ABSTRACT

As today’s consumers encounter different types of media, communication channel has become omnipresent. The vast array of marketing tools available to advertisers have lessened the use of traditional media advertising and seen the rapid rise of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) in response to it. This study establishes a model divided into two sections. The first part uses the relevant literature and a Modified Delphi Method to find the best selection criteria for an IMC company’s business manager, and Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) to determine the relative weights of the criteria. The second part uses the Grey Relational Analysis (GRA) to rank the alternatives and select the appropriate business manager. Finally, with an IMC company as an example, the authors use this model for empirical research. The results show that the emphasis on the criteria of professional competence, personal qualities, creative thinking, social skills and self-regulation. This research provides a new model for selecting a business manager, in addition to providing a reference basis for decision makers.

KEYWORDS
Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), Business Manager, Grey Relational Analysis (GRA), Integrated Marketing Communications, Modified Delphi Method

1. INTRODUCTION

As today’s consumers encounter different types of media, communication channel has become omnipresent. The media environment is complex, with many types of marketing channels available to reach consumers. The vast array of marketing tools available to advertisers have lessened the use of traditional media advertising and seen the rapid rise of IMC in response. Companies recognize the importance of including IMC in a marketing strategy. IMC integrates various platforms to...
communicate with consumers by planning and coordinating things such as media, public relations, events, promotions, packaging, the Internet, distribution channels and pricing, to share a company’s brand and message. Companies combine all of these in response to future development plans (Shimp, 1997).

The idea of Integrated Marketing Communication is to integrate all kinds of communication platforms that interact with consumers, to disseminate information in ways that is acceptable to all consumers, and to show a company’s brand through planned and coordinated messages. All of these methods and forms of dissemination correspond to different marketing plans.

In recent years, the number and size of IMC companies have increased; most companies work to provide clients with integrated communication services, and help them to create brands and output synergy. How can an IMC company stand out among the others and acquire client acceptance? This requires professional work, usually the task of a business manager of the company, whose external duties include negotiating with clients, making contacts, writing proposals; and internal duties include, developing strategies and coordinating resources, assigning and supervising work (Wu, 2012).

Finding the right person to handle these tasks is difficult. Executives at IMC Companies mostly rely on their personal experience and selection conditions are often unclear and lack systematization. Most IMC companies have no consistent standard. This study intends to help IMC companies in Taiwan to create a selection model for the business manager, which will not only provide a precise standard for personnel but also raise Taiwan’s Integrated Marketing Communication industry to a new level. As IMC companies provide all kinds of services, we will focus on how to select a business manager who specializes in event planning (e.g., news conference, concert, and PR events). Therefore, this study aims to gather aggregated expert opinions and define the selection criteria through a Modified Delphi Method, then determine the right criterion of weight using an Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), and finally, using alternative programs by Grey Relational Analysis (GRA) to select the best business manager. As the GRA computing is faster and simpler than the AHP, this study used alternative solutions by GRA, and uses an IMC company in Taiwan as an example. This new model provides a more objective and feasible method to select the best business manager.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Integrated Marketing Communications

The American Association of Advertising Agencies in 1989 defined IMC as a marketing communication of ideas, following a confirmed value-added plan, that considers the different means of communication that play a role in the plan, such as advertising, promotions, direct marketing, and public relations; and it integrates them through integrated planning to provide a consistent message to the audience, and maximize the results of dissemination (Caywood et al., 1991).

However, though the concept of IMC is very clear, and deemed valuable, it is difficult to execute and practice it (Duncan and Moriarty, 1997). Northwestern University’s Petrison and Wang (1996) indicate that the IMC is composed of “plan (idea) integration” and “execution (message) integration,” and both elements have to be considered to make a complete IMC plan.

2.2. Business Manager

In Taiwan, the authority and responsibilities of a business manager at an IMC company is similar to that of an account executive (AE) in the advertising industry. Externally, they are responsible for negotiating with clients, making contacts, and writing proposals; internally, they develop strategies and coordinate resources, assign and supervise work (Wu, 2012). Therefore, this study will first
A Theoretical Examination of SMEs Internationalisation in a Globalised Business Environment: An Eye on the Future
*International Journal of Customer Relationship Marketing and Management* (pp. 1-29).
[www.igi-global.com/article/a-theoretical-examination-of-smes-internationalisation-in-a-globalised-business-environment/145375?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/article/a-theoretical-examination-of-smes-internationalisation-in-a-globalised-business-environment/145375?camid=4v1a)