

# **SPECIAL APPLICATION OF MARKETING RESEARCH**

## **WEEK 7 ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION RESEARCH**

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## **WEEK SEVEN**

### **ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION RESEARCH**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

Welcome to week seven lecture! It is my joy to have you in this class. We have now started the second half of the course and to begin with is the lecture on advertising and promotion research. Advertising is one of the most popular tools of marketing communication and many people equity it to marketing. In this lecture we want to treat it as one of the tools of promotion though we may give it more weight than others. We will define promotion and promotion research, examine the main tools of promotion and also focus on the types of promotional research as well as benefits and challenges therein.

#### **7.2 Intended Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this lecture, you will be able to:

1. Define promotion and promotion research
2. Discuss various types of promotion tools
3. Examine various types of promotion research
4. Discuss benefits and challenges of promotion research

#### **7.3 Quotes on promotion and advertising research**

1. "Advertising research is key to improving communication between the brand and the consumer. Without understanding the audience, the message will fail to resonate." — John Philip Jones
2. "Effective promotion starts with solid market research. You must know your target audience's needs and preferences to develop messages that truly engage them."— Philip Kotler
3. "The more informative your advertising, the more persuasive it will be, and research allows you to tailor that information effectively."— David Ogilvy
4. "Pre-testing advertising content through research can save millions in campaign costs by ensuring messages are received as intended."— John A. Quelch
5. "Research allows advertisers to stay relevant in rapidly changing markets, ensuring that promotional messages adapt to consumer expectations."— Paul Feldwick
6. "Marketing research provides the data that allows advertisers to measure not only if a campaign was seen but if it influenced consumer behavior."— Peter Drucker
7. "Consumer behavior research is at the heart of advertising strategy. Understanding what motivates consumers informs everything from media choices to the creative message."— Leslie Butterfield
8. "Without research, advertising is blind. It's research that sheds light on the effectiveness of different media, frequencies, and messages."— Claude Hopkins

9. "Advertising research doesn't just identify what works; it shows why something works and how to replicate that success."— Kevin Lane Keller
10. "The foundation of modern promotion is research. Testing hypotheses on consumer preferences allows brands to refine their strategies and maximize effectiveness."— Kotler & Keller, Marketing Management

#### **7.4 What is advertising and promotion research?**

Various scholars define advertising and promotion research differently. The following is a good example of the many definitions in literature that point to significant components of the same.

1. "Promotion research involves the systematic collection and analysis of data on promotional tactics, such as sales promotions, discounts, and contests, to determine their effectiveness in influencing consumer behavior."(Shimp & Andrews, 2013)
2. "Advertising research is the study conducted to assess the effectiveness of an advertising campaign in terms of its impact on target audience attitudes, awareness, and purchase intentions."(Belch & Belch, 2018)
3. "Advertising research seeks to evaluate the influence of advertising messages on consumer decision-making processes through pre-testing and post-testing of campaigns to measure recall, comprehension, and attitude shifts."(Kotler & Keller, 2016)
4. "Promotion research evaluates how different promotional tools—such as coupons, sweepstakes, and loyalty programs—impact consumer participation, brand loyalty, and sales volume." (O'Guinn, Allen, & Semenik, 2014)
5. "Advertising research is the systematic investigation of how an advertisement performs in reaching its intended audience, evaluating its content, placement, and overall effect on brand equity." (Wells, Moriarty, & Burnett, 2006)

From these definitions we can deduce a number of issues significant to a marketer. The definitions collectively emphasize the role of research as an integral part of both advertising and promotional strategies. Here's an analysis of their key components:

- **Purpose-Oriented:** Promotion and advertising research, according to these definitions, is fundamentally about evaluating the effectiveness of marketing efforts. Whether it's understanding how a sales promotion drives consumer engagement or how advertising shifts brand perception, the focus is on collecting data to make informed decisions (Shimp & Andrews, 2013; Kotler & Keller, 2016).
- **Data-Driven:** Most definitions underscore the importance of systematic data collection and analysis. Research in this context relies heavily on metrics like consumer behavior, brand recall, and purchase intent (Belch & Belch, 2018; Wells, Moriarty, & Burnett, 2006). This highlights the empirical foundation of both fields, where understanding what works and why is key to success.
- **Pre- and Post-Campaign Analysis:** Research is employed before, during, and after campaigns. Pre-testing (e.g., concept tests, focus groups) helps optimize campaigns before

launch, while post-testing measures the actual impact on the target audience (Kotler & Keller, 2016). This is essential to adjusting strategies in real-time and ensuring resources are used effectively.

- **Diverse Methods and Focus Areas:** While advertising research often revolves around understanding the influence of messaging and media placement, promotion research digs into tactical tools like discounts and contests that directly stimulate consumer action (O'Guinn, Allen, & Semenik, 2014). This shows the complementary nature of these two areas in an integrated marketing approach.
- **Impact on Business Metrics:** Both fields of research are ultimately about driving business outcomes—whether it's improving brand loyalty, increasing sales volume, or boosting engagement. This makes the research highly practical and results-oriented, which is crucial for marketers to justify their investments.

In summary, promotion and advertising research is a critical tool for measuring and enhancing the impact of marketing activities, enabling brands to make data-backed decisions that can adapt to dynamic market conditions and consumer behaviors.

### **7.5 Purposes of advertising and promotion research**

Advertising and promotion research plays a vital role in shaping effective marketing strategies by helping businesses understand how to communicate with their target audience. The primary purposes of advertising and promotion research extend beyond merely promoting products—they include informing, educating, entertaining, and persuading consumers, among others. By utilizing these research insights, businesses can develop campaigns that not only increase brand awareness but also drive consumer behavior and engagement. Each of these purposes serves a unique function in the broader marketing ecosystem, contributing to brand development, customer satisfaction, and long-term business success (Belch & Belch, 2018; Shimp & Andrews, 2013).

- 1) **Informing:** Advertising research helps in creating campaigns that inform consumers about a product's existence, features, or benefits. This is critical when launching new products or entering new markets. Example: A campaign introducing the iPhone 15 highlights its new features, such as better battery life and camera enhancements (Belch & Belch, 2018).
- 2) **Educating:** Beyond merely informing, advertising often serves to educate consumers on how to use a product or the science behind it. Educational advertising is especially important for complex products or new technologies. Example: Procter & Gamble's educational campaigns on how its new laundry detergent is environmentally friendly (Shimp & Andrews, 2013).
- 3) **Entertaining:** Effective advertisements often aim to entertain as a way to capture attention and engage audiences. Humorous or emotional content makes advertisements memorable. Example: Super Bowl ads often focus on entertainment, such as Budweiser's iconic "Clydesdale horses" commercials (O'Guinn, Allen, & Semenik, 2014).
- 4) **Persuading:** Persuasive advertising research evaluates strategies that influence consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions. Advertisers often emphasize value propositions and competitive advantages to sway consumer preferences. Example:

- Apple's "Think Different" campaign successfully persuaded consumers that the brand is unique and innovative (Kotler & Keller, 2016).
- 5) **Reminding:** Advertising can serve to remind consumers of a brand or product, maintaining top-of-mind awareness. This is important for brands that have been in the market for a long time. Example: Coca-Cola's holiday campaigns remind consumers of the brand's association with festive seasons (Wells, Moriarty, & Burnett, 2006).
  - 6) **Reassuring:** Promotions can also reassure customers about their purchase decision, reducing post-purchase dissonance. Reassurance often comes through follow-up advertising that emphasizes the reliability or quality of the product. Example: Warranty advertisements from car companies like Toyota aim to reassure buyers about their vehicle's longevity (Belch & Belch, 2018).
  - 7) **Assisting Other Marketing Efforts:** Advertising can support and amplify other marketing activities, such as sales promotions or personal selling. Research here focuses on ensuring cohesion across various marketing channels. Example: A clothing brand may run ads during a sale, increasing foot traffic and making personal selling more effective (Shimp & Andrews, 2013).
  - 8) **Adding Value:** Advertising often serves to enhance perceived value, shaping the way consumers view a brand or product beyond its functional benefits. This added value could be emotional, aspirational, or cultural. Example: Nike's "Just Do It" campaign adds emotional value, associating the brand with personal achievement and perseverance (Kotler & Keller, 2016).
  - 9) **Generating Favorable Attitude Toward a Brand:** Advertising research often aims to foster positive brand attitudes, which lead to brand loyalty and advocacy. It measures whether consumers see the brand as trustworthy, high-quality, or socially responsible. Example: Dove's "Real Beauty" campaign reshaped the brand's image, fostering a positive attitude toward its commitment to natural beauty (Wells, Moriarty, & Burnett, 2006).
  - 10) **Leading to Favorable Intentions to Buy:** Advertising can influence purchase intent by highlighting benefits, showing social proof, or offering limited-time promotions. Research measures how effective ads are in driving consumers to make purchase decisions. Example: Amazon's "Prime Day" campaigns are designed to boost purchase intentions by offering time-sensitive deals (Belch & Belch, 2018).
  - 11) **Rationalizing a Purchase (Durable Goods):** For high-involvement products like cars or electronics, advertising can help consumers rationalize their purchases by providing factual, comparison-based content. Research assesses how well these ads influence decision-making. Example: Tesla ads that focus on long-term savings and eco-friendly benefits help consumers rationalize buying an electric car (Shimp & Andrews, 2013).

In conclusion, advertising and promotion research is indispensable for achieving various marketing objectives, from informing and educating consumers to reinforcing brand loyalty and influencing purchasing decisions. By systematically assessing the impact of promotional efforts, companies can refine their strategies to ensure they resonate with their audience, enhance brand perception, and foster favorable attitudes. Ultimately, the effectiveness of these campaigns depends on the alignment between promotional messages and consumer needs, which can be achieved through rigorous research and data-driven insights (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Wells, Moriarty, & Burnett, 2006). These efforts ensure that promotional activities not only capture attention but also deliver long-term value to both consumers and businesses.

## 7.6 Personal vs. Non-Personal Tools of Promotion and Advertising

Promotion and advertising tools can be broadly categorized into **personal** and **non-personal** tools. The key difference between these two categories lies in communication—personal tools involve direct, interactive communication, while non-personal tools use mass media channels where feedback is generally delayed or indirect. Table 7.1 summarizes the differences between personal and non-personal tools of promotion

**Table 7.1 Differences between personal and non-personal promotion tools**

Aspect	Personal Tools	Non-Personal Tools	Examples	Citations
<b>Interaction</b>	Direct, face-to-face interaction with consumers	Mass communication with little or no direct feedback	Personal selling, direct marketing	Belch & Belch (2018); Kotler & Keller (2016)
<b>Customization</b>	High customization: messages tailored to individual	Standardized messages for a wide audience	Sales presentations, personalized emails	Shimp & Andrews (2013); Belch & Belch (2018)
<b>Feedback</b>	Immediate feedback, real-time responses	Delayed or indirect feedback	Direct sales, event marketing	Kotler & Keller (2016); Wells, Moriarty, & Burnett (2006)
<b>Reach</b>	Limited to one-on-one or small group interactions	Wide reach through mass media	Customer calls, trade shows	Shimp & Andrews (2013)
<b>Cost</b>	Higher cost per interaction	Lower cost per thousand (CPM) for large audiences	Sales agents, customer meetings	Kotler & Keller (2016)
<b>Tools</b>	Personal selling, direct marketing, event marketing	Advertising, public relations, sales promotions	TV ads, press releases, sponsorships	Belch & Belch (2018); Shimp & Andrews (2013)

**1. Personal Tools of Promotion and Advertising: Personal tools** involve direct, one-on-one interaction between the marketer and the consumer. These tools rely on **personal selling** and **direct communication** to convey the promotional message. Because of the personal nature, these tools allow for immediate feedback and customized messaging. Table 7.2 summarizes these tools and role of research in each

**Table 7.2 Personal tools of promotion**

Promotion Tool	Description	Example	Role of Research	Citation
<b>Personal Selling</b>	Face-to-face or direct interaction between a salesperson and a customer. Useful for high-involvement or complex products.	A car salesperson engaging with a prospective buyer to explain the features and benefits of a new vehicle.	Research helps identify customer needs, preferences, and pain points, enabling salespeople to tailor their approach effectively (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Shimp & Andrews, 2013).	Kotler & Keller (2016), <i>Marketing Management</i>
<b>Direct Marketing</b>	Reaching out to consumers through mail, email, or phone calls to encourage a response. Often personalized and targeted.	A retailer sending personalized promotional emails to customers offering discounts based on previous purchases.	Research determines target demographics and preferences, optimizing message content and timing for better response rates (Belch & Belch, 2018; Kotler & Keller, 2016).	Belch & Belch (2018), <i>Advertising and Promotion</i>
<b>Event Marketing</b>	Face-to-face interaction with consumers at events, trade shows, or exhibitions where products are presented directly.	A technology company setting up a booth at CES (Consumer Electronics Show) to demonstrate its latest gadgets.	Research evaluates past event successes and consumer engagement strategies, informing booth design and interaction techniques (Shimp & Andrews, 2013; Kotler & Keller, 2016).	Shimp & Andrews (2013), <i>Integrated Marketing Communications</i>

Source: adopted from various authors listed in last column

**2) Non-Personal Tools of Promotion and Advertising**

**Non-personal tools** are designed to reach a broad audience through mass communication channels, typically with minimal or delayed feedback. These tools are ideal for promoting to

large, geographically dispersed audiences. Table 7.3 summarize these tools and roles of research in each

**Table 7.3 Non personal promotions tools and roles of research**

<b>Promotion Tool</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Role of Research</b>	<b>Citation</b>
<b>Advertising</b>	The most common non-personal promotion tool involving messages in mass media channels like TV, radio, print, and digital.	Coca-Cola running a global TV campaign during the FIFA World Cup.	Research identifies target audiences, optimal media channels, and effective messaging to enhance campaign impact (Wells, Moriarty, & Burnett, 2006; Kotler & Keller, 2016).	Wells, Moriarty, & Burnett (2006), <i>Advertising: Principles and Practice</i>
<b>Public Relations (PR)</b>	Managing the public image of a company through media coverage and press releases to build goodwill and credibility.	Apple's media event to announce new products, generating news coverage and media buzz.	Research assesses public perception, media effectiveness, and crisis management strategies to maintain brand reputation (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Shimp & Andrews, 2013).	Kotler & Keller (2016)
<b>Sales Promotions</b>	Short-term incentives to encourage immediate sales, such as discounts, coupons, or contests.	A supermarket offering a "buy one, get one free" promotion on groceries.	Research evaluates consumer behavior and preferences to design promotions that effectively drive sales and engagement (Belch & Belch, 2018; Wells, Moriarty, & Burnett, 2006).	Belch & Belch (2018), <i>Advertising and Promotion</i>
<b>Sponsorship</b>	Supporting events, teams, or causes in exchange for brand visibility; can create strong brand associations.	Nike sponsoring major sporting events like the Olympics.	Research identifies suitable sponsorship opportunities and measures brand impact and consumer associations (Shimp & Andrews, 2013;	Shimp & Andrews (2013), <i>Integrated Marketing Communications</i>

			Kotler & Keller, 2016).	
<b>Digital Marketing</b>	Online advertising through social media platforms, search engines, and websites, allowing brands to reach vast audiences.	Google Ads targeting specific keywords to attract online shoppers.	Research helps understand online consumer behavior, optimizing ad spend, and measuring campaign effectiveness (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019; Ryan, 2016).	Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick (2019), <i>Digital Marketing</i>
<b>Content Marketing</b>	Creating valuable and relevant content to attract and engage a target audience, building brand authority and trust.	A company blog providing informative articles related to its industry.	Research identifies content topics that resonate with the audience and optimizes for SEO (Pulizzi, 2014; Järvinen & Karjaluoto, 2015).	Pulizzi (2014), <i>Epic Content Marketing</i>
<b>Influencer Marketing</b>	Collaborating with influencers to promote products or services, leveraging their credibility and reach.	A beauty brand partnering with a popular beauty influencer to showcase its products.	Research determines the right influencers to reach target demographics and measures campaign ROI (Freberg et al., 2011; Khamis et al., 2017).	Freberg et al. (2011), <i>Public Relations Review</i>
<b>Email Marketing</b>	Sending targeted emails to customers and prospects to inform, promote, or engage them with personalized content.	A travel agency sending newsletters with travel deals to its subscribers.	Research analyzes subscriber behavior to improve open rates and conversion (Chaffey, 2022; Kumar & Reinartz, 2016).	Chaffey (2022), <i>Email Marketing: Strategy</i>
<b>Outdoor Advertising</b>	Includes billboards, transit ads, and other forms of advertising placed in public spaces.	A major brand advertising on billboards in high-traffic areas.	Research identifies high-traffic locations and measures the effectiveness of outdoor campaigns (Jansen, 2015).	Jansen (2015), <i>Outdoor Advertising: Research</i>

## 7.7 Characteristics of effective advertising

1. **Extending from Sound Marketing Strategy:** Effective advertising must stem from a well-defined marketing strategy that aligns with the overall marketing communication plan. This means that advertising should not function in isolation but rather integrate seamlessly with other promotional tools such as sales promotions, personal selling, direct marketing, and public relations. For instance, if a company is running a campaign for a new product, its advertising should complement the messaging in its social media campaigns and public relations efforts to reinforce the overall brand message and objectives. This integrated approach ensures consistency and maximizes impact (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Belch & Belch, 2018).
2. **Taking the Customer's View:** Effective advertising focuses on the consumer's perspective rather than the marketer's. It emphasizes the benefits that the product or service offers to the consumer, addressing their needs and desires rather than simply showcasing product features. This customer-centric approach requires marketers to understand their target audience deeply and craft messages that resonate with their interests. For example, advertisements for fitness products should highlight the health benefits and lifestyle improvements rather than just detailing technical specifications (Aaker, 1996; Woodside, 2010).
3. **Persuasiveness:** A persuasive advertisement effectively communicates benefits that appeal to both consumers and marketers. This means that the advertisement should not only attract attention but also motivate the consumer to take action, such as making a purchase. Persuasion can be achieved through compelling storytelling, emotional appeals, and clear calls to action that resonate with the audience. Advertisers often use various psychological techniques, such as scarcity or social proof, to enhance persuasiveness (Cialdini, 2009; Kotler & Keller, 2016).
4. **Breaking Through the Clutter:** With the saturation of advertisements in various media, an effective ad must find a unique way to capture consumer attention amidst the clutter. This could involve using distinctive visuals, clever messaging, or unexpected formats that stand out in consumers' minds. For instance, ads that incorporate humor or innovative storytelling can differentiate themselves from competitors, making them more memorable (Lindstrom, 2008; Schwartz, 2012).
5. **Ethical Promises:** Good advertising should maintain ethical standards by not promising more than it can deliver. Overstating claims or making unrealistic promises can lead to consumer disappointment and harm the brand's reputation. Ethical advertising fosters trust and encourages repeat business, as consumers are more likely to return to brands that deliver on their promises. Transparency in advertising is essential for building long-term customer relationships (Baker, 2014; Smith, 2011).
6. **Balancing Creativity and Strategy:** While creativity is a vital component of advertising, it should not overshadow the strategic goals of the campaign. The primary objective of advertising is to persuade and influence consumer behavior, not just to entertain. Advertisers must ensure that creative elements serve to enhance the core message and not detract from it. This balance ensures that consumers remember the key selling points rather than just the entertaining aspects of the ad (Holt, 2002; Keller, 2003).

In summary, effective advertising requires a comprehensive understanding of marketing strategies, a focus on consumer needs, persuasive messaging, the ability to stand out amidst competition, ethical practices, and a balance between creativity and strategic intent. Adhering to these characteristics can significantly enhance the effectiveness of advertising campaigns, ultimately leading to better brand awareness and customer loyalty.

## **7.8 Procedure of conducting advertising research**

Conducting advertising research is a systematic process that evaluates the effectiveness of advertisements to inform marketing strategies and improve ad performance. This procedure includes various types of studies, with a focus on copy testing for both print adverts and television commercials.

Step 1: Define Research Objectives: this involves two main considerations

- a) Identify Goals: Determine the specific objectives of the advertising research, such as measuring recall, recognition, believability, or impact on purchase intentions.
- b) Specify Metrics: Decide on the key metrics to be used for evaluation, such as proven recall, attitude shifts, or brand preference.

Step 2: Select Type of Advertising Effectiveness Study:

- a) Copy Testing: Choose between print advertisement testing or television commercial testing based on the medium being evaluated.

### **A. Copy Testing for Print Advertisements**

Step 3: Pre-Test Development

- Create Test Advertisements: Develop print ads to be tested, ensuring they align with the defined research objectives.

Step 4: Sample Selection

- Determine Sample Size: Select a minimum of 150 respondents per advertisement.
- Identify Target Audience: Ensure the sample is representative of the intended market, considering demographic factors.

Step 5: Conduct Testing:

Administer Recall Tests:

- a) Aided Recall: Ask respondents if they remember seeing the ad when prompted with cues.
- b) Unaided Recall: Ask respondents to recall any ads they have seen without prompts.

Evaluate Recognition: Test respondents' ability to recognize the brand name when presented without branding features.

Conduct Diagnostic Measures:

- a) Believability Assessment: Evaluate how believable respondents find the main idea.
- b) Comprehensiveness Evaluation: Identify any confusing or unclear elements.
- c) Assess Product Perception: Ask questions to measure changes in perception and purchase intentions before and after exposure to the ad.

Step 6: Data Analysis

- a) Analyze Recall and Brand Preference: Focus on proven recall scores and shifts in brand preference.
- b) Examine Diagnostic Measures: Use secondary diagnostic measures to supplement the analysis.

B. Copy Testing for Television Commercials

Step 7: Commercial Development

- Create Test Commercials: Develop television ads that fulfill the research objectives.

Step 8: Select Testing Method

Choose Between Off-Air and On-Air Testing:

- a) Off-Air Testing: Conduct tests in controlled environments (theaters, malls).
- b) On-Air Testing: Assess commercials in realistic settings, capturing viewer reactions in their homes.

Step 9: Sampling

- Determine Sample Size: Use at least 150 respondents who are past users of the product category.
- Identify Target Audience: Implement age and gender quotas based on category volume contribution.

Step 10: Conduct Testing

#### Administer Recall Tests:

- a) Proven Total Recall: Measure the percentage of respondents who remember specific elements of the commercial.
- b) Copy and Visual Recall: Analyze the recall of copy and visual elements separately.
- c) Evaluate Comprehension and Believability: Assess how well respondents understand and believe the product claims made in the commercial.
- d) Measure Attitude Shift: Calculate the difference in brand preference before and after viewing the commercial.

#### Step 11: Data Analysis

- a) Focus on Recall and Brand Preference: Similar to print testing, the analysis should center on recall scores and brand preference shifts.
- b) Compare to Norms: Evaluate results against established norms to assess performance.

#### Step 12: Draw Conclusions and Make Decisions

- a) Interpret Findings: Analyze data to derive actionable insights regarding the effectiveness of the advertisements.
- b) Make Go/No-Go Decisions: Based on the results, determine whether the ads are ready for market placement or need revisions.

#### Step 13: Reporting

- a) Document Results: Prepare a comprehensive report outlining research objectives, methodology, findings, and recommendations.
- b) Share with Stakeholders: Present the findings to relevant stakeholders for further strategic planning.

This structured approach to advertising research allows marketers to systematically evaluate the effectiveness of their advertisements. By following these logical steps, marketers can make informed decisions to optimize their advertising strategies based on data-driven insights.

### **7.9 Steps followed in conducting promotion research**

Conducting promotional research involves systematically gathering and analyzing information to understand the effectiveness of promotional activities. This process helps businesses make informed decisions about their marketing strategies. Here's a detailed discussion of the steps involved in conducting promotional research:

#### Step 1: Define Research Objectives

- a) Identify Goals: Clearly outline what you want to achieve with the research. Common objectives include assessing customer awareness, measuring promotional effectiveness, understanding customer attitudes, and evaluating competitors' promotional strategies (Kumar & Kumar, 2014).
- b) Formulate Hypotheses: Develop hypotheses that can be tested through research, guiding the direction of the study.

## Step 2: Design the Research Methodology

### Choose Research Type:

- a) Qualitative Research: Focuses on understanding attitudes, motivations, and perceptions through interviews, focus groups, or open-ended surveys (Kvale, 1996).
- b) Quantitative Research: Involves numerical data collection through structured surveys or experiments, allowing for statistical analysis (Bryman & Cramer, 2011).
- c) Select Data Collection Methods: Determine the most effective ways to gather information, such as surveys, interviews, or observational studies.

## Step 3: Define the Target Audience

- a) Identify Segments: Determine which customer segments are relevant to your research, based on demographics, psychographics, or behavioral criteria (Smith, 1956).
- b) Create Customer Profiles: Develop detailed profiles of target customers to tailor the research approach effectively.

## Step 4: Develop the Research Instrument

- a) Design Surveys or Questionnaires: Create structured tools for collecting data, ensuring questions are clear, concise, and relevant to the research objectives (Dillman, 2000).
- b) Pilot Testing: Conduct a pilot test of the research instrument with a small group to identify potential issues and make necessary adjustments.

## Step 5: Collect Data

- a) Field Data Collection: Implement the research plan and gather data from the identified target audience. This could involve:
  - b) Distributing surveys online or offline.
  - c) Conducting interviews or focus groups.
  - d) Observing customer behaviors in real-time (Malhotra et al., 2017).

## Step 6: Analyze Data

- a) **Data Cleaning:** Review and clean the collected data to eliminate errors or inconsistencies.
- b) **Statistical Analysis:** Use statistical methods to analyze quantitative data, identifying trends and patterns (Hair et al., 2010).
- c) **Qualitative Analysis:** Analyze qualitative data using content analysis or thematic analysis to identify key themes and insights (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

#### Step 7: Interpret Findings

- **Draw Conclusions:** Interpret the results in the context of the original research objectives. Determine whether the findings support or refute the hypotheses established in Step 1.
- **Evaluate Implications:** Assess the implications of the findings for promotional strategies, marketing decisions, and overall business performance.

#### Step 8: Report Results

- **Prepare a Comprehensive Report:** Document the research process, findings, and recommendations in a structured report. Include an executive summary, methodology, results, and actionable insights.
- **Present to Stakeholders:** Share the findings with relevant stakeholders, including management and marketing teams, to facilitate informed decision-making.

#### Step 9: Implement Recommendations

- **Develop Action Plans:** Based on the research findings, create actionable plans to enhance promotional strategies and address identified issues.
- a) **Monitor Implementation:** Track the effectiveness of implemented strategies and adjust as needed based on ongoing performance metrics.

#### Step 10: Evaluate and Review

- **Continuous Improvement:** Regularly assess the effectiveness of promotional strategies and research processes to identify areas for improvement (Kotler & Keller, 2016).
- **Feedback Loop:** Establish a feedback mechanism to incorporate insights from ongoing research into future promotional activities.

This structured approach to promotional research allows businesses to effectively assess the impact of their promotional strategies, enabling informed decision-making that aligns with marketing objectives.

## 7.10 Benefits and challenges of advertising and promotion research

Advertising and promotion research is essential for businesses seeking to develop effective marketing strategies. It involves the systematic collection and analysis of data to understand consumer behavior, evaluate advertising effectiveness, and optimize promotional campaigns.

### *Benefits of Advertising and Promotion Research*

- **Enhanced Campaign Effectiveness:** Advertising research helps assess how well advertisements resonate with the target audience, allowing for refinement in messaging and creative elements. This leads to more impactful campaigns that drive consumer engagement (O'Guinn et al., 2013).
- **Informed Audience Targeting:** By identifying specific audience segments and understanding their preferences, businesses can craft targeted advertising campaigns that are more likely to convert. Research helps in tailoring messages that resonate with distinct consumer groups (Smith, 1956).
- **Brand Awareness and Perception Measurement:** Advertising research assesses brand awareness levels and consumer perceptions, providing insights into how ads influence brand image. Measuring brand recall and recognition helps marketers evaluate the effectiveness of their advertising efforts (Keller, 2001).
- **Optimization of Advertising Spend:** Research helps determine the return on investment (ROI) of various advertising campaigns, allowing companies to allocate their budgets to the most effective strategies. Data-driven insights enable marketers to focus resources on high-performing channels (Batra et al., 2016).
- **Adaptation to Market Changes:** Continuous advertising research allows brands to stay attuned to shifts in consumer behavior and preferences, making it easier to adapt promotional strategies accordingly. Real-time insights can help respond quickly to market dynamics (Schultz & Kitchen, 2000).
- **Creative Development Guidance:** Research provides valuable feedback during the creative process, helping evaluate potential advertisements before they are launched. Identifying which concepts resonate most with consumers allows marketers to refine their creative strategies (Mackenzie & Lutz, 1989).

### *Challenges of Advertising and Promotion Research*

- **Cost Considerations:** Conducting thorough advertising and promotion research can be expensive, particularly for small businesses with limited budgets. The costs associated with data collection, analysis, and reporting may deter some companies from pursuing research initiatives (Malhotra et al., 2017).

- **Data Reliability and Validity:** Ensuring the reliability and validity of research findings is crucial. Poorly designed studies or biased samples can result in inaccurate conclusions that misguide marketing strategies (Bryman & Cramer, 2011).
- **Rapidly Evolving Consumer Behavior:** Consumer preferences can change quickly, particularly in the digital age. Research findings may become obsolete rapidly, necessitating ongoing efforts to keep up with trends (Dahl & Hoefler, 2004).
- **Complexity of Market Dynamics:** The advertising landscape is influenced by various factors, including cultural, social, and economic variables. This complexity can make it challenging to isolate the impact of advertising efforts on consumer behavior (Kotler & Keller, 2016).
- **Integration of Research Insights:** Integrating research findings into existing marketing strategies can be challenging. Organizational resistance or siloed departments may hinder the application of research results (Kotler & Keller, 2016).
- **Ethical Considerations:** Advertising research must adhere to ethical standards, particularly regarding consumer privacy and data protection. Misleading or intrusive research practices can damage consumer trust and brand reputation (Culnan, 1999).

Advertising and promotion research is crucial for informing marketing strategies, optimizing campaign effectiveness, and enhancing brand perception. The benefits, such as improved targeting and campaign performance, must be weighed against challenges like costs and data reliability. By addressing these challenges, marketers can leverage advertising research to create more effective promotional strategies that resonate with consumers and drive business success.

### **7.11 Review Questions**

1. What are the primary objectives of advertising research, and how do they influence campaign development?
2. Describe the different methods of data collection used in advertising research. What are the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative versus quantitative approaches?
3. How can consumer behavior theories inform advertising strategies? Provide an example of a theory and its application.
4. What role does A/B testing play in advertising research, and how can it be used to optimize marketing campaigns?
5. Discuss the importance of target audience segmentation in advertising research. What factors should marketers consider when segmenting their audience?
6. How do metrics such as reach, engagement, and conversion rates contribute to the evaluation of advertising effectiveness?
7. What ethical considerations should be taken into account when conducting advertising and promotion research? How can researchers ensure their practices are ethical?

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