

# PREFACE

*“The truth isn’t the truth until people believe you, and they can’t believe you if they don’t know what you’re saying, and they can’t know what you’re saying if they don’t listen to you, and they won’t listen to you if you’re not interesting, and you won’t be interesting unless you say things imaginatively, originally, freshly.”*

– William Bernbach, the legendary American advertiser and former CEO of DDB Needham

With products attaining parity, *communication* remains the only major differentiation tool for a marketer. On the one hand, the field of communications is becoming increasingly popular due to its significance and the immense scope for creativity that it offers. On the other hand, a review of communication these days reveals that a large chunk of it is neither creative, nor strategically sound. Moreover, it is not always socially responsible. Makes us wonder... what is going wrong? One reason is the haphazard, hit-and-miss approach towards the subject. Creativity that is not leashed by sound strategic roots, or strategy that is not given creative wings can fall flat on a communicator’s face.

We have seen this happening umpteen number of times, and recurring yet again. Examples abound, such as the NDA government’s brilliant ‘India Shining’ campaign that bombed and saw the Congress returning to power even after an ad spend of Rs. 500 crores and a focus on India’s improving economic conditions and achievements. Or take the cases of the failed relaunch of the *Onida* devil—the green-horned popular ad persona of the ’80s and ’90s, the disastrous sinking-without-trace of *Vanilla Coke* that had done well in blind tests, or the disappointing *Pepsi TV* campaign that generated immense interest through a teaser campaign. Why was it only analysis-at-hindsight that revealed that the feel-good factor of the ‘India Shining’ campaign failed to connect with the masses, as pointed out by Congress’ *Aam aadmi ko kya mila* counter-campaign? Or that the idea of envy as personified by the *Onida* devil was relevant when there were only 4-5 colour television brands in the market, not when the *Sony*s and *Panasonic*s were ruling the roost with their sheer foreignness and technological prowess? Or that even a *Wakaw* by the film star Vivek Oberoi in an Elvis Presley-cum-Shammi Kapoor getup can be “wrong positioning,” “irrelevant advertising,” or “removed from the *Coca-Cola* mother brand”? Finally, no excuse can be allowed for a creative from the house of *Pepsi* that fails to meet expectations and sustain interest even after the featuring of three popular Bollywood celebrities. While we are certainly making headway in international awards, the question that we need to answer is whether our communication is becoming more effective.

## Why This Book?

A review of current books on the subject reveals that there are two major categories in which they may be placed. There are advertising and promotions textbooks on one hand, and professional reference books on the other. The former target students and have their foundations in theory.

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Undeniably, they provide practical examples, as the very subject of communications cannot be taught without examples. But there is none to very little hands-on, execution-oriented coverage. The professional reference books primarily address the needs of practitioners with the spotlight on execution and functional nitty-gritty, giving a slip to boring theory. This has created a lacuna between the two where we'd like to position our book.

### For Whom?

While writing this book we consciously kept two distinct sets of students in mind – those who would be more interested in the managerial aspects of communication, and those who would be more interested in mastering the creative aspects. In that regard, MBA students who specialize in Marketing and choose an elective in IMC or Advertising comprise our prime target audience. This is because many of these students will go on to become creative campaign designers while others will grow to be effective managers in marketing communications or brand management. Apart from this, the book is also oriented towards the needs of students of those sectoral institutes and business schools that offer specialized courses in the areas of marketing communications.

To take care of its management-inclined audiences, the book features sections and chapters on the conceptual understanding of IMC, objective-setting, media planning, budgeting, dealing with legal issues and such, whereas sections on creative execution of advertising in various media, as well as coverage of other promotional tools cater more to the creatively inclined, i.e. those wishing to be involved in the actual making of an advertisement as well as students going into client servicing or account planning.

To meet our objectives, this book addresses students with a textbook-like format. But it goes a step further than giving them a fleeting, textbook-ish exposure to advertising and promotions. It covers basic theory with practical examples, and then moves on to the real essence of communication. The text delves into important execution-related details, such as the art of brainstorming for creative ideas, rules of copywriting, designing print advertisements, making a television commercial, understanding camera moves, etc. And it does this without losing focus on the core curriculum of marketing and communication programmes.

So why do we think that this academic-cum-professional blend is a better approach? From our own teaching experience, we have come to believe that our intense and vocational approach will interest and educate students better. We've found that the serious student of the subject always wants to know about the *how* part – how is communication actually created or what happens behind the scenes. We have written this book to serve the purpose, more so **with its special emphasis on the Indian scenario**. Thus, the book aims to serve as a comprehensive text for students and amateurs interested in marketing communications in general and advertising in particular.

### Contents of the Book

This text introduces students to the concept of *integrated marketing communication*, and its major tools, techniques and media, with a special focus on *advertising*. Admittedly, we are particularly inclined towards advertising, since we believe that it is this tool that offers the highest opportunity for strategic and creative work. This is because advertising is the most used form of communication yet, and any other form of communication almost always involves some advertising. Hence, an entire section of our book is dedicated to understanding the creative strategy in advertising.

Any “integrated” concept will be incomplete without discussing all the constituent elements in proper perspective. Consequently, we have also included other major promotional tools like *sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing and other unconventional media* in reasonable detail. Finally, we’ve tied them all together through a consistent focus on integrated communication.

The book begins by introducing students to marketing communications and proceeds to describe the marketing communications environment. The areas covered in the environment section also serve as a brief refresher on concepts of marketing management that are especially relevant from the viewpoint of communications. After laying the foundations, the book progresses to discuss various promotional tools. In the section on advertising, the text explains the basic concepts of advertising strategy and big idea, and then outlines a medium-by-medium execution of creative. This is unlike other books that talk about strategy and then club all kinds of execution into one or two chapters. Next, the book explains media strategy and planning. In the closing section, all discussion is wrapped up with a focus on budgeting and evaluation.

Following is a more detailed description of the sections included in the text:

- **Section 1: Understanding Integrated Marketing Communication**

This section introduces students to integrated marketing communications, establishes it as a sub-discipline of marketing, and puts it in perspective in the management of a business. Chapter 1 discusses the functions and tools of marketing communication and the concept of integrated marketing communication. Chapter 2 reviews the marketing strategy environment and concepts related to marketing strategy from the perspective of communication specialists – segmenting markets, targeting the right audiences and positioning products to suit the requirements of the market.

- **Section 2: The IMC Programme Situational Analysis**

This section focuses on the internal and external environment facing marketing communication specialists. Chapter 3 explores the socio-cultural environment throwing light on consumer behaviour and purchase decision process. Chapter 4 discusses the theoretical foundations of communications. Chapter 5 reviews the organisation structure of the promotions world and familiarises students with various players including ad agencies and regulatory bodies in India.

- **Section 3: Advertising**

This section exposes students to the field of advertising and takes them as close to its making as can be done in a classroom. It aims to prepare them in conceptualising and executing creative advertising in various media. Chapters 6-13 take students through various stages of advertising – from research and conceptualisation, to framing an advertising strategy, to coming up with a ‘big idea’, to finally executing the advertisement in various media. Some important production tips are also given, although producing an advertisement can only be learnt through real-life work experience.

- **Section 4: Other Promotion Tools**

Section 4 surveys the other areas of marketing communication – sales promotion (Chapter 14), direct marketing (Chapter 15), public relations, publicity and corporate advertising (Chapter 16) and other unconventional promotional media (Chapter 17). Principles related to strategy and creativity taught in the section on advertising can be extended to these other tools as well.

- **Section 5: Media Planning and Strategy**

The fifth section of this text deals with understanding the peculiarities of the media for the various communication tools mentioned earlier. Chapters 18-20 discuss the strengths and weaknesses of various media, estimating audiences in each of them and the process of buying time or space in media. Chapter 21 puts it all together by laying out the steps to developing an effective media plan.

- **Section 6: Budgets, Objectives and Evaluation**

Chapters 22 and 23 put creative ideas to the test of fixed budgets and defined objectives through the process of evaluation. Chapter 24 exposes students to the regulatory and economic environment of communications, prodding them once again to test their ideas before implementation.

- **Appendix 1:** Reviews the most awaited question of them all—‘How to land that coveted ad job?’

- **Appendix 2:** Coaches students in the art of effective presentation of their creative ideas.

- **Appendix 3-5 (On the website; address [www.mhhe.com/kruti\\_alan](http://www.mhhe.com/kruti_alan)):** Contributions from an advertising professional lend an industry perspective to some of the topics discussed in the book.

#### **Distinctive Features**

The high points of our text are the following salient features:

- **Indian orientation:** The biggest limitation of books by foreign authors is that the examples and case studies are all foreign, which makes it difficult for Indian students to relate to them. Our communication environment, and its tools and techniques are unique to our country, which makes it necessary to have a special Indian focus.
- **Academic-cum-professional blend:** The text focuses on practical learning, key concepts and applications as theory does not hold much relevance unless it can be shown *how* it can be put into practice. Unlike some other books that are text- and theory-heavy, our book encapsulates excess and repetitive theory succinctly, thereby allowing instructors and students to cover the basics better. It also focuses on the practical applications of theoretical concepts discussed in the text. Further, the section on advertising covers salient execution-oriented details.
- **Current examples of various types of products and businesses:** The wide spectrum of current examples taken from different product and business environments demonstrates to students how marketing communication concepts can be applied in real-life situations. The examples selected are both of success stories that talk of what went right, and of failed communication situations that help students diagnose problems and learn from others’ mistakes.
- **Coverage of all major marketing communication tools:** While the spotlight remains on advertising, due justice has been done to other major communication tools as well.

- **Exclusive features:** In addition to an entirely new section on ‘Creative Execution in Advertising,’ the text also has two unique appendices regarding career guidance and presentation skills.
- **A comprehensive learning system:** This is provided by the exhaustive pedagogical features of the book such as in depth explanation that handholds students through the chapters, practical examples that provide real-life insight, and chapter summaries that reinforce learning. In addition, the text challenges understanding and thinking with questions, tests application abilities with projects, and puts problem-solving skills to test through case studies.
- **Superior text organisation:** The section-wise organisation of the text has been given much thought to. Sections and chapters have been arranged roughly in the order that an instructor would like to follow for teaching.

To fortify students’ learning and to stir them into action, we have included the following **pedagogical features** in our text:

- **In Perspective:** This opening feature introduces students to the concepts to be learnt in the chapter in a lucid and interesting manner, and in most cases, through a real-life example.
- **Practical examples:** Boxed examples, and features such as **Case in Point** and **Management Focus** are amply sprinkled throughout the text to give students classic and current insights into the real world. Almost all of them retain the Indian outlook.
- **Summaries:** End-of-chapter summaries help students review the material quickly and recap important points of the chapter.
- **Exercises:** These quiz students on their understanding of the material discussed in the text and beyond.
- **Suggested class projects:** Individual and team projects require students to apply concepts learnt in the chapter in practical, real-life situations. They test students’ understanding of theory and require them to begin thinking and working as a marketing communications specialist.
- **Critical thinking questions:** Questions that don’t have straightforward answers given in the text, but that tax students’ understanding and grip on the topic, and propel them into thinking and research, are asked.
- **Case studies:** Actual or likely business scenarios emphasising aspects learnt in the chapter cultivate strategic thinking. Questions based on the case require students to spot problems, analyse facts, research information, apply concepts and solve problems.
- **Instructors’ website:** A website [www.mhhe.com/kruti\\_alan](http://www.mhhe.com/kruti_alan) that includes PowerPoint slides of chapters, has been set up as a teaching aid for instructors.
- **Discussion website:** The dynamic website [www.ThinkingInk.net/imcbook](http://www.ThinkingInk.net/imcbook) features articles and discussions by the authors, instructors, communication professionals and students alike on the latest happenings in the communication world. These help in an even better understanding of the concepts discussed in the text, as well as of emerging ideas, theories and practices.

## Acknowledgements

Our maiden authoring venture has been possible due to the contributions, permissions, inputs and efforts of many people.

First and foremost, we are thankful to the entire team of McGraw-Hill Education, not only for their dedicated efforts in all publishing duties but also for their immense enthusiasm in shaping this creative book. The hard work and constant partnering done by Tapas Maji, Anubha Srivastava, and Hemant Jha of the editorial team are especially noteworthy.

We are also thankful to all our reviewers whose valuable inputs and comments have helped us take this book closer to perfection. Their belief in the quality of our work gave us the much-needed impetus in pitching this text in the crowded market of communication books. We have implemented as many suggestions as possible in this edition of the book. The ones we could not due to some constraint, will be taken care of in the next few editions. We express our sincere gratitude to Prof. Abraham Koshy, Professor of Marketing, IIM, Ahmedabad; Mr. Madhukar Kamath, MD and CEO, Mudra Group; Prof. Atul Tandan, Director, MICA; Dr. Mukul Gupta, Professor of Marketing, Management Development Institute, Gurgaon, and Visiting Professor, Wits Business School, Johannesburg; Mr Ambi M.G. Parameswaran, Executive Director and CEO, DraftFCB Ulka; Dr. Seema Gupta, IIM, Bangalore; Mr Krishna Mohan, former President and National head of Training, Ogilvy & Mather, and currently Chief Mentor, Eco Earth; Mr. Anand Halve, Co-Founder Chlorophyll Brand & Communications Consultancy Private Limited; Prof. V. Sudha, PSG Institute of Management Studies, Coimbatore; Prof Devashish Das Gupta, Indian Institute of Management, Lucknow; Prof. Manish Agarwal, Invertis Institute of Management Studies, Barielly; and Prof. Freda J. Swaminathan, Fore Institute of Management, Delhi.

A large amount of the verbal and visual content of this book could not have been incorporated without the generous contributions and kind permissions of many of the industry professionals and corporations. For the textual content, our special thanks go to Anil Wanvari, Editor-in-Chief, IndianTelevision.com; Anurag Batra, Managing Director and Editor-in-Chief, Exchange4Media Group and Pitch magazine; Sreekant Khandekar, Founder and Chairman, Agencyfaqs! and Brand Reporter; and Jonathan Barnard of Zenith Optimedia, for allowing us to source content from their publications. Many thanks also to our friend Sanjay Chakraborty, Director – Brand Services, Triton Communications, for contributing three short essays that make for an interesting read and lend a professional's perspective on the subject.

We would like to thank the team at Raymond – S L Pokharna, VP, Marketing and Commercial, and Saurav Bhattacharya, Director of Branding – for contributing a case study on one of Raymond's ad campaigns. And we appreciate the help of Shailen Sohoni, COO, RKSBBDO, in providing the creative work for the campaign. In addition, we thank Piruz Khambatta, Chairman, Rasna Industries Limited, for the case study on Rasna; Chaitra Leo Burnett's Praveen Tripathi, Associate Regional Director – Media and Strategic Planning, and S. Sudarshan, Account Planner, for the case study on media planning; and GCMMF's B. M. Vyas, Managing Director, and R. S. Sodhi, Chief General Manager, for the case study on Amul. Further, we are grateful to Colleen Fahey, Executive Vice President and Director of Strategic Planning, Publicis Dialog, USA, and Leroy Alvares, President, Tribal DDB, for giving us the opportunity to interview them and feature excerpts of their inputs in the book. We also thank Jaldeep Patel for his overall inputs on media planning.

For the visual content, the authors wish to thank Anmol Dar, Managing Director, Superbrands India, for permission to reproduce from three Superbrands books images on several pages, as acknowledged in the text. We are also extremely grateful to Piyush Pandey, Executive Chairman and National Creative Director (India & South Asia), O&M, and his team; R. Balakrishnan, National Creative Director, Lowe; and Madhukar Kamath, Managing Director and CEO, Mudra, and the team at Mudra, for granting reprinting permissions for a lion's share of the visuals featured in this text. We also extend our thanks to M. G. Parameswaran, Executive Director and CEO, DraftFCB Ulka; Colvyn Harris, CEO, JWT; Sharad Haksar, CEO, 1pointsize; Jagdip Bakshi, CEO, Contract Advertising; Vibhuti Bhatt, CEO, One Advertising; Nitish Mukherjee, Managing Director, Leo Burnett; and Nakul Chopra, CEO and Managing Director, Publicis for securing reprinting permissions from their clients for the creative work featured in this book.

In addition to acknowledging communication agencies, we would also like to express our gratitude to the organizations that directly gave us reproduction permissions for their advertisements. A special mention needs to be made of Hindustan Unilever Limited, Marico India, Cadbury India, Dabur India, Parle Products, Cancer Patients' Aid Association, Amul, The Himalaya Drug Company, ING Vysya, V. J. Mediaworks, Taj Group, ITC, Tata Chemicals, Hyundai Motors, Daikin Industries, Platinum Guild, MouthShut.com, Naukri.com Group, MakeMyTrip.com, J. K. Ansell, People Interactive, Hidesign, Chaya Garments, Tic Tac Movie Rental, NECC, and of the individuals in these organizations responsible for granting permissions. Our thanks also go to Mr. Vikas Malhotra of Readers' Digest for his approval for using the visuals of the RD sweepstakes example.

And although we need not formally thank these two individuals, who are more family than professionals, we would like to mention how much we value their involvement in this venture. Rishit Shroff, an Architect and Interior Designer, has sketched the impressive illustrations you see in this text. And Saumil Shah, CEO, Net-Square Solutions, and a hobbyist photographer, has lent some illustrative photographs from his diverse and striking album. And while we are on the note regarding family, we would like to deeply and sincerely thank our families, who have been extremely patient and supportive towards this seemingly never-ending project.

A final word – in case we have missed out anyone in the thanksgiving, consider it a case of pure oversight caused in a state of ecstatic euphoria that we feel at the launch of our first book.

**Kruti Shah**  
**Alan D'Souza**