engine optimisation (SEO), blogging, photos and infographics, videos and podcasts, presentations and e-books, and social media.
- Learners work in pairs on short case studies. Ask each pair to select the most appropriate and effective marketing communication tools to use in different business scenarios, and report back to the class.
- Ensure all learners are prepared before giving them the assignment brief for the assessment of learning aims A and B.

Learning aim C: Present a marketing communications plan to a client for a specific product or service

- Introduce learning aim C.
- Give a presentation on how to prepare a marketing communications package. Consider:
 - aims and objectives
 - identification of the target market
 - preparation of a campaign summary with proposed communication tools
 - identification of an appropriate marketing communications mix for the plan
 - allocation of resources
 - identification of constraints.
- Give learners guidance on how to prepare a business presentation, including layout and presentation. Lead a group discussion about good practice and things to avoid. Introduce the use of story boards and explain how to deal with technical issues. Look at types of presentation and the elements involved in presentation design.
- Learners practise using presentational software to produce a business presentation. For example, they could be asked to prepare some presentation slides highlighting the features of a new product being launched to market. (You could provide case study materials relating to suitable products.) The purpose of these practice activities will be to identify good practice when designing presentation slides.
- Ensure all learners are prepared before giving them the assignment brief for the assessment of learning aim C.
- Learners begin the research phase of assignment 2, and compile the material they will use when preparing their marketing communications plan.
- Learners produce their presentations.
- Learners give formal presentations, then submit their marketing communications with feedback from the teacher highlighting good practice.



Details of links to other BTEC units and qualifications, and to other relevant units/qualifications

This unit links to:

- Unit 2: Research and Plan a Marketing Campaign
- Unit 34: Launch and Run an Enterprise
- Unit 39: Developing an Enterprise Strategy

Resources

In addition to the resources listed below, publishers are likely to produce Pearson-endorsed textbooks that support this unit of the BTEC International Level 3 Qualifications in Business and in Enterprise and Entrepreneurship. Check the Pearson website (<http://qualifications.pearson.com/endorsed-resources>) for more information as titles achieve endorsement.

Textbooks

- Coupland-Smith, H., Phillips, J., Richards, C., Summerscales, A. and Smith, J. (2016) *Pearson BTEC National Business: Student Book 1*, Pearson, ISBN 978-1-292-12624-1 – Covers a range of units on the BTEC International programme which are relevant to marketing communications. Suitable for all learners.

Journals

- *Business Review* (Philip Allan Magazines) – A journal designed for Business Studies learners that includes relevant and topical business articles and case studies.

Websites

- Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) – There is a section on the CIM website which includes articles on marketing communications. Search online for 'CIM'.
- *The Times* – Provides up-to-date information and case studies about a whole range of different businesses and organisations. Search online for 'The Times'.
- A range of business case studies can be found by searching online for 'business case studies'.
- Tutor2U – A useful website containing resources, case studies, articles and revision materials, plus links to other sources of information. Search online for 'Tutor2U'.

Pearson is not responsible for the content of any external internet sites. It is essential for tutors to preview each website before using it in class so as to ensure that the URL is still accurate, relevant and appropriate. We suggest that tutors bookmark useful websites and consider enabling students to access them through the school/college intranet.