

AN INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION MODEL FOR MARKETING THE UFS

by

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To God all the glory.

DECLARATION

“I declare that the thesis hereby submitted by me for the Ph.D. degree at the University of the Free State is my own independent work and has not previously been submitted by me at another university/faculty. I furthermore cede copyright of the thesis in favour of the University of the Free State.”

Dalmé Mulder

June 2008

Bloemfontein

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CHAPTER 1

GENERAL ORIENTATION AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Today's highly competitive marketing environment suggests that organisations must do all they can to differentiate themselves from the competition in order to survive. Marketing practices seem increasingly ill-suited to the demands of today's marketplace, and budgets are excruciatingly tight. To make matters even worse, research shows that much of the money that organisations spend on marketing and communication is actually wasted (Koekemoer 2004; Sinclair & Barenblatt 1996; Koekemoer 1989). These factors, together with the political, economical and technological changes that took place in South Africa during the last decade or so, contribute towards the fact that businesses face an unprecedented and sometimes bewildering array of challenges to their growth and prosperity.

The higher education environment in South Africa has not escaped the changes that took place in the rest of the country. In transforming the higher education sector in South Africa, the number of institutions have been reduced by merging numerous universities and technicons. This has left a smaller number of institutions; but a growing number of privately owned and international institutions are seeking new business opportunities in South Africa (Annual report of CHE 2000). It is also predicted that the effect of HIV/Aids will in the near future impact negatively on the number of potential learners in South Africa that will qualify for further education after completing their school education. In South Africa, an estimated 5.3 million people were infected with HIV/Aids in 2004 (UNAIDS 2004:190). Statistics indicate that half of all new infections are occurring among young people between the ages of 15-29 (Hivinsite 2006). This high rate of infection significantly reduces the life expectancy of this group.

Furthermore, the fact that especially black people's socio-economic and political situation has changed in the past decade or two, now gives them access to higher education. This causes a complete change in the stakeholder profile of higher education institutions. All these developments make the marketplace very testing and cut-throat. Niemann (2005:103) opines that the "twenty-first century marketplace" brings the greatest changes in the need for, and demand on integrated communication (IC). However, there is no IC model available to address the unique challenges of the higher education environment.

1.1.1 The higher education environment

As mentioned previously, the former Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, has reduced the number of higher education institutions to streamline the higher education sector. This has left a smaller number of these institutions to render a service to learners in South Africa. However, more privately owned institutions and international institutions are entering the South African higher education environment and a study conducted by the HSRC (Cosser & Du Toit 2002) has shown that almost 10% of the respondents in the study prefer to continue their studies at a private institution. Although this figure may seem insignificant compared to the total number of learners that do continue their studies, the significance of this finding lies in the fact that this decision by learners were fueled by public institution's inability to render the services the learners need and want. This figure could thus increase in future. The fierce competition is therefore not only among the traditional institutions, but "outsider" private institutions are also becoming key role players in this competitive arena.

Apart from the external factors mentioned, there are also a number of factors in the internal environment of higher educational institutions that confront management teams. Limited resources and the frequent changing of the Higher Education Framework (HEF) and the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) guidelines are some of the factors that affect the internal environment of higher education institutions, but even more prominent is the changing profile

of learners and employees through transformation. The mosaic of cultures that co-exist in South Africa pose a complex communication challenge to universities. One of the greatest challenges facing higher educational institutions in South Africa is to identify the best way to operate in this new, more competitive environment. As Liebenberg and Barnes (2004:7) suggest, the relatively calm waters in which higher education institutions functioned a few years ago are becoming stormier. Management of these institutions is forced to radically change the way they organise their employees and other resources to meet these challenges.

As universities become more aware of this dynamic environment, they will have to realise that delivering their brand promise to their clients and persuading them will depend on how well they understand and manage the relationship between them and all their stakeholders.

1.1.2 Managing stakeholder interaction through integration

Integrated communication is an effective way to manage all interaction between an organisation and its stakeholders, and as a result develop a brand in the stakeholders' minds because of the interactions they have with that company. Organisations the world over face many challenges of which the management of interaction with stakeholders, which has also changed face, may be one of the more prominent confrontations. Organisations can no longer rely on a single campaign to build and sustain its brand and be effective and profitable. The premise of IC is that synergies are achieved when all brand contacts work in concert.

This holistic approach to communication and marketing has developed over the past two decades. In America, Asia and Australia it was initially called integrated marketing communication, while in Europe, it was often referred to as *through-the-line* communication. However, literature increasingly agree on the term integrated communication as the evolved offspring of integrated marketing

communication (IMC) (Niemann-Struwig & Grobler 2007; Niemann 2005; Mulder 2004).

1.1.3 IMC turns IC

So just what is IMC and its offspring, integrated communication? Deighton (in Jones 1999:339) suggests a well-integrated marketing communication campaign may be compared to a swan gliding across a lake: The observable grace gives little hint to the furious activity beneath the surface. Integrated marketing communication is seen as a communication development process that differs from the one traditionally used by marketers. In short, it involves a planning approach that attempts to coordinate, consolidate, and bring together all the communication messages, programmes, and vehicles that affect an organisation's stakeholders and their perception of the organisation and the products or services it offers. According to Niemann (2005) integrated communication differs from IMC in five important strategic areas. Integrated communication proposes a more *holistic perspective to include all stakeholders* whereas IMC focus predominantly on *customers*. With this comes the necessity to understand that organisations now function in the *stakeholder century*. Secondly, integrated communication focus on communication, in other words dialogue or *two-way communication* and include all communication – not just messages formulated by the organisation. The focus is therefore in the third instance on *external and internal messages*. The most fundamental difference between IMC and IC is that in IMC the marketing or communication departmental strategy drives the messages of the organisation. However, in IC, the *strategic intent of the organisation as a whole drives all the communication of the organisation*. In the last instance, IC is *strategic in nature* while IMC contributes to the *technical aspects* of the organisation.

It should be noted that the focus of this study is predominantly on IC as an extension of IMC. Although IMC was the preferred term until the late 1990s and in some instances reference will be made to IMC, it must be read within this

context. The researcher supports the notion of Niemann (2005:29) that integrated communication is always integrated marketing communication but that integrated marketing communication is not always integrated communication.

1.1.4 IC status in South Africa

Although this concept was conceived in the early 1990s, it is still relatively new in the South African marketing environment. A study done in 2001 by Store and Mulder reflected that many role players in the South African marketing industry were then still completely unfamiliar with the IMC concept, and some of those who claimed to be familiar with the concept did not understand the essence thereof. Recently, Niemann (2005) has investigated the familiarity and knowledge of role players in the South African marketing industry with regards to integrated communication, and once again the majority of the respondents has demonstrated a lack of knowledge regarding the issue. Oosthuizen (2007:8) supports this view and adds that marketers, particularly at senior level, still have a fundamental lack of understanding of the business they are in.

The problem is that it is not easy to develop IC programmes. In many cases, the concept of IC is in direct conflict with the way marketing, marketing communication, and organisational communication is generally practised by organisations. In addition, several factors, like a lack of knowledge about IC, existing organisational structures and budget allocation (to mention only a few), have slowed the IC adoption process and contributed to the fact that organisations are not reaching their full potential. For decades, marketers have used the long-established communication disciplines of advertising, public relations, sales promotion, personal selling and direct marketing to achieve a diverse range of objectives. Traditionally, clients erected strong barriers around these functions – managing each separately with different objectives, goals and budgets (Belch & Belch 1995). Today, these previously independent tools are increasingly being coordinated under an umbrella strategy in an attempt to

increase communication effectiveness and consistency. However, this is but a small step towards practicing IMC. Koekemoer (2004:4) classifies organisational integration in terms of four levels. According to this classification, an organisation is on the first of the four levels of integration when the tactical coordination and alignment among the marketing communication elements are in place. On the second level the scope of communication is broadened to encompass and coordinate internal and external marketing communication activities. In other words, all sources of brand contact that stakeholders have with a company are integrated. The third level of integration entails the application of empirical data using information technology to provide a basis to identify, value and monitor the impact of integrated internal and external communication programs with key stakeholders over time. At the highest level of integration the emphasis of corporate strategic planning is shifted from an inside-out, operations-driven orientation to an outside-in, customer-driven orientation.

There has been a lot of discussion about integrated marketing communication during the past few years, and integrated communication more recently. At its earliest application, IMC was the integration of all communication vehicles within a specific campaign, including advertising, public relations, and direct marketing communication. The premise was simple – synergies can be achieved when all such communication work in harmony, as it ensures that stakeholders are exposed to consistent and complementary messages. Later on, IMC definitions became broader in application, as it was admitted that a brand is developed in stakeholders' minds as a result of all interactions they have with a company, and not just as a result of a campaign they are exposed to. The notion of synergy is central to most, if not all, arguments in favour of integration (Duncan & Everett 1993). Synergy is the key benefit of IMC because each communication tool reinforces the other for greater effect. Moriarty (1994) argues that it is essential for cutting edge companies to integrate total communication programs. IMC, she claims, is not an option but a requirement.

A last comment on the practice of IMC (and more specifically IC) in South Africa has relevance to the definition of the term. One of the first definitions of IMC, developed by the American Association of Advertising Agencies (AAAA), was accepted by an overwhelmingly high percentage of the respondents in the Store and Mulder (2001) study. The AAAA's first definition of IMC was:

a concept of marketing communication planning that recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of a variety of communication disciplines – for example, general advertising, direct response, sales promotions, and public relations – and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency, and maximum communication impact (Belch & Belch 1998:9-10).

This definition presents a very narrow perspective of IMC. Advocates of the IMC concept, such as Don Schultz of Northwestern University, Chicago, argue for a much broader perspective that considers all sources of brand or company contact that a customer or prospect has with a product or service, not just the contact that traditional marketing communication disciplines bring about. The pioneers of IMC like Schultz, Sandra Moriarty and Larry Percy note that IMC calls for a holistic approach to planning marketing and coordinating the various communication functions.

The fact that the respondents in the Store and Mulder (2001) study did not comment on the limitations of the definition, seriously question the depth of their knowledge and understanding of the IMC concept. As recommended in the above-mentioned study, agencies (and marketers) should delve deeper than just the surface of IMC in order to discover the sustainable competitive advantage that a fully integrated approach to marketing and communication can hold.

The 21st century marketplace is symbolised by stakeholder integration, which is built around a two-way symmetrical approach to interactivity and is therefore

regarded as the stakeholder age (Niemann 2005:8). Kitchen and Schultz (2000) predict that by 2010 the global marketplace will be characterised by interactivity. They also postulate that organisations will have to build real relationships with real stakeholders. Being amidst the stakeholder century, the focus is obviously on the organisation's stakeholders' needs and wants. If organisations want to be effective in this stakeholder age, they will have to follow an integrated approach to communication.

This study will aim to address the above-mentioned issues and to expand South African and global knowledge in the field of integrated communication, specifically applied in a multi-cultural higher education environment.

1.1.5 Cultural sensitivity in marketing and communication

Cultural awareness is vital for effective communication and marketing communication alike, because different cultures communicate in different ways. While the universal objectives of marketing communication are to inform and more specifically to persuade, the way in which ethnic groups come in contact with information and are persuaded to act on information varies widely. More than a decade ago, Rensburg (1993) advocated that cultural sensitivity is a necessity if organisations want to be successful in the diverse South African environment. Furthermore, in the stakeholder century (Niemann 2005; Gronstedt 2000; Schultz 1998; 1997), consumers have more control over the marketing messages they receive than ever before, and this trend will escalate with filtering technologies. The important thing for marketing and communication practitioners to understand is that even when these technologies are successfully applied, their efforts to build relationships with stakeholders must be based on the intimate and timely exchanges of information shared between old friends.

Marketing and communication practitioners realise that they should seek to enhance long-term relationships with stakeholders rather than concentrating on

one-time transactions. It has been proven that it is much cheaper to repeat business with existing customers than it is to persuade non-users of your product/service to make a brand switch. Many organisations are looking to stakeholders to do their marketing for them. The number of books recently published on this issue highlights the power of such marketing, known within the industry as “viral” or word-of-mouth marketing. This emphasises the importance of having meaningful relationships with existing clients and all other stakeholders.

The University of the Free State (UFS) is a typical example of an intercultural organisation. In line with the new democratic government’s policies of transformation, the UFS has gone a long way in transforming its profile from a previously Afrikaans university to one that accommodates people from all cultural groups. Chaney and Martin (2007:2) underline the fact that a lack of effective intercultural communication skills often causes misunderstandings. According to these authors, this leads to irritation and even distrust between the parties concerned. As no organisation can afford this, the UFS and all other multi-cultural organisations will increasingly have to be more cautious of cultural differences when formulating marketing and communication strategies.

1.1.6 Context of the study

South Africa has a unique environment within which universities have to function. The fact that South Africa has eleven official languages and a variety of cultures are only some of the factors that contribute towards the complexity of the South African environment. Political and economical factors have had a direct impact on South Africa as we know it today. Furthermore, new technologies such as databases and the Internet are changing the rules of the communication and marketing game.

Universities are now also part of the business sphere. Van Wyk (2005) calls this phenomenon corporatisation. This author argues that markets in higher

education have given birth to “corporate universities”. A university should therefore be run like a corporate institution, with the same prominence that marketing enjoys in the corporate environment.

The unique organisational structure of higher education institutions, with numerous product offerings by just as many different departments and units also contribute to the fact that the integration and management of marketing and communication endeavours are quite testing and deserve urgent attention.

Another aspect that is of importance regarding the context of this study is the impact of transformation and integration on higher education institutions in South Africa. The UFS experienced a very turbulent phase in the beginning of 2008 with racial tension on campus as a result of a new hostel integration policy that was announced in 2007. A couple of incidents on campus have received national and international media coverage which harmed the image of the university tremendously – creating a very challenging environment for marketing the UFS.

1.2 FOCUS OF RESEARCH

The scientific research method begins with curiosity about a given situation, which is articulated as a problem and frequently phrased in the form of a question(s) (Gebremedhin & Tweeten 1994:1). It is of paramount importance that the research effort is accurately focused, because the focal point unquestionably determines the successful completion of the endeavour. Leedy (1997:45) maintains that to see the problem with unwavering clarity and to state it in precise and unmistakable terms is the first requirement in the research process.

Welman and Kruger (2001:13) describe a research problem as “some difficulty that the researcher experiences in the context of either a theoretical or practical situation and to which he or she wants to obtain a solution”. It is therefore a

logical first step to identify and articulate the research problem of this study in order to focus the research.

1.2.1 Identification of the research problem

The research problem of this study is:

There is no integrated communication model available to guide marketing practitioners of the University of the Free State.

The research problem gives rise to research questions. To perform the research, the problem is divided into more manageable secondary research problems / questions as most problems are too complex to be solved without subdividing them.

1.2.2 Formulation of the research questions

Babbie and Mouton (2001:76-77) identify four types of research questions. Based upon these four types of questions, the following research questions are formulated for this study:

Meta-analytical research question:

What is the context in which integrated communication is practised in this study? (Secondary research question)

Conceptual research question:

What constitutes integrated communication and what is the conceptual foundation thereof? (Secondary research question)

Normative research question:

What is the ideal manner to conduct integrated communication? (Secondary research question)

Theoretical research question:

Which guidelines can be recommended to implement integrated communication for marketing the University of the Free State? (Primary research question)

The research questions act as directors in formulating the goal and objectives of the study. The primary research question indicates the goal of the study, and the secondary research questions give rise to the primary and secondary objectives.

1.2.3 Goal and objectives of the study

Babbie (1994:90-92) identifies three basic purposes of social research in general. *Exploration* is used to explore a topic or provide a basic familiarity with a topic, *description* is provided to describe a situation, event or process, and *explanation* is offered to indicate causality between variables or events. This study focuses on all three options mentioned, and therefore the research conducted in this thesis can be described as explorative, descriptive and explanatory in nature.

The goal and objectives of this study are directed towards answering the stated research question to address the identified research problem. Therefore the goal and objectives are directly related to answering the primary and secondary research questions mentioned in the previous sub-section.

Against this background, the goal of the study can be formulated as:

To develop an integrated communication model for marketing the University of the Free State (answering the theoretical and primary research question).

In turn, the objectives of this study are related to the answering of the secondary research questions. The objectives are divided into primary and secondary objectives.

Primary objectives:

- 1 *to discuss the current marketing related structures and processes at the UFS, including the context in which they are manifested (answering the meta-analytical research question);*
- 2 *to explore the integrated approach to marketing and communication as a benchmark for the UFS (answering the conceptual research question);*
- 3 *to provide a conceptual IC model for marketing the UFS (answering the normative research question); and*
- 4 *to subject the conceptual model to scrutiny by critical role-players at the UFS.*

Secondary objectives:

- 1 *to explore the higher educational environment of South Africa (linked to the meta-analytical research question);*
 - 2 *to reflect on a multi-cultural organisational environment (linked to the meta-analytical research question);*
 - 3 *to define and study the evolution and development of integrated communication (linked to conceptual research question);*
 - 4 *to explore integrated communication within an organisational context (linked to conceptual research question);*
-

- 5 *to identify and examine the fundamental principles of integrated communication* (linked to the conceptual research question);
- 6 *to identify challenges in the implementation of integrated communication* (linked to the conceptual research question); and
- 7 *to describe and critically evaluate existing models of integrated communication* (linked to the normative research question).

In figure 1.1 the focus of this study is illustrated.

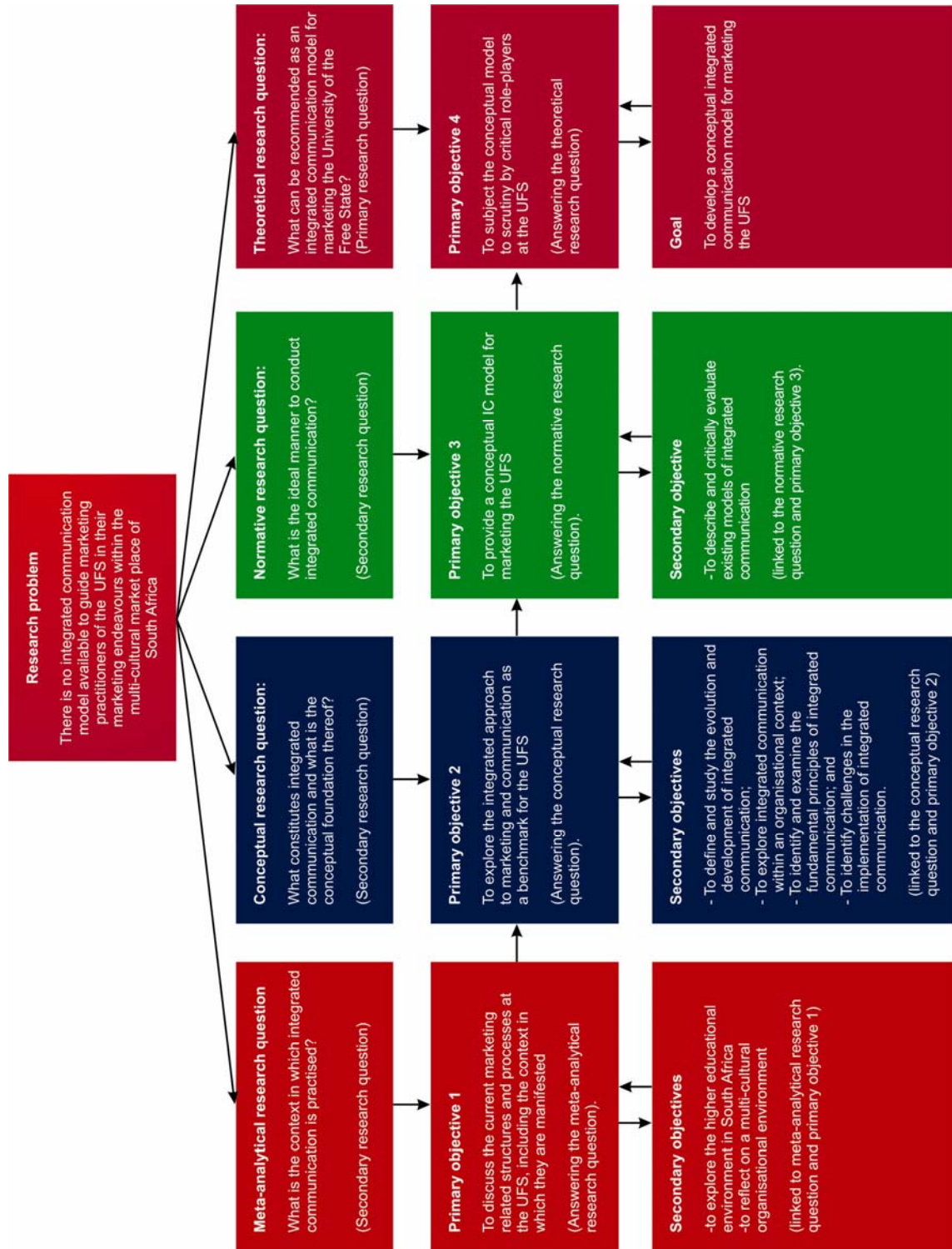


Figure 1.1: Research focus

1.3 NECESSITY OF THE RESEARCH

Effective communication is an integral part of business, also within universities. With all the political, cultural, economic and technological changes taking place, the successful few will be those who are best able to break through the communication clutter. Traditional marketing communication, meaning the type produced regularly by marketing communication managers, is being challenged by these major changes. A question posed by Rensburg and Ströh (1998) regarding how one should strategically deal with the overwhelming torrent of change and interchanged uncertainty within the organisational and social worlds has relevance to this study as no institution, and certainly not universities, can function within a closed environment.

The UFS most definitely experiences the impact of the mentioned environmental factors and changes. Due to political and economical factors, the UFS was forced to change the way in which business was normally done. The so-called turnaround-strategy was introduced to adapt to the changing South African environment. Although this strategy has had many positive outcomes, one of the negative aspects thereof is the fragmentation of the UFS brand due to the decentralisation of the institutes marketing function. Consequently, the UFS brand does not have a strong position in the marketplace.

In this new business environment, organisations have learned that integrated marketing communication practices and principles will help them build the customer relationships that create profitable and strong brands (Gronstedt 2000; Duncan 2001). A multi-faceted integrated communication (IC) effort by organisations thus seems fundamental. It has become even more important as new communication tools, such as the Internet, become more relevant. It is essential that there be a consistency of message, in other words that the communication efforts project a singular voice. Organisations must deliver the right message in the right medium at the right time to elicit the right result. Communication integration, in which every aspect of the communication mix is

brought together under a master strategy, is the future of successful organisations (Lin 2000/2001; Engel, Warshaw, Kinnear & Reece 2000; Schultz, Tannenbaum & Lauterborn 1994).

However, although Grobler and Puth propagated the idea of integrated communication as far back as 2002, evaluated against the results of the studies done by Store and Mulder (2001) and Niemann (2005), South Africa still has a long way to go in this regard. Even though building stakeholder relationships and integration is an organisational challenge (Duncan 2001:79), implementing this master strategy in a multi-cultural environment poses even more challenges.

South African literature and research with regard to IC is limited, as is the practice thereof in the South African environment. Ehlers (2002) has suggested a framework for structuring integrated communication in South African organisations, but this model lacks a holistic focus as it concentrates on only two functions of IC, namely marketing and public relations. Niemann (2005) has addressed this shortcoming and has developed an implementation model for the management of strategic IC in the South African marketplace. Although this model thoroughly calculated the principles of IC, the one aspect that needs elaboration is the multi-cultural environment within which any South African model is implemented. Furthermore, higher education institutions have a character of their own, which necessitates an adapted IC model. The results of this study could contribute towards this goal and fill a scientific knowledge gap in the South African marketplace in this regard.

1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS

The research methodology in this study is divided into four phases and is based on the qualitative research paradigm. Grounded theory is employed as overarching research strategy for all four phases. The first phase establishes, through a literature review, the meta-analytical research question and objective

one of the study. Phase two determines, by means of a combination of three techniques (literature review, historical research and concept analysis), the conceptual research question, i.e. the conceptual foundation of integrated communication. Phase three establishes the ideal manner to conduct integrated communication by means of the literature review. Phase four consists of focus groups and personal interviews and forms the last part of the process to develop a conceptual integrated communication model for marketing the UFS.

In order to meet the goal and objectives of this study, the research process is based on the Mitroff model (Mitroff, Betz, Pondy & Sagasti 1974). This model guides the researcher through the process of studying a phenomenon in science from a holistic or systems point of view. Although this model was formulated in 1974, it has been successfully applied on numerous occasions in management sciences (Koornhof 2001; Niemann 2005), and it will be applied in this study to define the scope of the research, provide guidance in structuring the research and identify the processes and stages that should be followed. As the grand theory of this study is based on the systems theory, this further confirmed the choice of the Mitroff model as this model is also based on the systems perspective.

1.4.1 The Mitroff model for problem solving in systems thinking

The purpose of the model (Mitroff *et al.* 1974:46) is to outline a programme for studying science from a holistic or systems point of view. This model was used to lay the groundwork for conceptualising research inquiry from a whole systems perspective. The researcher is thus motivated to deal with complexities of science in a systematic way. Koornhof (2001) and Niemann (2005) postulates that the Mitroff model assists the researcher to document the various steps in the research process and allow the researcher to identify and follow those steps that are appropriate in the research. Mitroff *et al.* (1974:46) argue that certain aspects of science can only be studied from a whole systems perspective and that anything less than a holistic view of science will fail to pick

up certain of science's most essential characteristics. According to Niemann (2005) the model identifies the different phases of problem-solving, and highlights various research approaches, styles and attitudes towards science. The graphic illustration in figure 1.2 represents a simple whole systems view of the activity of problem-solving.

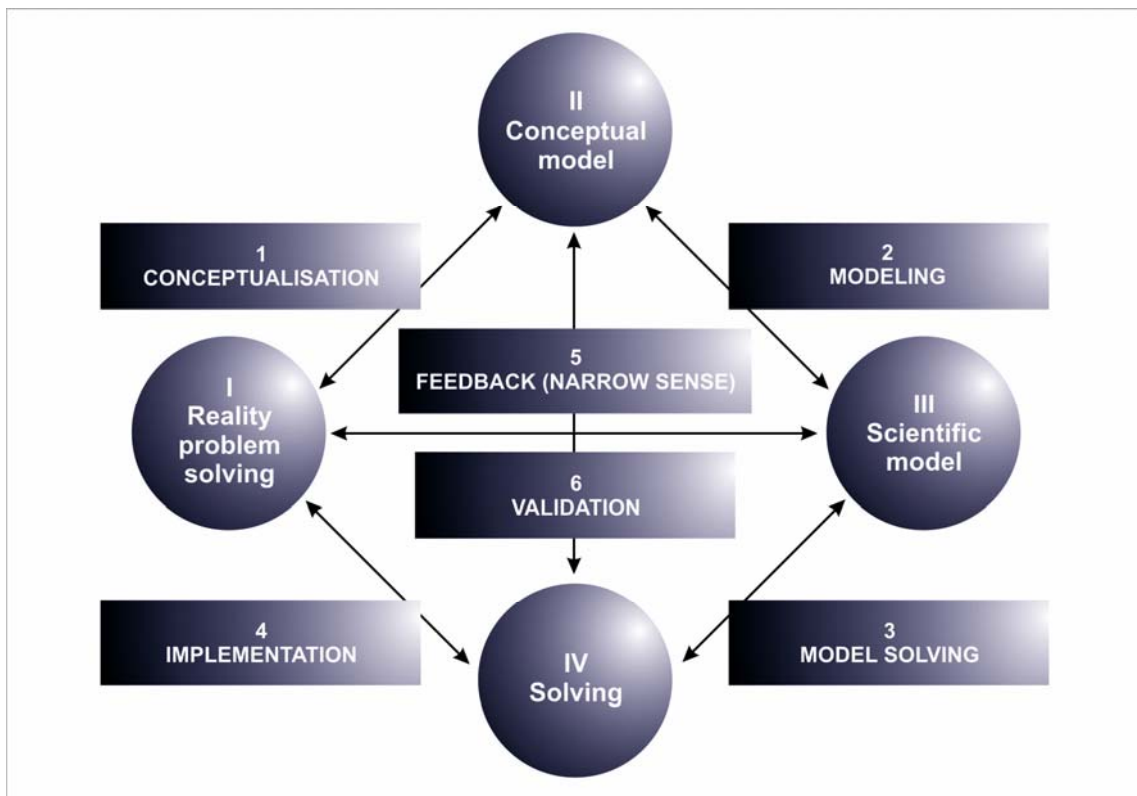


Figure 1.2: Mitroff's systems view of problem-solving (Mitroff *et al.* 1974:47, adapted by Niemann 2005:14)

The Mitroff model consists of four elements and six paths. In the figure, the four circles represent the four elements (I, II, III, IV) and the essence of the model. These elements are "Reality problem solving", "Conceptual model", "Scientific model", and "Solving". Closely related to these elements are the six paths, described in figure 1.2. These paths or activities are conceptualisation, modeling, model solving, implementation, feedback and validation. Viewed from a systems perspective, there is no simple "starting" or "ending" points in this model. The process can begin at any point in the diagram.

Mitroff *et al.* (1974:47) describe that the arrow or path from the circle labeled “Conceptual model” is meant to indicate that the “first phase” of problem-solving consists of formulating a conceptual model of the problem situation. The conceptual model set up the definition of the problem that has to be solved. The field variables that are used to define the nature of the problem are specified, as well as the level at which the variables are treated. According to the Mitroff model the second phase entails the formulation of a scientific model (circle III). Models are simplifications used to make complex concepts more comprehensible.

The third phase concerns the performance of activity 3 to derive a solution from the scientific model. Niemann (2005:15) argues that the aim of social science is to provide a solution to a specified problem. The implementation or utilisation of the solution to the problem area in practice (activity 4) gives feedback of the solution to the original problem stated and entails activity 5 in the model. Validation is the last phase. Here the degree of correspondence between reality and the developed scientific model is evaluated. The comparison between the scientific model and reality may take place repeatedly until the scientific model is refined to reflect the necessary aspects of reality (Mitroff *et al.* 1974:51; Niemann 2005:16).

1.4.2 Applying the Mitroff model to this study

As the Mitroff model implies that legitimate research need not address all the activities and elements in the model (Niemann 2005:16), the scope of this thesis will only cover the first two circles of the model (Reality problem situation and Conceptual model) and the path (Conceptualisation) that connects it.

Circle I includes phases one to three of the research methodology of the study (see chapter 2). Phase four, namely the development of an integrated communication model for marketing the UFS, based on phases one to three of

the research methodology, materialise in Circle II. Within the scope of this thesis, the developed model will be conceptual in nature and will not have been validated in order to resume to circle III (scientific model). Thus, in the first three proposed phases of the current research (exploring the literature on integrated communication and intercultural communication), the activity of reality problem situation took place. This in turn led to phase four (circle II) where the conceptualisation of the model took place (formulating an integrated communication model for marketing the UFS). In figure 1.3 the application of the Mitroff model to the current research is outlined.

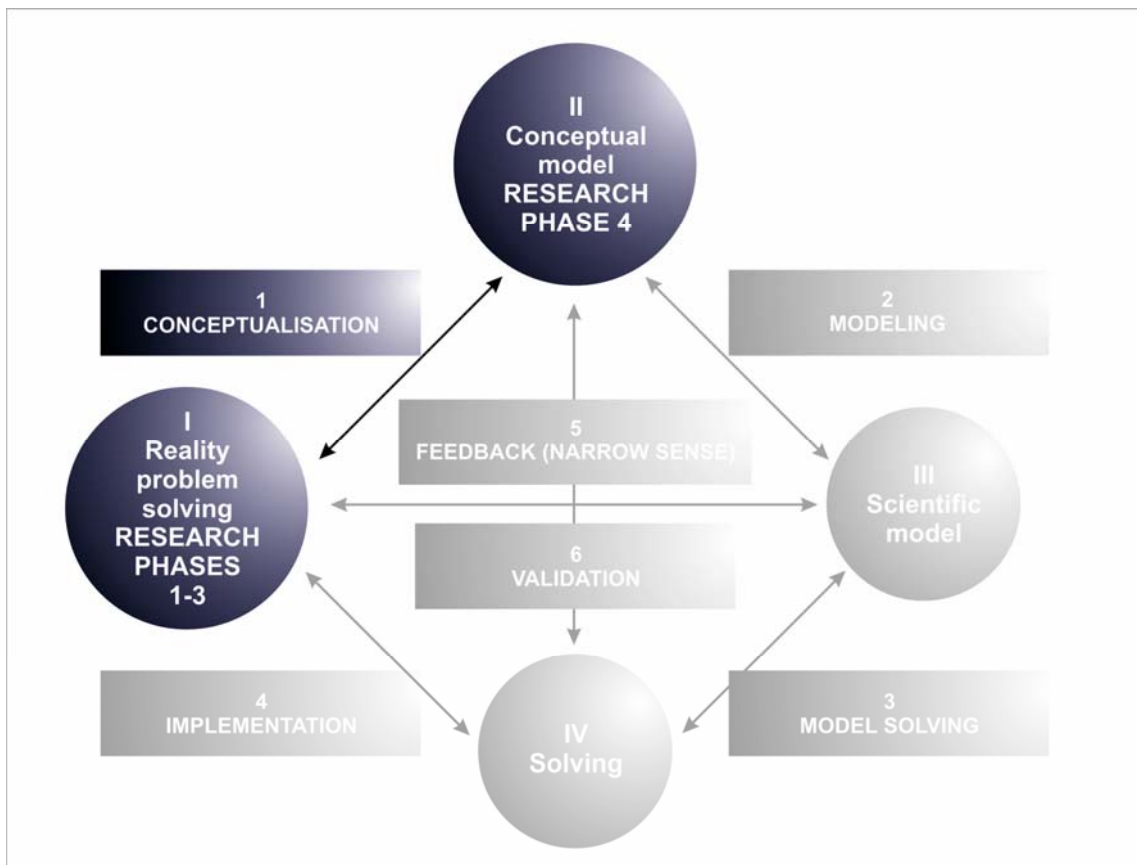


Figure 1.3: Application of Mitroff model to study (Mitroff *et al.* 1974:47)

1.5 META-THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND CONCEPTUALISATION

A theoretically sound investigation of the issue highlighted in the research problem of the study (see 1.2.1) is essential. A clarifying discussion is necessary to provide a comprehensive theoretical understanding of the origins of the mentioned problem. It is argued that, in order for an organisation to function successfully, it needs to function in the worldview of relationship management with a two-way symmetrical approach. The three main theoretical domains relevant to this study are integrated communication, integrated marketing communication, and intercultural organisational communication. Each of these theoretical areas consists of a range of sub-fields that influence the mentioned domains, with subsequent theories, which are relevant. Table 1.1 provides a summary of the meta-theoretical framework and conceptualisation of this study.

<u>Context</u>	Tertiary education institutions, and more specifically the multicultural environment of the UFS		
<u>Philosophical assumptions</u>	This study will be conducted within a constructivist paradigm. This paradigm assumes a relativist ontology, a subjectivist epistemology, and a naturalistic set of methodological procedures to develop an integrated marketing communication model that can be implemented in a multicultural environment.		
<u>Grand theory</u>	The grand theory of this study is that of systems theory driven by systems thinking.		
<u>Worldview</u>	Relationship management with a two-way symmetrical approach		
<u>Theoretical Domains</u>	Intercultural organisational communication	Integrated communication	Integrated marketing communication
<u>Descriptive sub-domains</u>	Intercultural communication Corporate culture	Corporate communication Managerial communication Marketing communication	Corporate focus Institutional processes Infrastructure
<u>Theories related to these domains</u>	New science systems theory Deal & Kennedy's strong cultures theory Peters & Waterman's excellent cultures theory	Interactional communication theory	Marketing systems theory Relationship marketing Customer relationship management theory
<u>CONCEPTS</u>	Thinking/reasoning Stereotypes Language Perception Materialism Collectivism/Individualism Power distance Male/female orientation Uncertainty avoidance Confusian dynamism	Public relations Employee communication Crisis communication Business communication Corporate advertising Media liaison Corporate affairs Communication auxiliary Internal communication External communication	Relationship management Brand integration Stakeholder-centricity Strategic consistency Stakeholder focus Sustainable success Mission marketing Stakeholder-conscious employees Message consistency Contact synergy Purposeful dialogue Financial accountability Cross-functional planning Core competencies Database management Integrated agency

INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION
through relationship management

ADAPTED TO A MULTICULTURAL MARKETPLACE
to build relationships with all stakeholders.

Proposed conceptual model for:

AN INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION MODEL FOR
MARKETING THE UFS

Table 1.1: Meta-theoretical framework and conceptualisation of the study

1.5.1 Philosophical assumptions and underlying theory of the study

All qualitative researchers have principles and beliefs that shape how they see the world and act in it (Bateson, in Denzin & Lincoln 1994:1). The network that contains the researcher's epistemological (What is the relationship between the inquirer and the known?), ontological (What kind of being is the human being? What is the nature of reality?) and methodological (How do we know the world or gain knowledge of it?) premises may be termed paradigm (Guba 1990:17). A paradigm or interpretive framework forms a basic set of beliefs that guides action.

According to Guba (1990:*ibid*) each interpretive paradigm makes particular demands on the researcher, including the questions that are asked and the interpretations that are brought to them. Four major interpretive paradigms structure qualitative research, namely positivist and postpositivist, constructivist-interpretive, critical (Marxist, emancipatory), and feminist post-structural.

This study is conducted within a *constructivist paradigm*. This paradigm assumes a relativist ontology (there are multiple realities), a subjectivist epistemology (the knower and subject create understandings), and a naturalistic (in the natural world) set of methodological procedures. According to Charmaz (2002:677) constructivist analysts view data and analysis as created from the shared experiences of the researcher and participants and the researcher's relationship with participants. This is a view shared by Henning (2004:115).

The grand theory of this study is that of *systems theory* driven by *systems thinking*. A system can be defined as a set of interrelated items that is interconnected and influence one another in an environment to produce a pattern that is different to the sum of its parts. In society systems exist in every arena, in family systems, mass media and organisational systems amongst others. All of these are composed of parts that exert an influence on one another. According to Montouri (2000:63) systems thinking provides a model for

seeing interrelationships among factors, rather than focusing on the individual factors (or circumstances) themselves.

Systems thinking can therefore be regarded as the application of the systems theory within the organisational context, focusing specifically on the interactivity and interdependence of the various segments in the organisation, whereas the emphasis of the general systems theory is on the greater wholeness of the system (Niemann 2005:21). According to Littlejohn and Foss (2005) and Backlund (2000:444) systems thinking enables a dynamic, holistic examination of an organisation. As it unfolds, it ensures that the changes made are in concert with environmental changes, demands, and constraints.

According to Littlejohn (2002) any system is made up of three components. All systems are made up of individuals (employees) or items. These objects all have attributes. Attributes refer to the qualities or characteristics of the objects. This can refer to the characteristics or traits of employees. Finally, these objects all have relationships with one another. All parts of a system are interconnected and dependent on the other parts. Thus, change in one part affects the rest of the system directly or indirectly. This aspect has great value for any system as any change in one part will influence other parts.

Another important aspect regarding systems is the fact that systems can be open or closed. Almost all systems in society are open. This implies that they give and receive matter and energy to and from their environment. An organisation may for example be affected by external competition.

All systems have certain characteristics (Littlejohn 2002). Every system is embedded within other supra-systems and have subsystems located within them. This refers to the *hierarchical aspect* of systems. Thus, the university is part of the society, but it has smaller systems (e.g. faculties, departments) within itself. Systems must be able to *adjust* to their environment. When an organisation begins to lose clients, it must be willing to *change* its strategy to

survive. All systems *interact with their environment* and are influenced by this interaction. Furthermore all systems provide a whole which is different to its parts. This is referred to as its *wholeness* and *interdependence*. All the parts are interconnected. Systems must strive to maintain a *balance* or homeostasis if they are to survive. *Self-regulation* and *control* are also important characteristics of systems. All systems seek to self-regulate themselves – usually through feedback. To conclude, *equifinality* should be present in systems (Littlejohn 2002). This refers to the task accomplishment or final stage of achievement of a system. An organisation must seek to achieve its goals. If one strategy does not work, another should be sought.

The theoretical approach to systems theory also signifies important aspects to be considered. Firstly, it shows that the exchange of information is essential to the survival of any system. If an organisation does not communicate with its employees, it will not function effectively. Another important factor is the continuous re-evaluation of systems and the structuring thereof. This will ensure there are no malfunctions and that information will flow smoothly. Within an organisation, if correct formal and informal communication structures are not in place, the system (organisation) will be affected negatively.

The cybernetic theory is also an important consideration within systems (Kreps 1990). A system must self-regulate to maintain balance and control (homeostasis). Thus, an organisation must listen to and react to the feedback of its clients to ensure its successful future. The general systems theory also contributes an important aspect. As mentioned before, all systems include sub-systems and all of these influence the supra-system. Thus, departments influence the university and the university influences the society.

However, one should also take cognisance of criticism against the systems theory. Firstly, not all communication is an exchange of information. Employees may use communication systems merely for gossip. Secondly, not all communication is efficient in achieving its goal. Thus, although a

communication system might be in place to deal with employee grievances, it may not make an impact. Thirdly, system theory does not account for the peculiarities of a particular system. Human beings within a system are not all the same. Human beings often account for malfunctioning in a system.

1.5.2 The worldview and domains of the study

According to Niemann (2005:23) it can be maintained that, as organisations need to maintain the “systemness” within the context of integration, the interactivity with the environmental system implies a worldview of relationship management within a two-way symmetrical approach. This holds true as shared communication and interdependence are fundamental to maintaining relationships within the organisation, as well as the greater system in which the organisation is functioning.

In this study an *interactional approach to communication* will be adopted. Communication is seen as a process, not a structure. It is inherently interactive, adaptive and transactional, and it evolves. It is regarded as the process by which meaning is shared and association is built up in the formation of groups and cultures, and by which interpersonal transaction, social position, action status and power are manifested, changed and, in some cases, diminished. The interactional view does not describe communication as an entity or activity that exists apart from people and their interactions. At the core of organisations are communicating, interacting and transacting individuals who actively shape their own behaviour.

Against this background, the theoretical domains within the paradigm of the systems theory in this study are intercultural organisational communication, integrated communication and integrated marketing communication. It should be noted that, based on the principle that a system is a set of elements that interact, this study is indeed undertaken from the worldview of relationship

management with a two-way symmetrical approach. A system is a set of interrelating units with relationships among them.

It is reasoned that organisational communication forms the context within which both integrated communication and integrated marketing communication are practised. Niemann (2005) suggests that communication management is linked to organisational management in that communication management is driven by the strategic intent of the organisation. This author also suggests that communication management is integrated with marketing management from a more holistic move (driven by systems thinking) towards relationship building in a two-way symmetrical approach. It is further argued that intercultural communication is integrated with organisational communication, as all organisations in South Africa function in a multi-cultural environment and consist of employees from different cultural backgrounds. (These theoretical domains and their constructs will be discussed in chapters three and four.)

The domains of the study are defined as:

- Intercultural organisational communication:

With the intention to understand the nature and scope of intercultural organisational communication, it is necessary to define what each component of the concept entail. Organisational communication refers to communication taking place among people working together to achieve individual or collective goals. Conrad and Poole (2005:3) propose that organisations must maintain at least an adequate level of communication effectiveness in order to survive and prosper. Communication is described by these authors as a process through which people, acting together, create, sustain, and manage meanings through the use of verbal and nonverbal signs and symbols within a particular context. Tubbs and Moss (2000:8) explain that the main purpose of communication is to create or generate shared meaning and as a result, truly effective communication is an interactive process.

Mersham and Skinner (2001:9) define an organisation as a relatively stable system of individuals who work together to achieve, through a hierarchy of ranks and a division of labour, common goals. Kreps (1990:19) adds that communication enables the organisational leader to direct the organisation as a whole and to adapt to changing tasks, conditions, and environmental constraints.

Intercultural communication occurs when a member of one culture produces a message for consumption by a member of another culture, suggest Samovar, Porter and McDaniel (2007:9). More precisely, these authors opine that intercultural communication involves interaction between people whose cultural perceptions and symbol systems are distinct enough to alter the communication event. Jandt (2004) supports this notion and describes intercultural communication as fundamentally about individuals communicating with other individuals with whom past experiences have not been shared. Intercultural organisational communication thus refers to the intercultural communication taking place within an organisational context.

- Integrated communication (IC)

Although numerous definitions of IC has been formulated, the definition of Niemann (2005) will be used as point of departure in this study. This author defines integrated communication as the strategic management process of organisationally controlling or influencing all messages and encouraging purposeful, data-driven dialogue to create and nourish long-term, profitable relationships with stakeholders (Niemann 2005:30).

- Integrated marketing communication (IMC)

The definition of IMC formulated by the American Association of Advertising Agencies (AAAA) (Belch & Belch 1998) captures a widely voiced perspective on

IMC and will be used at the onset of this study. The AAAA defines IMC as a concept of marketing communication planning that recognises the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of a variety of communication disciplines – general advertising, direct response, sales promotions, and public relations – and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency, and maximum communication impact. Shimp (2000) adds that IMC makes use of all forms of communication which are relevant to the customer and prospects, and to which they might be receptive. In sum, the IMC process starts with the customer or prospect and then works back to determine and define the forms and methods through which persuasive communication programs should be developed.

1.5.3 The descriptive sub-domains and concepts of the study

Taken from the three theoretical domains of the study, the sub-domains and related concepts are derived. Figure 1.4 illustrates these terms and the chapters in the study where it will be discussed.

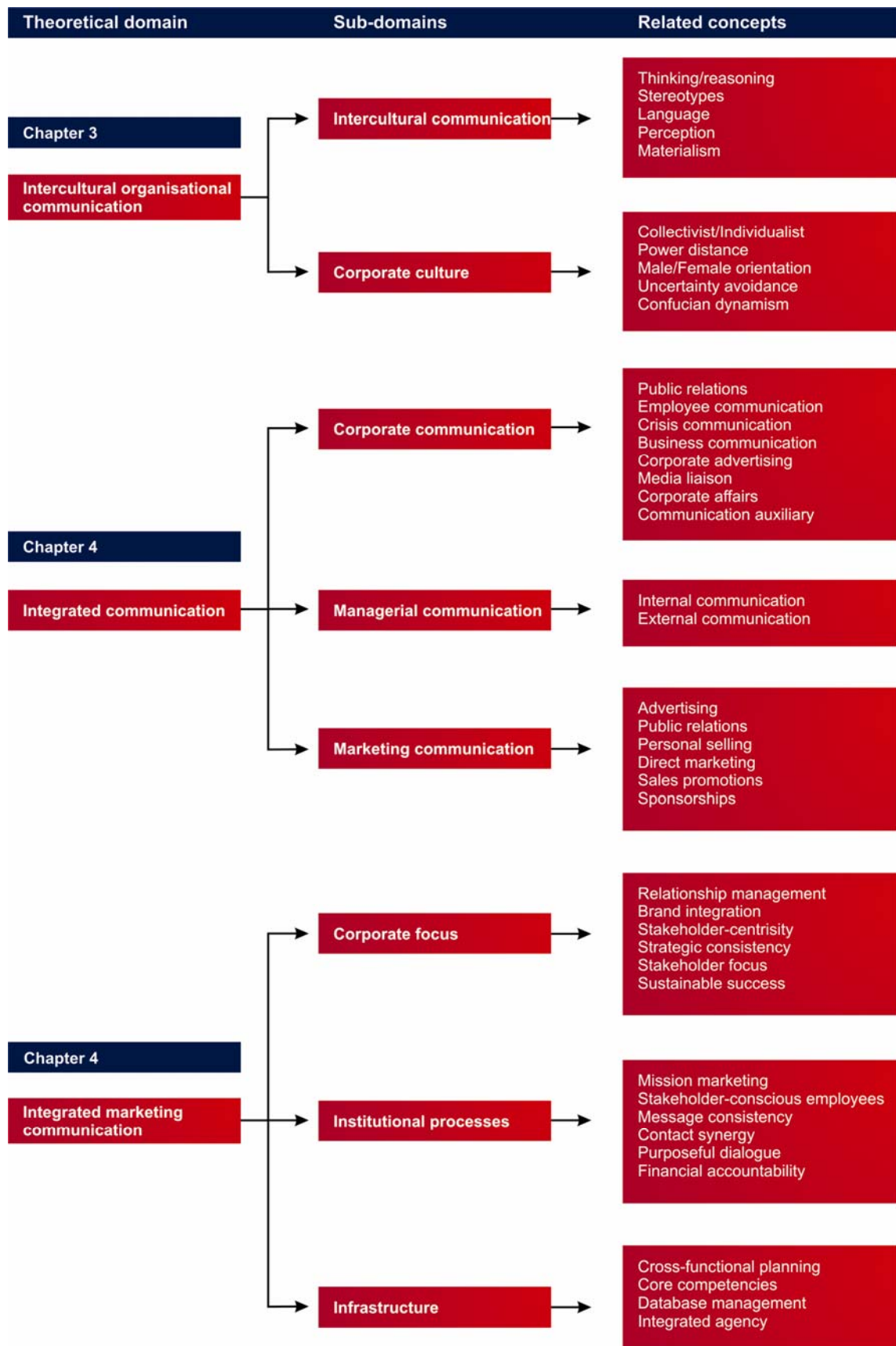


Figure 1.4: Domains, sub-domains and concepts of the study

1.6 STRUCTURING OF CHAPTERS

This study unfolds in eight chapters (including the current one). In chapter one a general orientation to, and rationale for the study was given. Issues addressed in this chapter included inter alia the purpose, focus and value of the study. The conceptual framework and meta-theoretical approach underlying the study were described. Furthermore, the necessity of the research and broad details of the research methodology of the study were discussed.

Chapter two will be devoted to the meta-theory of the research methodology used in all four phases of this study. As grounded theory is employed as overarching research strategy, it is advisable to give an overview of the research design and methods at the onset of the study. The data collection and -analysis techniques used will be discussed and the sampling design explored.

The context of the study is explained in chapter three. The higher education environment, and more specifically the University of the Free State as institution (and as an example of a multi-cultural marketplace in South Africa) and its current practices with regard to marketing and communication, is explored. Because of the dual focus in the context of this study, the second part of this chapter aims to explore the main features of a multi-cultural organisational environment.

The focus of the fourth chapter is the theoretical domains of integrated communication. It is argued that a systems approach to communication and marketing in an organisation culminates in integrated communication. The evolution of integrated communication is explored and the trends that necessitated this evolution are described. Attention is also paid to the conceptual foundations of IC that drive integration in an organisation. To conclude the chapter, the challenges organisations face in implementing IC are examined.

The important models used to date in IMC and IC are the focus of chapter five. As different models tend to focus on different aspects of a phenomenon, a wide-ranging number of models are included to better inform the formulation of a new model. South African models that are included in the discussion are those of Ehlers (2002) and Niemann (2005). The arguments formulated in chapter four regarding the theoretical foundation of IC are used to discuss and evaluate all the models.

Chapter six offers a discussion of the conceptual IC model for marketing the UFS that evolved from the first three phases of this research. In this chapter attention is paid to the incorporation of the basic principles of IC that are discussed in chapter four. Furthermore, it is indicated how the new model addresses lessons learned from other models (chapter five) and displays a sensitivity towards intercultural communication factors that can enhance effectiveness in a multi-cultural environment (highlighted in chapter three).

The second last chapter (chapter seven) provides the results of the focus group discussions held, the personal interviews conducted and the electronic questionnaires (phase four of this study) that were completed. The aim of phase four is to identify challenges and opportunities that are specific to the marketing and communication of the UFS. The phase is used to test the relevance and acceptance of the conceptual IC model (discussed in chapter six) among the UFS marketing and communication role-players.

In chapter eight the research questions and primary research objectives are dealt with to draw final conclusions and make relevant recommendations. Conclusive remarks regarding the conceptual IC model for marketing the UFS are provided. The chapter further focuses on the limitations and reliability of the study. Suggestions for future research on IC are highlighted. This chapter concludes with a critical reflection and summary of the study.

Figure 1.5 gives an exposition of the chapters and structuring of this thesis.

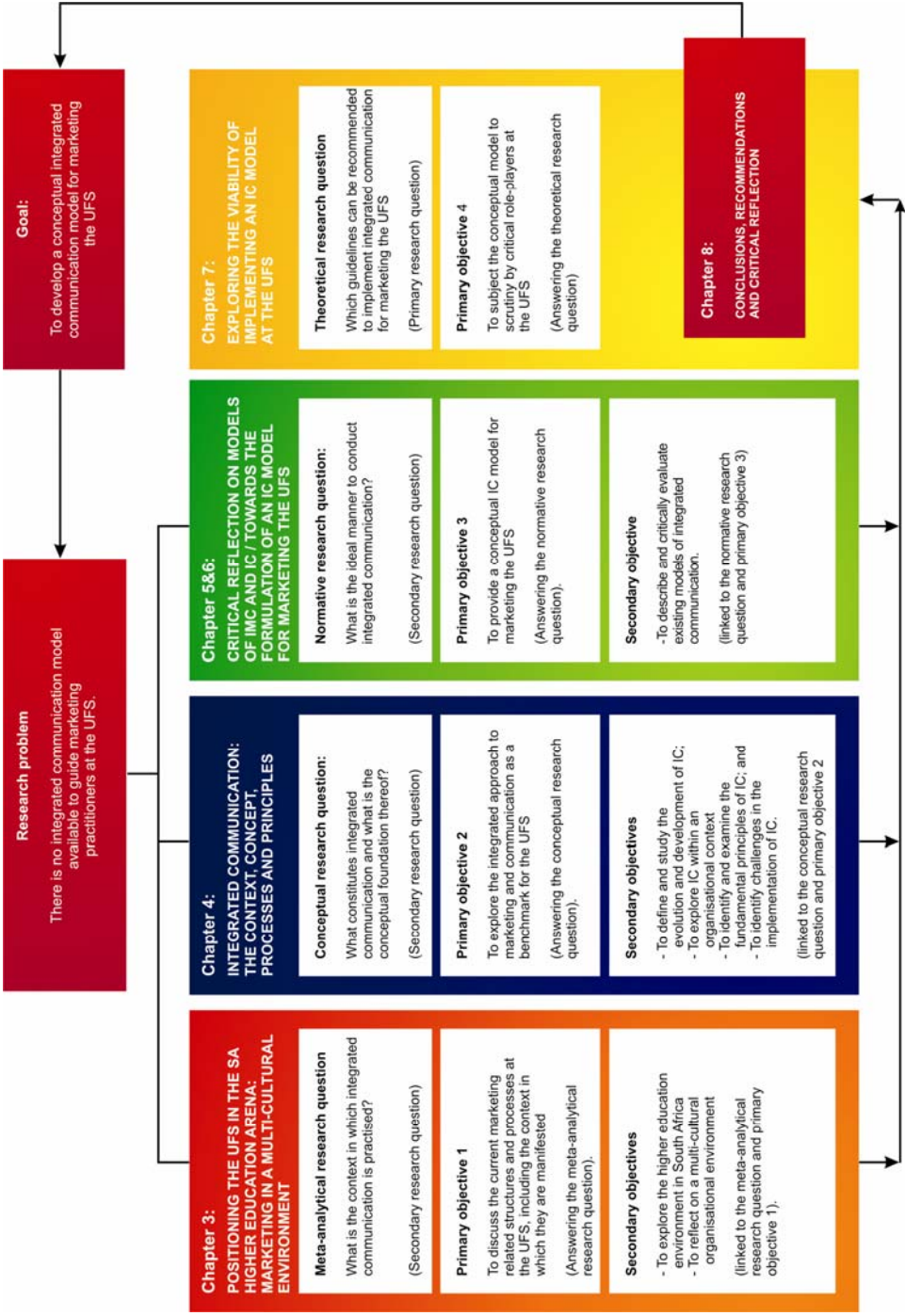


Figure 1.5: Exposition of chapters and structuring of the thesis

CHAPTER 2 RESEARCH PROCEDURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The research procedure is outlined in this chapter. As grounded theory is being practised from the outset of the research and will act as overarching research strategy, a complete exposition of the research design will be discussed in this chapter. The research methodology used in phase four will again be highlighted in chapter seven.

The literature review, historical research, conceptual research, focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and e-mail questionnaires (phases 1 - 4) will all be conducted within the grounded theory strategy and will be used to inform the proposed model that will be developed and tested in phase four. The comparative nature of the study necessitates an explanation of the research methodology before the research commences.

To confirm the focus of the study within the research parameters, the goal and primary objectives directed by the research questions of the study (highlighted in chapter 1, see 1.2) are framed.

2.2 GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

As mentioned in chapter 1 (see 1.2.3), the goal of this study is to develop an integrated communication model for marketing the University of the Free State. In order to reach this goal, primary and secondary objectives are formulated. The primary objectives are linked to the research questions identified (see 1.2.2). The secondary objectives are linked to the primary objectives. The primary objectives are:

- 1 *to discuss the current marketing related structures and processes at the UFS, including the context in which they manifest;*
- 2 *to explore the integrated approach to marketing and communication as a benchmark for the UFS;*
- 3 *to provide a conceptual IC model for marketing the UFS; and*
- 4 *to subject the conceptual model to scrutiny by critical role-players at the UFS.*

2.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

To successfully address the goal and objectives of this study, a certain research design is followed. Research design is defined by Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe (1990:21) as "...the overall configuration of a piece of research: what kind of evidence is gathered from where, and how such evidence is interpreted in order to provide good answers to the basic research question(s)". In simple terms, Babbie and Mouton (2001:74) consider the research design as a plan or blueprint of how the researcher intends to conduct the research.

Basic to the design of the research are four fundamental questions that must be resolved with respect to the data. The questions are: What data is needed? How will the data be secured? Where is the data located? How will the data be interpreted? (Leedy 1997:115). The rest of the discussion on the research methodology will address these questions.

2.3.1 The phases of the research process

As mentioned in chapter one (see 1.4) this study proceeds in four phases. The meta-analytical research question will be addressed in phase one. In this

phase a literature review will be performed to analyse the context in which integrated communication is practised. Phase one consists of two sections, first of all documents that discuss the higher education environment of South Africa, and more specifically the University of the Free State, will be explored. Thereafter, literature that reflects on an intercultural organisational environment will be studied. The rationale for this phase is to address primary objective one and to explore the context in which the proposed model will be implemented.

Phase two consists of three stages. Firstly, the writing of history to review the evolution and development of integrated marketing communication and integrated communication is evaluated. To understand marketing communication (and more specifically integrated communication), one has to go back to the roots thereof and scrutinise the path of development. "Innovation begins with abandonment. It's not what you start; it's what you stop that counts," says Drucker (in Schultz, Tannenbaum & Lauterborn 1994:1). This statement underlines the importance of knowledge concerning the development of integrated communication to understand the importance and effective application of new approaches to it.

Secondly, conceptual research will be conducted in stage two, and thereafter a literature review in stage three to identify and examine the fundamental principles of integrated marketing communication and integrated communication. The aim of the three stages in phase two is to address the conceptual research question, namely "what constitutes integrated communication and what is the conceptual foundation thereof?". This phase focuses on primary objective two.

Phase three involves a literature review to explore the different ways suggested to conduct integrated communication. Existing IMC and IC models will be discussed, compared and evaluated in this phase. The aim of this phase is to deal with the normative research question of this thesis (What is

the ideal manner to conduct integrated communication?) and in doing that, focus on primary objective three.

Finally, in phase four, focus groups discussions, in-depth interviews and e-mail questionnaires will be conducted with individuals involved with the marketing and communication of the UFS, as well as with members from the UFS residences. As mentioned earlier, grounded theory will be employed as research strategy to gather and analyse the data and to integrate the findings of phase four with that of the previous phases. The aim of this last phase (phase 4) is to identify challenges and opportunities specific to the UFS marketing and communication environment, and to substantiate the conclusions draw in the first three phases of the study (addressing primary objective four). Through the continuous interplay between the data of the different phases, a new IC model for marketing the UFS emerges. Figure 2.1 present a visual aid of the research design of this study.

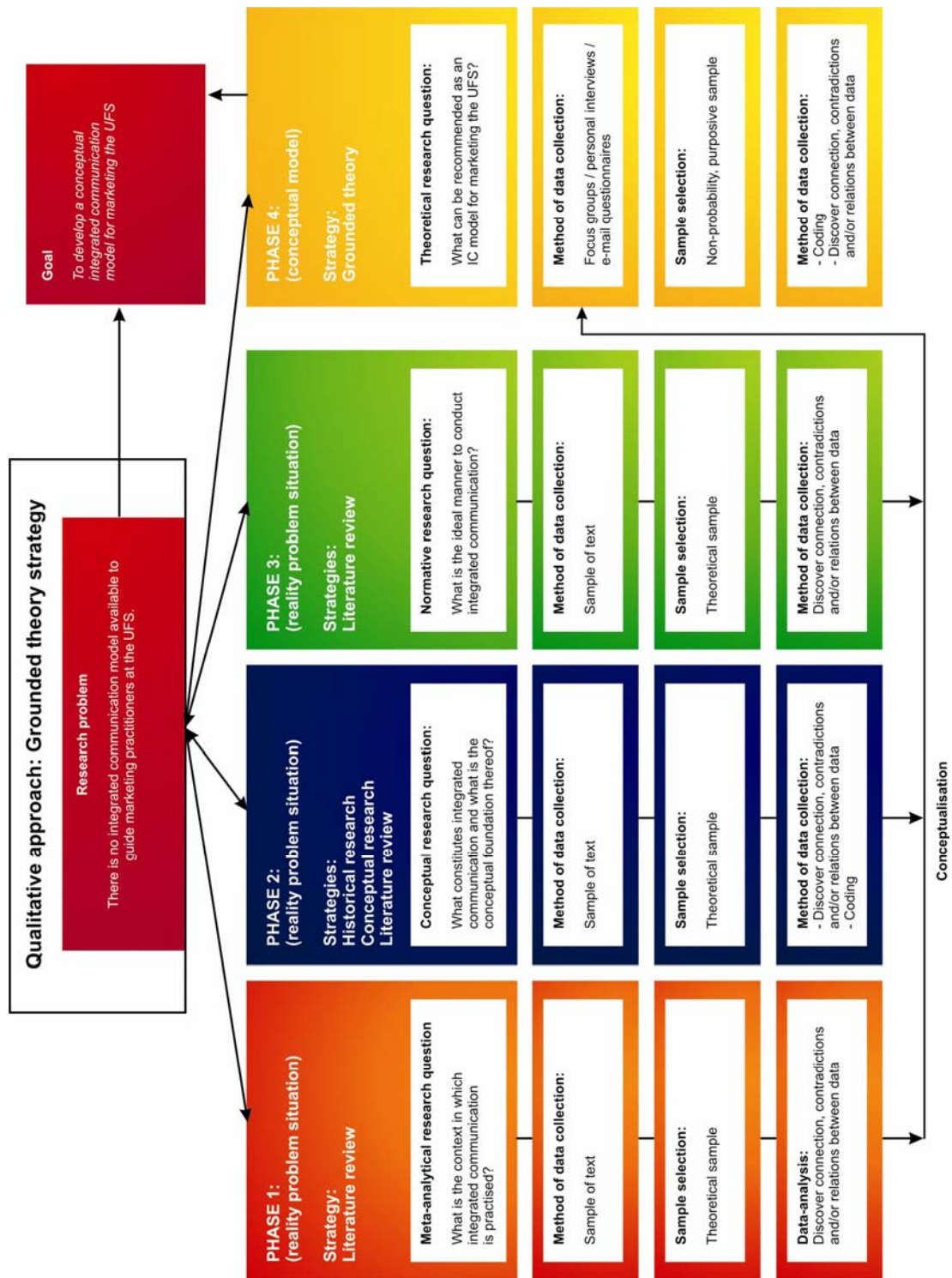


Figure 2.1: The research design

2.4 A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PARADIGM

A qualitative approach will be followed in all four phases of this study. The obvious advantage of qualitative inductive methods is the ability to derive theory from within the context of the data collected. Mouton (2001:37) suggests that the highest level of complexity in research is referred to as methodological paradigms, namely qualitative and quantitative paradigms. Qualitative research contributes towards a researcher's depth of understanding of the occurrence under investigation (Wimmer & Dominick 1997:49). Qualitative research methods are designed to help researchers understand people and the social and cultural contexts within which they live (Morse 1995). Kaplan and Maxwell (in Myers 1997) argue that the goal of understanding a phenomenon from the point of view of the participants and its particular social and institutional context is largely lost when textual data are quantified. Furthermore, a qualitative research approach is relevant in studies focusing on the development of theory or models (Morse 1995; Brink 1991; Polit & Hungler 1987) as is the case in this thesis.

Qualitative research also affords the opportunity to describe, interpret, evaluate and verify (Brink 1991:15; Leedy & Ormrod 2001:148). These authors define description as "revealing the nature of certain phenomena, processes, situations or systems". They see interpretation as "gaining insight in the nature of a particular phenomenon, developing concepts, theoretical perspectives or models, or discovering problems that exist within the phenomenon". Evaluation is described as "providing a means through which a researcher can judge the effectiveness of particular policies, practices, or innovations" and verification "allows the researcher to test the validity of certain assumptions, claims, theories or generalisations within real-world contexts" (Leedy & Ormrod 2001:148).

When evaluated against the goal and objectives of this study, it becomes apparent that there are direct links between the above-mentioned purposes or advantages of qualitative research and this study. In this study, the development and nature of integrated communication *will be described*. Attention will also be paid to the scope of intercultural marketing communication. As insight is gained into the nature of the IC phenomenon it will be *interpreted* and the conceptual foundation of the term will be developed. Theoretical perspectives and models will also be studied to discover problems and opportunities that might exist within the phenomenon. Following the Mitroff model of problem solving in systems thinking, this research will also *evaluate* the data to judge the effectiveness of the particular practices. However, this study will not include verification that will allow the researcher to test the validity of certain assumptions, claims, theories or generalisations within the real-world context.

Against this background the researcher contends that a qualitative approach is a feasible approach to follow to attain the goal and objectives of this study.

2.5 RESEARCH STRATEGIES

The general principle is that the research strategy or strategies, and the methods or techniques employed, must be appropriate for the questions you want to answer (Robson 1998:38). Just as there are various philosophical perspectives that can inform qualitative research, so are there various qualitative research strategies, which can be employed.

A research strategy is a method of inquiry. The choice of research strategy influences the way in which the researcher collects and analyses data. Specific research methods also imply different skills, assumptions and research practices. Different research strategies in qualitative research include amongst others action research, case study research, literature review, ethnography, phenomenology, historiography, grounded theory,

content analysis and conceptual research (Leedy & Ormrod 2001; Mouton 2001; Denzin & Lincoln 1994).

The overarching strategy used for constructing a substantive theory in this thesis is grounded theory. The idea is that substantive theory from the data can feed into the theory without being driven by the theory, as suggested by Henning (2004:47). In other words, the inquiry is not theory-driven, but data-driven. Grounded theory is described by Leedy (1997:111) as a qualitative research strategy aimed at deriving theory through the use of multiple phases of data collection and interpretation. Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Creswell (1994) describe it as a set of procedures for analysing data that will lead to the development of theory.

Qualitative research generates large amounts of non-standard data that makes analysis problematic. The grounded theory method has been advocated as a way of handling these problems. However, grounded theory is much more than that. Grounded theory is a general methodology for developing theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analysed. Glaser and Strauss initially presented this methodology in their book *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (1967). The method they developed is also called the constant comparative method. According to Martin and Turner (1986) grounded theory is an inductive, theory discovery methodology that allows the researcher to develop a theoretical account of the general features of a topic while simultaneously grounding the account in empirical observations and/or data. Strauss and Corbin (1990) support this notion and suggest that grounded theory is a strategy, which can be used to develop a theory and to ground the theory in the data, which supports the existence of a theory. The major difference between grounded theory and other methods is its specific approach to theory development – grounded theory suggests that there should be a continuous interplay between data collection and data analysis.

As suggested earlier, this study will be conducted in four phases. In each one of the phases the researcher identified appropriate data collection and interpretation strategies to address the various research questions and objectives of the specific phase. For the sake of clarity, the rest of the discussion will be done according to the four phases highlighted in figure 2.1 that illustrates the research design followed in this study.

Phase 1: Literature review

In phase one a literature review will be used to explore and analyse the context in which integrated communication is practised. Because of the dual nature of the context (higher education institution – UFS, and a multicultural organisational environment), this phase will consist of two different stages. In both stages a literature review will be employed.

According to Wellington, Bathmaker, Hunt, McCulloch and Sikes (2005:73) the undertaking of a **literature review** allows the researcher to:

- Define what the field of study is by identifying theories, research, and other ideas with which the study connects;
- Establish what research has been done which relates to the research questions;
- Consider what theories, concepts and models have been used and applied in the field of study; and
- Identify the “gaps” or further contributions that this research can make.

In this study, the researcher used the literature review in phases one, two and three to address all of the aspects highlighted by Wellington *et al.* (2005). Strauss and Corbin (1990) describe two types of literature that might be used in this methodology. Technical literature includes handbooks and articles and can be used in the following ways:

- ❑ to develop theoretical sensitivity to the area;
- ❑ to develop secondary sources of data such as quotations;
- ❑ to develop questions for use in guiding additional data searches;
- ❑ to develop a theoretical sample; and
- ❑ as a means to partially validate theory as it is developed.

Non-technical literature includes letters, reports, newspapers and other materials that are considered primary data, to be analysed for theory development (Strauss & Corbin 1990:55). In this study both technical and non-technical literature will be employed to realise the above-stated objectives. Glaser and Strauss (1967) suggest the use of library material in triangulation with field data (as will be the case in this study).

The researcher bent on theorising needs to take steps to reduce the gaps in the data by achieving theoretical saturation before concluding field studies (Hueser 1999). In both stages of phase one, technical as well as non-technical literature will be examined.

Phase 2: Historiography, conceptual research and literature review

In phase two, three different research methods will be used to address the research questions.

Phase 2 / Stage 1: Historiography or historical research

The main aim of the first stage of phase two is to structure various popular views on the development of marketing communication. In order to attain this objective, historiography was employed. **Historiography or historical research** attempts to fashion a descriptive written account of the past. According to Matejski (in Berg 1995:161) it is at once descriptive, factual, and fluid. Historiography attempts to systematically recapture the complex nuances, the people, meanings, events, and even ideas of the past that have

influenced and shaped the present (Leedy 1997). Tuckman (in Denzin & Lincoln 1994:306) suggests the historical knowledge is essential to the interpretation of an argument. It is a study of the relationships among issues that have influenced the past, continue to influence the present, and will certainly affect the future (Glass 1989). The major impetus in historical research is, as with other data-collection strategies, the collection of information and the interpretation or analysis of this data. Historical research will be conducted to seek out implications of and/or relationships between approaches in marketing communication from the past and their connections with the present.

Advantages of historical research as pointed out by Leedy (1997:174) are:

- Historical data is never petrified and static;
- The historical researcher does not merely relate *what* happened but can also present a *factually supported* rationale to explain *why* events happened; and
- If primary data is used, it tends to ensure the integrity of the study and strengthen its reliability.

Disadvantages of historiography:

- The authenticity of documents (if primary sources are not used) can be questioned; and
- Different people ascribe different meanings to different words. This can influence the internal evidence of a study (Leedy 1997:175).

<i>Phase 2 / Stage 2: Conceptual research</i>
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In the second stage of phase two, conceptual research will be used to determine what constitutes integrated marketing communication and integrated communication. Conceptual research is considered by Friedl, De Vos and Fouché (in De Vos 2002) as a type of advanced literature review, studying source material (in this particular study definitions of IMC and IC)

which contain information pertaining to the concepts in which one is interested. Conceptual research is an accepted method of textual investigation, particularly in the field of communication (De Vos 2002).

The process of conceptual research has not been documented extensively. However, the three stages recommended by Sartori (1984:11) will be followed in this study (see 2.7)

While working inductively, the researcher looks for emergent patterns in the data. First of all the constructs that are present in the definitions of IMC are identified (anatomy). Thereafter the constructs are clustered according to general themes (reconstruction). These general themes then become the concepts (concept formation) that describe the meaning of the constructs of each cluster.

Conceptual research is a form of inductive analysis, which means that the patterns, themes, and categories of analysis come from the data; they emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on them prior to data collection and analysis (Walker 1985). Although no documented advantages and disadvantages of conceptual research could be found, the following aspects can be highlighted:

Advantages:

- It is an “unobtrusive” measure.
- The data is in permanent form and hence can be subject to reanalysis, allowing reliability checks and replication studies.
- It may prove a “low cost” form of longitudinal analysis when a series of documents of a particular type is available.

Disadvantages:

- The documents available may be limited or partial.

- The documents have been written for some purpose other than for research, and it is difficult or impossible to allow for the biases or distortions that this introduce (triangulation with other accounts, data sources are used in this study to address this problem).
- As with other non-experimental approaches, it is very difficult to assess causal relationships.

The outcomes of the conceptual research phase are to summarise a usable collection of characteristics comprising the concept, then presenting them in the form of a final definition (see 8.2.2.1).

Phase 2 / Stage 3: Literature review

- In the last stage of phase two, a literature review will be used to explore the theories elementary to the disciplines from which integrated communication developed.

Phase 3: Literature review

In order to determine what the ideal manner is to conduct integrated communication, a literature review was performed. The literature review was employed to critically analyse and examine existing models of IMC and IC.

Phase 4: Grounded theory

In phase four, the last phase of this research and also the zenith of the study, the second part of the normative research question of this thesis will be addressed. Grounded theory will be employed in this phase to identify challenges and opportunities specific to the UFS marketing and communication environment. The acceptability and relevance of the theoretical underpinnings of integrated communication and the concept

format model that at this stage has evolved from the data, will be examined in this phase.

2.6 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

The research method chosen in each phase of this study determines the technique of data collection. As the study progresses, theoretical insights and linkages between categories should increase, making the process exciting as “what is going on” will finally becomes clearer and more obvious. Data collection and sampling will be dictated by and directed entirely toward the emergent model, as Denzin and Lincoln (1994:230) suggest should happen.

Phase 1: Literature review

Phase 2: Historical research, conceptual research and literature review

Phase 3: Literature review

The literature of science is a permanent record of research facilitating communication among scientists. Significant research literature on the topic constitutes the data that will be used in the literature reviews of phases one, two and three.

In the conceptual research, small numbers of texts and documents are analysed. A sample of text on IMC and IC definitions will be evaluated.

Phase 4: Focus groups / in-depth interviews / e-mail questionnaires

Interviews are frequently the main source of the information one will develop the theory from, but any data collection methods can be used (Kvale 1996; Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell & Alexander 1995). Focus groups are frequently used in qualitative research (Barbour & Kritzinger 1999), and are suited to grounded theory (Henning 2004; Charmaz 2002). So is informal conversation, group feedback analysis, or any other individual or group

activity that yields data. Focus groups will be used in phase four. It will be supplemented with personal interviews and e-mail questionnaires. The personal interviews will be used to obtain information from senior staff/managers who, in terms of hierarchical authority, play both an operational and strategic role. Personal interviews were selected for these respondents because they can shed optimal light on the issue that is investigated. Furthermore, their presence during focus group discussions may have inhibited the employees as they might not speak as freely in the presence of their supervisors. Some respondents were not available for personal interviews or a group discussion. They were asked to respond to the e-mail questionnaire.

The data from the focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and e-mail questionnaires will be used to confirm the relevance of the research findings in phases one to three, and to assist in the development of a conceptual IC model for marketing the UFS.

2.7 UNITS OF ANALYSIS AND SAMPLING FOR THE STUDY

The unit of analysis refers to the object, phenomenon, entity, process or event that the researcher will be investigating (Mouton 2001:51). In this study the existing body of scientific knowledge on integrated marketing communication, integrated communication, and multi-cultural communication forms the basic unit of analysis. This will be supplemented by focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and e-mail questionnaires (during phase 4) with people who are responsible for marketing or communicating about the UFS brand. An addition, historical documents, policy documents, reports on research conducted by the UFS, and marketing strategies will be drawn on to develop the emergent model.

In the following section an exposition is given of the specific sampling technique that will be used in each one of the phases of this study.

Phase 1: Literature review

Phase 2: Historical research, conceptual research and literature review

Phase 3: Literature review

Theoretical sampling is used in all three above-mentioned phases. Charmaz (2006:189) declares that, when a researcher engages in theoretical sampling he/she seeks people, events, or information to illuminate and define the boundaries and relevance of the categories. Glaser and Strauss (in Melia 1982:329) define theoretical sampling as based upon what they call “saturation of categories”. Data is collected as long – and only as long – as they are adding to the development of a particular category. Once a situation is reached where nothing new is emerging, then the category is deemed saturated. Charmaz (2006: *ibis*) calls this phenomenon theoretical saturation.

As categories emerge from the data, the researcher will then seek to add to the sample in such a way that diversity is increased in useful ways. The purpose is to strengthen the emerging theory by defining the properties of the categories, and how these mediate the relationship of category to category. The data-collection and -analysis will be completed when theoretical saturation is obtained (Charmaz 2006). In other words, the process of response-analysis-reconstruction-response continues until no new information is acquired. The data for the historical research section of phase two (stage 1) will consist of a theory-based or operational construct sample of articles (both printed and electronic) and textbooks published from 1960 to 2007. In operational construct sampling, the researcher samples incidents, slices of life or documents on the basis of their potential manifestation or representation of important theoretical constructs. The sample becomes, by definition, representative of the phenomenon of interest (Patton 1990:176).

The data for the literature review (stage 3 in phase 2) will consist of primary publications i.e. specialised handbooks and articles from journals (both printed and electronic). When selecting the literature, the researcher will concentrate on the chosen topic and the objectives set for the study (i.e. exploring the basic principles of IC). The same procedure will be followed when compiling the unit of analysis for phase three (examining existing models on IMC and IC). The material will be obtained through title searches on the databases NEXUS, SACat, Sabinet and the Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (NDLTD). Internet searches will also be performed by means of EBSCOHOST.

Phase 4: Focus groups / in-depth interviews / e-mail questionnaires

In phase four, a non-probability, purposive sample will be used. The participants of the focus groups, in-depth interviews and e-mail questionnaires will be selected based on their specific position at the UFS in relation to marketing and communication responsibilities. It is critical not to simply get the view from executive management, as they may not be in touch with the current situation regarding the marketing and communication activities of the UFS, or alternatively may not be aware of the extent of potential communication and marketing related issues the employees are experiencing. The mentioned respondents will represent a theoretical “population” in that they are spokespersons for the topic of inquiry (Henning 2004:71).

Against the background of the recent unrest experienced by the UFS because of hostel integration policies that were implemented at the beginning of 2008, it was decided to include respondents from this area in the research to determine whether the proposed model could address specific issues pertaining to this area of marketing and communication. Representatives of residence management and primarii were therefore included in one focus group.

2.8 DATA-ANALYSIS

In a grounded theory study, data analysis involves four procedures, namely open coding, axial coding, selective coding and the development of the theory (Charmaz 2006; Leedy & Ormrod 2001; Miles & Huberman 1994; Strauss & Corbin 1990; Glaser & Strauss 1967). Leedy and Ormrod (2001:154-155) describe the four procedures as follows:

- Open coding: The data is scrutinised for commonalities that reflect categories, or themes, within the data. After the data is categorised, it is further examined for properties – specific attributes or subcategories – that characterise each category. In general, open coding is a process of reducing the data to a small set of themes that appear to describe the phenomenon under investigation.
- Axial coding: Interconnections are made among categories and subcategories. Here the focus is on determining more about each category in terms of the conditions that give rise to it, the context in which it's embedded, the strategies that people use to manage it or carry it out, and the consequences of those strategies. The researcher moves back and forth among data collection, open coding, and axial coding, continually refining the categories and their interconnections as additional data is collected.
- Selective coding: The categories and their interrelationships are combined to form a story line that describes “what happens” in the phenomenon being studied.
- Development of the theory: A theory in the form of a visual model will be offered to explain the phenomenon in question. The model depicts the evolving nature of the phenomenon and describes how certain conditions lead to certain actions or interactions, how those actions or

interactions lead to other actions, etc. The model will be based on the data collected in all four phases.

During the analysis stage the data will be interpreted. The researcher will review the material that was collected and evaluate it carefully. The data will be sorted and categorised into various topical themes. This strategy allows the researcher to identify patterns within and between the sources. The topics in the historical research component are grouped and presented according to timeframes (1960-1970; 1971-1980; etc.).

According to Sartori (1984:11) data analysis in conceptual research involves anatomy, reconstruction and concept formation. Determining the anatomy of a concept means that its constituting elements (characteristics, properties and/or attributes) are identified. Reconstruction means that these constituting elements are reorganised and represented in a logically sound manner. Concept formation can be described as a definition. Here the concept is described as broadly and widely as possible. The formulation of a definition is the outcome of the data analysis in this stage.

As grounded theory is used in all four phases, constant and continuous comparisons will be drawn between the data derived from each one of the four phases in this study. This will give rise to the theory that is grounded in the studied material. A model will be used to depict this theory on IC as evolving phenomenon. In Figure 2.2 an illustration of grounded theory as overarching research strategy is depicted.

2.7 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter was to discuss the meta-theory of the research methodology of this study. The research paradigm, strategy and data-collection and -analysis methods were discussed. The four phases of the study served as basis for this discussion and were used to provide clarity regarding the research procedures followed in this study. From chapters

three to seven the detail discussed in this chapter will be applied to develop an IC model for marketing the UFS.

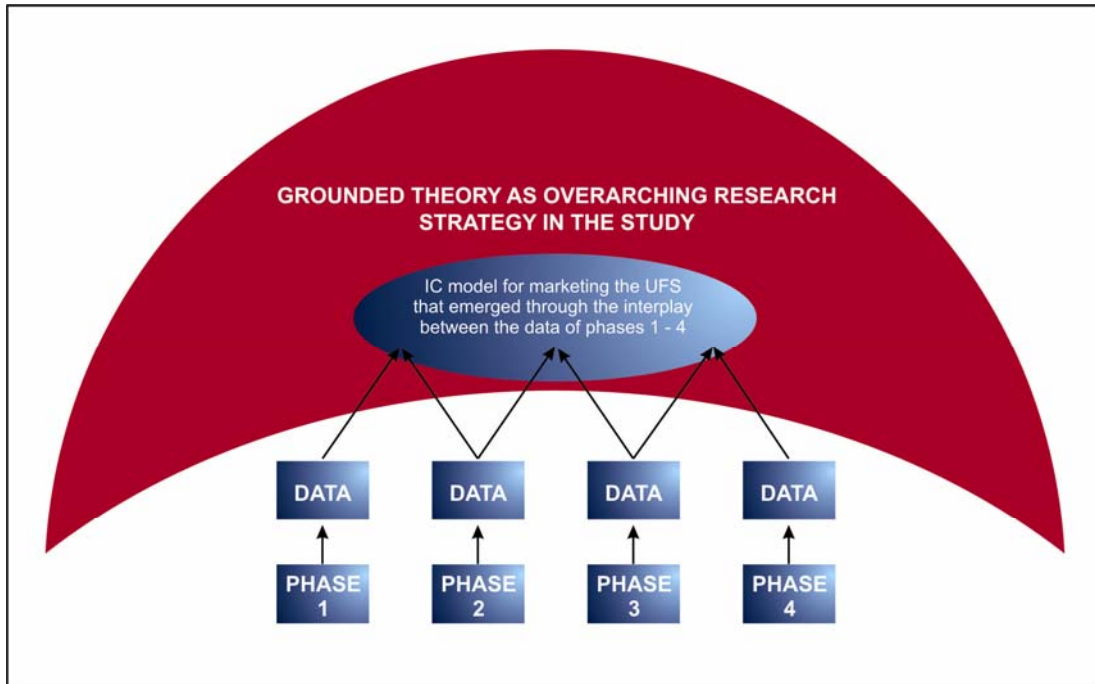


Figure 2.2: Illustration of grounded theory as overarching research strategy

CHAPTER 3

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE: A MULTI-CULTURAL SOUTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The context within which a research project is undertaken is of utmost importance as it has a direct influence on the outcome of the results and also determine the unique characteristics needed to be successful in that specific framework. In this study an IC model for marketing the University of the Free State will be developed. The context of the study is thus the higher education environment of South Africa and more specifically the UFS. But also significant is the internal environment of the university, which is a typical illustration of a multi-cultural organisation in South Africa.

In this chapter a brief overview will be provided of the broader context of the study, namely the higher education landscape in South Africa. Thereafter the history, organisational structure, and latest marketing and communication related activities of the UFS will be documented. Furthermore, the multi-cultural organisational communication characteristics of an institution like the UFS will receive attention.

3.2 THE SOUTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT

Since 2000 the education landscape in South Africa has undergone immense changes. Public tertiary institutions were merged during the period 2000-2004 to form new institutions, while a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) was implemented to regulate the programmes on offer by the tertiary institutions. The result was the formation of a number of newly-named institutions intended to meet the requirements of both the NQF and the specific needs of industry in the South African economy (Department of Education 1998:19-20).

Due to the above changes, universities and technicons (now known as universities of technology) have been reorganised to meet the needs of different target markets in South Africa (Department of Education 1998:19-20). These changes have been implemented with the intention of reaching government's objectives for equity, efficiency and development (Pandor 2005:2).

Along with these changes in the educational landscape, marketing and marketing communication have also undergone significant changes. De Wet (2001), and Niemann, Crystal and Grobler (2003) agree that dramatic changes have occurred in the tertiary education domain in South Africa. Up to the late 1980s, tertiary institutions had operated in a regulated environment, with guaranteed subsidies and the resulting students. Marketing was then viewed as a commercial concept that was relevant to commercial organisations but not to educational institutions (Mzimela 2002:1-2). However, a top-down approach to communication is no longer relevant. Markets are now exposed to a "sphere of cross influences" from a number of different information sources (Edelman 2004:7). Communication and marketing practitioners therefore need to review existing marketing and communication practices if they are to meet the new information needs of their markets. A study conducted by Kotler and Fox (1995) highlights the link between environmental changes and the marketing communication of tertiary institutions and suggests that the tertiary educational domain needs to adapt its marketing communication approach because of the environmental factors threatening its functioning. Smith, Scott and Lynch (1995) documented the extent to which the marketing communication activities of universities have been undergoing fundamental changes. These authors emphasise the need for IMC and the application of IMC within the tertiary educational domain to adjust to the environmental changes.

The idea of markets in higher education (or the marketisation of higher education) is suggested by Marginson and Rhoades (2002), and is also evident in education policy such as the National Plan for Higher Education (NPHE). In this document the Ministry of Education (2001:8) acknowledges that the most

important consequence of the absence of a national plan has been the development of a competitive climate between public higher education institutions. This competitive climate has been fuelled by the emergence of a market in higher education as a result of a growing private higher education sector.

The Ministry regards the intensified competition between public higher education institutions as the product of two related factors: a decline in student enrolments in the late 1990s and financial constraints resulting from pressure on financial resources. Financial constraints have been an important factor in the rise of markets in higher education (Van Wyk 2005:42)

Van Wyk (2005) presents the idea of a “corporate university”. This author suggests that the “corporate university” is the direct result of markets in higher education. Bostock (in Van Wyk 2005) is of the opinion that corporatisation means that universities are assumed to be very similar to large businesses and therefore capable of being run as businesses. The corporate university is predominantly characterised as an institution that pursues technical excellence and follows a supplier/customer model of the basic educational relationship.

3.3 THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE

Situated in Bloemfontein in the Free State province in central South Africa, the University of the Free State (UFS) was established in 1904 as the first higher education institution in the Free State. The institution was first known as Grey University College (GUC). The institution grew from humble beginnings with only a handful of students to become a vital link in the country’s tertiary education system with more than 25000 students enrolled in 2008.

3.3.1 Historical overview

The humanities and natural science faculties were the first introduced at GUC. The university started out with six students. By 1920, 100 students were enrolled. However, circumstances were strained, and growth and prosperity were slow. After successful student recruitment and fund-raising, the student number increased to 420 in 1927.

By 1950, the most important professional faculties (commerce, law and education) had been added and student numbers had reached 1000. This period was characterised in particular by language conflict, in which Rector DF Malherbe (1929-1934) was a strong campaigner for Afrikaans. After 1948 the UCOFS (University College of the Orange Free State), which succeeded the GUC, became an Afrikaans-only university.

On 18 March 1950 the UCOFS attained its independence as university. During this time the UOFS (University of the Orange Free State) experienced systematic growth without significant financial constraints and was an Afrikaans “people’s university” moulded on Christian-Nationalist principles, inextricably embedded in the dominant political dispensation of apartheid and separate development (Fourie 2004:461). Other professional faculties were gradually established (agriculture and medicine) and student numbers rose to 2000 in 1960, 4000 in 1970 and 7000 in 1975. The ideal of a fully-fledged, independent university had, to all intents and purposes, been realised.

However, the period 1976-1989 was one of political instability and transformation in South Africa. The UOFS became politically and academically isolated, both from within South Africa and internationally. The university had to adapt to the changing environment and in 1978 the first black postgraduate students were enrolled. This was the start of the multi-cultural era for the UOFS. Student numbers gradually increased to 9000 in 1988.

From 1990 – 2004 the UOFS awoke to the reality of the transition to a post-apartheid society and an ANC-led government. To facilitate fair access for black students, the dramatic decision to institute parallel-medium education in 1993 signalled the beginning of multi-lingualism as well as the speedy admission of black students. The university became a leader in transformation, taking on a multi-cultural and multi-lingual character, based on a Christian foundation, and its name was changed to the University of the Free State (UFS). Former South African president Nelson Mandela praised the UFS for the enthusiasm and innovation with which the institution reacted to the challenges of transformation. According to him the UFS “represents a model for many in this regard”. Student numbers rose dramatically from 10 900 in 1999 to more than 23 000 in 2004.

In 2004, when the higher education institutions were merged, the QwaQwa and Vista-Bloemfontein campuses were incorporated with the University of the Free State. During this year a new language policy, which extended multi-lingualism to management and administration; as well as the purposeful establishment of an institutional culture of multi-culturalism; multi-lingualism; non-racialism and non-sexism; a culture of tolerance and equity in diversity were approved. The UFS celebrated its centenary in a campus climate of harmony and prosperity, but major challenges still remained in terms of transformation, multi-lingualism and diversity (Fourie 2004).

3.3.2 Present-day UFS

Today, the UFS hosts approximately 25000 students in six different faculties, namely the Humanities, Economic and Management Sciences, Theology, Law, Agriculture and Natural Sciences, and the Faculty of Medicine. These faculties house several departments, units and schools.

Two imperatives that the UFS and all other higher education institutions are confronted with are excellence and transformation. In February 2007 the draft UFS Institutional Charter was launched. This document is an important

document to underpin the transformation of the university. This document aims to provide a clear framework and vision of the kind of university the UFS must be after transformation and after the necessary redress phase (Fourie 2008).

This document has direct relevance to this study as it implies that the UFS will have to be repositioned in terms of its intrinsic qualities and functioning, and in the minds of the public, the corporate world, the national and international higher education sector and other key stakeholders. As basis for this repositioning five mega-projects have been identified, namely: strategic academic clusters, the teaching and learning model, new income streams for higher levels of financial sustainability, institutional culture and institutional charter and finally the transformation plan. In addition to these projects, two strategically critical and generic enabling projects were included, namely the promotion of a research culture at the UFS and – of the most importance to this study – to continue to build the profile of the UFS and to develop a positive image of the UFS in terms of the national media and national mindset. The recent rumblings and concomitant negative publicity (nationally and internationally) because of a racist video produced by members of one of the residences of the UFS, made the repositioning and more effective marketing of the UFS a priority to the management team.

The previous paragraph emphasises the importance of effective marketing for the UFS to address some of the mentioned strategic priorities set for this university. In the following section the current marketing and communication situation will be described.

3.3.3 UFS marketing and communication

Early documentation on the marketing and communication functions at the UFS and a personal interview with the Director of Marketing (Van Rooyen 2008) have revealed that both these functions were managed from a central division called the Public Relations Bureau of the university. However, the university's

marketing and fundraising activities were restructured in 2003. Two independent divisions were created, namely UFS Marketing, and Strategic Communication (Fourie 2008:374).

Strategic Communication is responsible for internal communication (the staff newsletter *Dumela*, formerly known as *Informa*, as well as electronic communication via the Intranet and Internet), and *Bult* – a publication focusing specifically on UFS alumni. The section also handles media liaison and administrates the university web page. Corporate Liaison, formerly known as the UFS Foundation, forms part of UFS Marketing. UFS Marketing is responsible for recruiting new students, building and maintaining relationships with the university's Alumni, and contributing to the financial sustainability of the UFS (Van Rooyen 2008a; Van Rhyn 2008). UFS Marketing has satellite offices in Kimberley, QwaQwa and Pretoria.

These two sections function separate from one another. They are situated in different office blocks on the Bloemfontein campus, and report to different authorities. The Strategic Communication section reports to the Chief Director: Community Service, but also has a direct line of communication with the Rector of the university. The Marketing section's line manager is the Chief Director: Operations. The UFS executive management structure, with the positions of the directors of Strategic Communication and UFS Marketing in the organisational management chart is depicted in figure 3.1.

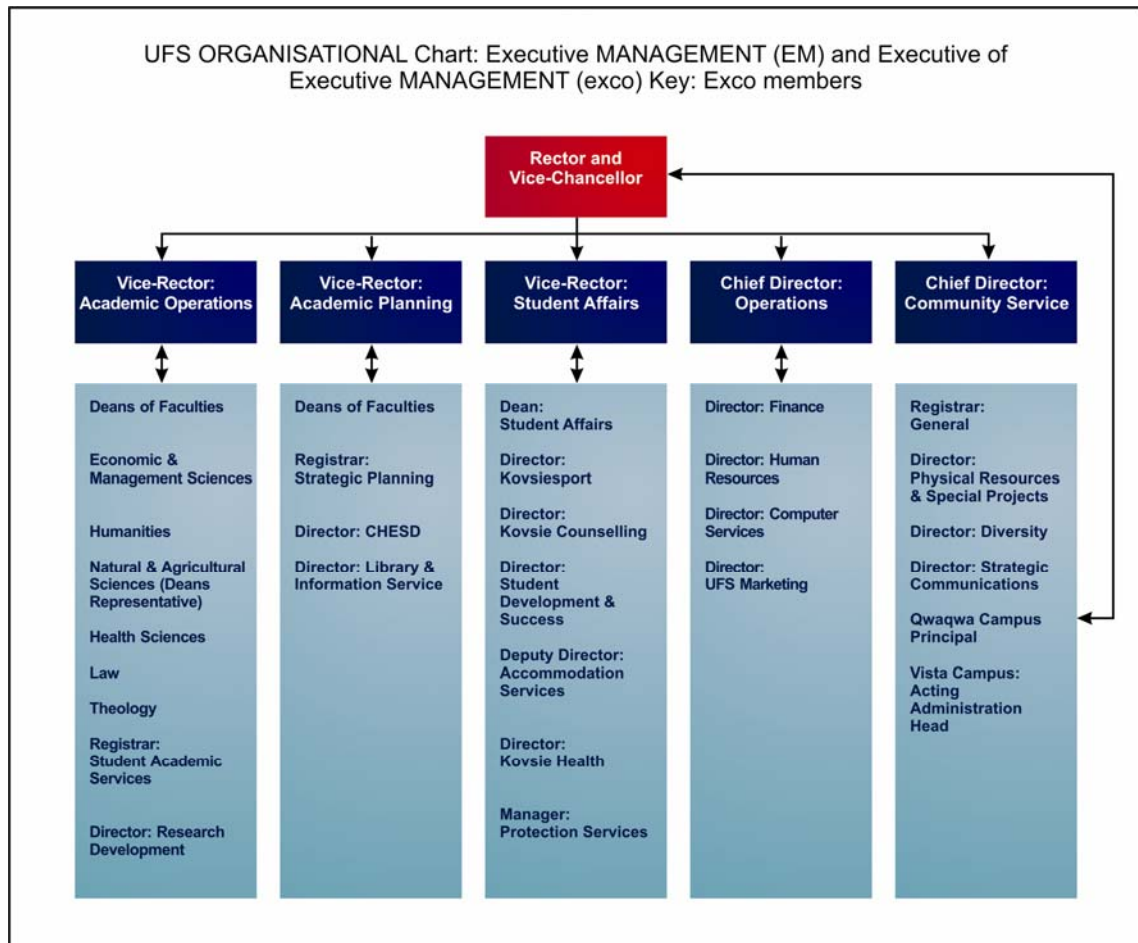


Figure 3.1: UFS organisational chart – Executive management

Both these sections have a small staff complement. The Strategic Communication division has six staff members, and the Marketing section has 20 staff members at present. Both these divisions are headed by directors whom are supported by a deputy director in the case of Strategic Communication and three deputy directors in the Marketing section. At UFS Marketing there are three business units, namely Programme Marketing, Alumni and the UFS Trust. Both Strategic Communication and UFS Marketing are responsible for the marketing and communication of all three campuses, namely the Bloemfontein campus, the QwaQwa campus and Vista-Bloemfontein.

In 2000, as part of the UFS turnaround strategy, the faculties were instructed to market themselves. When the marketing function was (to a certain degree) decentralised to the faculties, the results were spectacular. Some 90 new teaching programmes were developed and presented from 2001 onwards, while the number of first-year and postgraduate students rose phenomenally. However, no brand blueprint, corporate identity manual or any other marketing guidelines were provided during this time and most programmes were marketed in isolation. This resulted in a fragmented brand and no real positioning strategy in place (Van Rhyn 2007).

At present, four of the six faculties of the UFS have individuals appointed by the Dean of each faculty to help with their marketing activities. However, in two instances these individuals are academics who still have academic responsibilities. The other two faculties do not have any dedicated marketing or communication staff members. Only two of the faculties have a dedicated person who is responsible for the marketing and communication activities of the faculty. Only one of them is a full-time employee of the UFS, while the other is a consultant.

In all the faculties a number of programmes are presented. Each programme is managed by a Programme Director. The Programme Director is an academic specialist in the field of his/her programme. Apart from overseeing the program's academic content, quality and presentation, marketing the programme is also part of this person's responsibility, although most do not have any marketing background or education.

The Programme Directors form part of their faculty's marketing committee with the chairperson of the committee being a member of the UFS marketing advisory committee. The meetings of the UFS marketing advisory committee take the format of an information session where UFS Marketing informs the members about marketing related issues. At present, this committee does not really fulfil any advisory function. On the other hand, the faculty marketing

committee meetings are used to convey information from the marketing advisory committee to the Program Directors. The marketing committees of the faculties and the marketing advisory committee meet once a term.

In figure 3.2, the UFS organisational chart: Governance and management structure is illustrated. It is alarming to note that marketing and communication do not feature on this chart.

The previous discussion highlights the evolution that the UFS has undergone. From Grey College, a poor Free State community with initially hesitant steps, the minimum of faculties and buildings, to a broad spectrum of basic and professional faculties and buildings. The UFS has become a strong, mature university over little more than a century (Fourie 2004:467). However, one of the challenges that still remains, and that forms the focal point of this study, is to be effective in a multi-cultural, transforming organisational environment and more specifically to conduct marketing and communication effectively in a multi-cultural organisational environment.

3.4 A MULTI-CULTURAL ORGANISATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Contemporary societies in many parts of the world are increasingly characterised by a multi-cultural population composition. In order to address integrated communication (and subsequently marketing communication) quality and effectiveness, one needs to analyse and give prominence to the important role that culture plays in these processes, because communication and culture are inextricably linked.

“Our culture tends to determine our thinking on issues and our behaviour towards the people around us,” say Van Staden, Marx and Erasmus-Kritzinger (2007:45). The South African landscape is regarded as a heterogeneous and

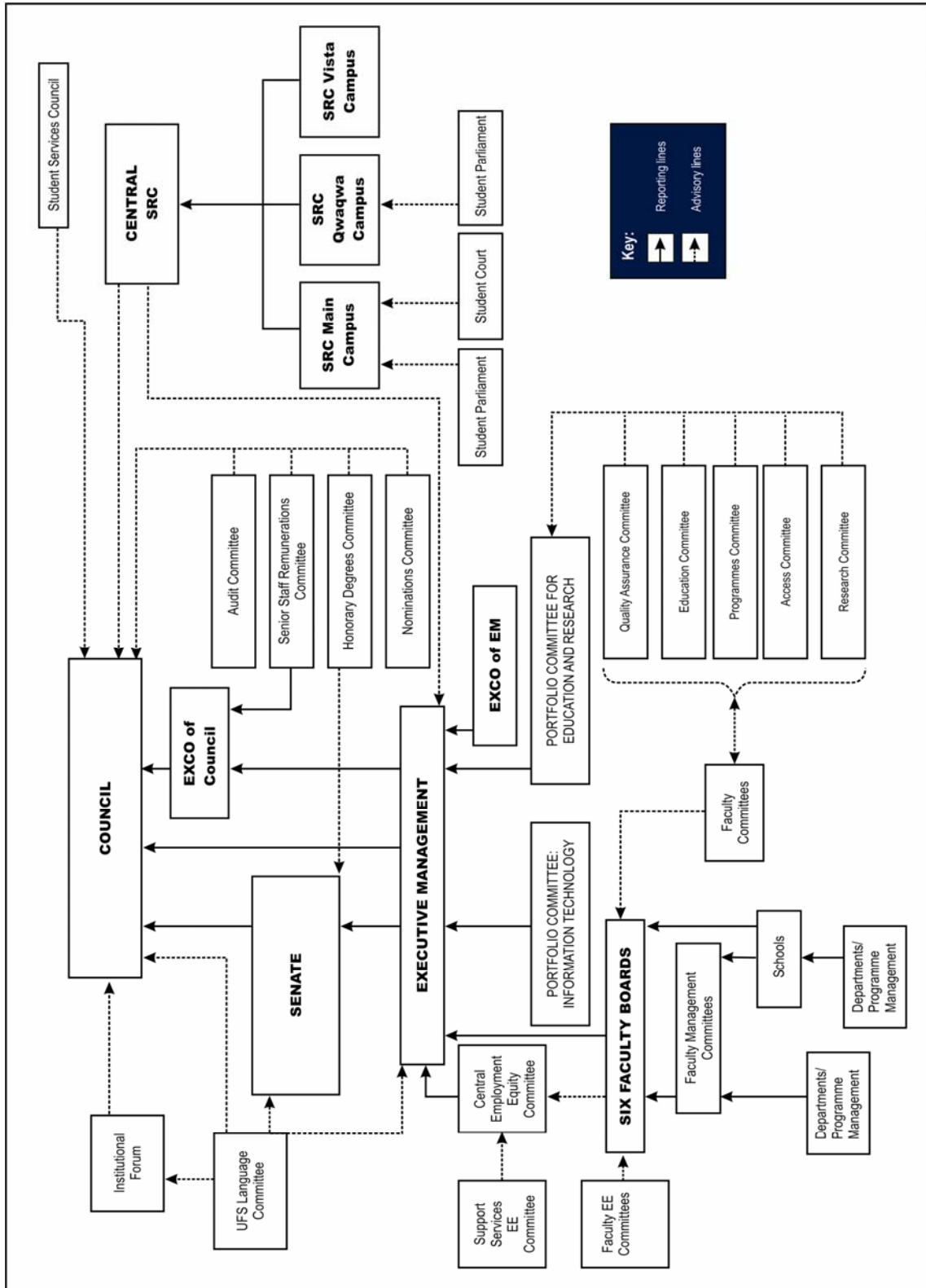


Figure 3.2: UFS organisational chart – Governance and management structure

complex composition of individuals. Communicating effectively in such an environment is a daunting challenge. However, Werner (2007) is of the opinion that it is essential for organisations to move away from perceiving diversity as a process of managing numbers, to a process where diversity is recognised and utilised as a competitive advantage. The purpose of the next section is to emphasise the need for cultural sensitivity and to explore the opportunities diversity offers to organisations employing integrated communication.

3.4.1 Culture defined

Culture gives an individual identity and is the code of conduct that a person lives by. Culture is learned, shared, and passed on from one generation to the next. It influences the very existence of an individual, because it is a way of life. Jandt (2004) describes intercultural communication as fundamentally about individuals communicating with other individuals with whom past experiences have not been shared. Culture is described by Samovar, Porter and McDaniel (2007:20) as a set of human-made objective and subjective elements that in the past have increased the probability of survival and resulted in satisfaction for the participants in an ecological niche. Culture thus became shared among those who could communicate with each other because they had a common language and they lived in the same time and place. Hall (2005:5) summarises the previous author's opinions by stating that culture is a historically shared system of symbolic resources through which we make our world meaningful.

Moulder (1992:19) highlights five claims about culture. These claims are firstly that everyone's culture **has been created** for them, and largely by people who are older than they are and who began to shape their behaviour, beliefs, attitudes, feelings, and values from the moment that they were born. Secondly, everyone's culture is **always changing**, because they are always adapting to new groups of people and to new social, political, and economic situations. Thirdly, **none of the members of a cultural group is totally homogeneous**; that is why new groups are always coming into existence and cease to exist.

Fourthly, ***no cultural group is totally unique***; this is why some individuals from extremely different backgrounds and with extremely different life experiences manage to form alliances and to co-operate with each other. Finally, it is ***difficult to change the culture*** that one inherits because it has taught one how to behave, as well as what to believe, to feel, and to value; and most people, once they have learned these things, want to keep it that way. To this Saeed (2005) adds the fact that culture is ***ethnocentric***, which is an obstacle to intercultural communication as it reflects a tendency for one group of people to regard their culture as superior to others. For all these reasons it is not easy to formulate effective integrated communication strategies in multi-cultural environments.

3.4.2 The growing importance of intercultural communication awareness

Marketers who face cultural diversity in both internal and external environments have to take cognisance of the impact culture can have on their success. The study of culture as it relates to business has emerged as a distinct field of study (Frey-Ridgway 1997). Marketing, communication and marketing communication endeavours that were successful ten years ago will not necessarily have the same successful impact today. According to Mulder (2007) cultural sensitivity must become central to organisational operations.

Misunderstanding between people of different cultures often arises from differences in values and priorities. To this Oosthuizen (2004:61) adds the importance of frame-of-reference in communication. Knowledge of these obstacles reinforces the need for cultural sensitivity among all members of organisations and their stakeholders. In the following discussion, the main obstacles to effective intercultural communication, as described by Saeed (2005:77-80), are highlighted briefly.

3.4.2.1 Different modes of thinking and reasoning

Different structures of reasoning can cause communication breakdown between people from different cultures. Western cultures are considered as abstract in character, while Eastern cultures are characterised as contextual. According to Irwin and Moore (1994), this means that when Japanese people interact with Australian business people, they are often seen as too polite to express their opinion or hold no opinion at all, when they frequently change their minds. Worldviews, as discussed by Hall (2005), can be seen as underlying to the differences in thinking and reasoning between cultures. This author describes worldviews as abstract notions about the way the world is. According to Hall (2005:31) they are usually the premises upon which challenges and debates are conducted. Worldviews are sometimes referred to as value orientations; however, values are grounded in beliefs about the way the world should be rather than assumptions about the way the world is (Hall 2005:50). Closely linked to this concept are norms. Norms can be considered as social rules for what certain types of people should and should not do (Hall 2005:52). All of the above mentioned concepts have a direct bearing on the thinking and reasoning between people from different cultures.

3.4.2.2 Stereotyping

Stereotypes are those perceptions or beliefs harboured of groups or individuals based on preconceived opinions and attitudes (Van Staden, Marx & Erasmus-Kritzinger 2007). Miller (2006) differentiates between two aspects related to stereotypes, namely prejudice and discrimination. Prejudice refers to negative attitudes toward another person based on his/her culture group identity. Hall (2005:202) defines prejudice as a rigid attitude that is based on group membership and predisposes an individual to feel, think, or act in a negative way towards another person or group of persons. Discrimination refers to observable behaviour for the same reason (Miller 2006:264).

3.4.2.3 Language

Language differences can produce barriers to cross-cultural understanding and organisational communication. Difficulties associated with the translation of English into a foreign language (or vice versa) often leads to linguistic blunders (Sae 2005:78). At the UFS a policy of parallel language use is in place. However, meetings and other working arrangements are conducted in English, even though English is the majority of the people's second language.

2.4.2.4 Perception

Perception is a process by which individuals view reality and make sense of it (Werner 2007; Kreps 1990). Perception precedes and affects our judgment and decision-making (Weiss, in Sae 2005). The subjective nature of perception often causes barriers to effective intercultural communication.

3.4.2.5 Materialism

According to Sae (1998) most Western cultures place importance on material acquisitions and tend to equate materialism with success. However, some societies place little or no value on material acquisitions and regard materialism as vulgar and greedy. They resist being identified or related with people who tastelessly flaunt wealth (Sae 2005:80). The multi-cultural nature of students and staff members of the UFS bring about that both of these perspectives prevail at the UFS.

3.4.2.6 Religion

Many people's worldviews are affected by their religion. Religion affects the way in which people in an organisation relate to each other and to outsiders (Sae 2005:80).

3.4.2.7 Ethnocentrism and parochialism

Individuals who practise parochialism view the world exclusively from their own cultural perspective. They adamantly maintain that “my way is the only way” (Sae 2005:27). These individuals do not give recognition to other people’s culture. Ethnocentric individuals acknowledge cultural differences, but consciously (or subconsciously) believe their culture is superior (Van Staden, Marx & Erasmus-Kritzinger 2007; Sae 2005). Although not scientifically tested, the incidents that happened on the UFS campus at the beginning of 2008 demonstrate that there are still individuals who support one of these viewpoints.

Research on communication in South African organisations done by Rensburg (1993) highlighted the cultural complexity of the South African environment. A management study of Australian national and multinational organisations revealed the centrality of intercultural communication (Sae 1998). To manage a culturally diverse organisation effectively, each individual has to be encouraged to reach his/her full potential in pursuit of the organisation’s objectives (Jenner in Sae 2005). According to this author, that means developing a **corporate culture that fundamentally fosters and values cultural diversity**. When considering De Wet’s (2005:54) view of culture as the values, activities, and products of a relatively large human group through which it responds to its conditions of existence, the corporate culture of an organisation could be an effective vehicle to address multi-culturalism in an organisation. Van der Wal and Ramotsehoa (2001) as well as Rensburg (1993) are in favour of this argument and state that diversity in organisations can only be managed effectively when the organisational culture is appreciative of diversity.

3.4.3 Organisational / corporate culture

Corporate or organisational cultures are unique and provide a stimulus for employees behaving in ways unique to the organisation. Werner (2007:2) states

that most definitions of organisational culture agree that it refers to a system of shared assumptions held by members, which distinguishes one organisation from others. According to De Chernatony (2001) organisational culture acts as the “glue” uniting staff in different locations to act in a similar manner. Informally it is referred to as “the way we do things around here” (Jandt 2004:419). Jandt (2004) also describe it as the **set of values, goals, and priorities** that is encouraged through the policies and procedures of the organisation. Sae (2005:274) supports this notion and adds that managers should take responsibility for institutionalising cultural diversity as the main ethos and guiding principles within their organisation so that **organisational processes, policies, and practices** are seen to reflect cultural diversity in every conceivable way.

Dombai and Verwey (1999:126) are of the opinion that organisational or corporate culture determines socialisation, power relationships, policies and procedures, reward systems, discourse systems and ideology, all of which have a significant impact on the day to day experiences of all employees. Sae (2005:140) adds to this that corporate culture reflects shared values, beliefs, norms, expectations, and assumptions that bind people and systems together. This author suggests that like an iceberg, corporate culture has both visible and invisible elements. The observable aspects include the physical setting, language, stories, legends, myths, heroes and heroines, ceremonies, behaviours, and dress. The visible aspect is indicative of the underlying dimensions, that is, the values, assumptions, beliefs, attitudes, and feelings of members as well as unwritten rules about the environment, time space, relationships, and activities (Weiss, in Sae 2005:140; Werner 2007:4). Simply put, the way in which an individual experiences his or her organisation is by and large a function of the organisational culture (Dombai & Verwey 1999:126; Rensburg 1993:77).

Deal and Kennedy (1982) argue that organisational success can be enhanced through the development of a **“strong” culture**. These authors are of the

opinion that if an organisation has the components of a strong culture, it will be a better place for individuals to work and will improve both individual and organisational performance. Deal and Kennedy (1982) identify four key components of a strong culture, namely: values, heroes, rites and rituals and cultural network, which refers to the communication system through which cultural values are instituted and reinforced.

Peters and Waterman's (1982) "Excellent cultures" theory highlights several themes related to excellent organisations. These themes are:

- Excellent organisations gear decisions and actions to the **needs of customers** - The importance of people, e.g. "a close relationship with the customer" and "productivity through people" are important themes.
- Excellent organisations **react quickly** and do not spend excess time planning and analysing.
- Excellent organisations encourage employees to **take risks** in the development of new ideas.
- Excellent organisations encourage **positive and respectful relationships** among management and employees.
- Excellent organisations have employees and managers who **share the same core values** of productivity and performance.
- Excellent organisations stay **focused on what they do best** and avoid radical diversification.
- Excellent organisations **avoid complex structures** and divisions of labour.
- Excellent organisations exhibit both **unity of purpose** and the diversity necessary for innovation.

3.4.4 Features of organisational culture

Common characteristics in the various ways organisational culture is seen, as described by Saeed (2005:141), are listed below:

- Organisational culture defines a boundary in creating distinctions between one organisation and another. In other words, each organisation projects its uniqueness in terms of who it is and what it stands for.
- Organisational culture conveys a sense of identity for organisational members.
- Organisational culture facilitates the generation of commitment to something larger than interest in oneself (Mead, in Sae 2005:141).
- Organisational culture provides the necessary standard that an employee recognises and is willing to honour. It is the organisational ethos.
- Management relies on its organisational culture (or ethos) as the driving force behind the successful operation of an organisation rather than the formal, traditional structures of control (Ivancevich, Olekans & Matteson 1997; Peters & Waterman 1982).

3.4.5 Functions of organisational culture

The functions of organisational culture can be summarised as follows:

- It creates a corporate identity that distinguishes one organisation from others;
- As a result, it gives members of the organisation an identity;
- Identifying with the organisation creates greater commitment to organisational goals and objectives;
- Organisational culture guides employees in terms of acceptable behaviours and attitudes, especially when they have to make decisions and solve problems;
- It creates social system stability with associated emotional security;
- It serves as a yardstick for evaluating and correcting deviant behaviours and for rewarding desired behaviours (Werner 2007:1).

3.4.6 Types of organisational culture

One of the most renowned researchers in the field of culture and cultural differences is Hofstede (1980; 1984). Hofstede has identified five “value” dimensions that is often used to explain differences in organisational culture. Hall (in Conrad & Poole 2005:388) added the low context / high context culture dimension to the already developed culture types identified by Hofstede. In the next section these dimensions will be elaborated on. It is important to take note of the fact that the dimensions do not exist in isolation, but normally the presence of one dimension presupposes the presence of some of the others.

3.4.6.1 Collectivism vs individualism

People in collective societies learn to place a high value on solidarity, cooperation, and concern for others. They prefer to work in groups (Werner 2007). In these cultures a person’s identity is closely tied to his/her membership in important referent groups. Their communication tends to be guided and constrained by concerns about hurting the other person’s feelings, minimising impositions placed on the other person, and avoiding negative evaluations of the other person. In contrast, individualistic people learn to value competition and independence from other people or groups. According to Werner (2007) individualistic people prefer to make their own decisions and stay emotionally independent of others. Conrad and Poole (2005) suggest that they prefer communication that is clear, efficient, and effective, and they adapt their own communication to correspond to those guidelines.

Individualism is a very strong value. Before the UFS was transformed, most of the students and staff members came from a Western background in which individualism is strongly embedded. Currently, the majority of students come from an African background which value collectivism: an injury to one is an injury to all. It can therefore be said that amongst students of the UFS the collectivistic dimension reigns supreme, but amongst staff members the

individualistic dimension is still dominant. This might change in the near future as the profile of the staff component at the UFS is also changing.

3.4.6.2 Power distance

Power distance indicates how power is distributed in an organisation. It refers to the amount of power supervisors can acceptably exercise over their subordinates (Conrad & Poole 2005). Werner (2007) suggests that a high power distance is reflected in more levels of hierarchy, a narrow span of control and centralised decision-making. Employees are expected to submit to authority and demonstrate respect to management. Low power distance is reflected in organisations that emphasise networking and collaboration. In this cultural value employees would probably call managers by their first names and freely communicate with them.

At the UFS, as at all universities, a strong hierarchical structure exists. This brings about several layers of ranks and protocol procedures that need to be followed. As a result, decision-making sometimes takes very long. Titles are linked to ranks, and persons are addressed by these titles. These are some of the distinguishing features of an organisational culture where a high power distance occurs.

3.4.6.3 Male / Female orientation

This orientation refers to the extent to which the culture values the stereotypically masculine traits of assertiveness, competitiveness and materialism (Werner 2007), or the stereotypically feminine attributes of cooperativeness, nurturing, quality of relationships, supportiveness and interdependence (Conrad & Poole 2005; Werner 2007).

The UFS has a predominant male orientation. Although the university is working towards gender equity and has gender equity policies in place, several of the

top management positions are still held by males. At the time the study was undertaken, only 9% of the executive management team of the UFS was female. This results in an environment where assertiveness and competitiveness are more prevalent than stereotypical feminine attributes like supportiveness and nurturing.

3.4.6.4 Uncertainty avoidance

The degree to which people are uncomfortable with ambiguity and risk and therefore prefer to work with long-term acquaintances or friends rather than with strangers is seen as the avoidance of uncertainty by Conrad and Poole (2005). Organisations with strong uncertainty avoidance rely on formal rules and procedures to control events and create security. Such organisations avoid taking risks (Werner 2007). Those cultures high on the uncertainty avoidance scale tend to show their emotions more freely than members of cultures on the opposite avoidance extreme (Van Staden, Marx & Erasmus-Kritzinger 2007).

With regard to this cultural value, it is difficult to position the UFS in one of the two categories. It can be argued that the staff members of the UFS demonstrate low uncertainty avoidance as they have been through several phases of change over the last couple of years. The UFS successfully underwent a turn-around strategy and is in the process of transformation, adapting to the new South African context. Although some of staff members embrace the changes and are enthusiastic about new technologies and ideas that can be implemented to improve their work environment, there is a rather large component of the staff members that grapple with these changes.

Most students do not affirm change. Two incidents that recently occurred on the UFS campus is testimony to this claim. At the beginning of 2008 racial tension on campus reached new heights because of residence integration policies implemented by UFS management. Numerous similar events have taken place

on the UFS campus over the years. The student corps of the UFS can therefore be considered high on the uncertainty avoidance scale.

3.4.6.5 Confucian dynamism

This concept differentiates cultures in which people learn to take a short-term time orientation (low Confucian as in the United States) from cultures like China where a long-term one is preferred (Conrad & Poole 2005:388). People from the USA will therefore go to a business meeting with contracts ready to be signed at the end of the meeting. People from China on the other hand will opt for several follow-up meetings, to get to know their potential business partners first, before they will sign any contract. Even though this dimension, added by Hofstede (2001; 1997) to his original system, has received many criticism (amongst other against the research methods used and the tendency to equate nationality and culture), it is worth taking note of.

As universities are results-driven (and financially-driven), and academic achievement and research output are expected of students and staff members alike, the organisational culture at the UFS can be considered to have a predominantly short-term time orientation.

3.4.6.6 Low context / high context cultures

Hall (1977) added low and high context cultures to the dimensions identified by Hofstede (1980; 1984). In low-context cultures people focus their attention on the explicit content of a message when they try to make sense out of it. As Lustig and Koester (2006:110) suggest, high-context cultures prefer to use high-context messages in which most of the meaning is either implied by the physical setting or presumed to be part of the individual's internalised beliefs, values, norms, and social practices; very little is provided in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message. In high-context cultures, much of the meaning

is extracted from the context in which the message is uttered, and the message itself is much more ambiguous (Van Staden, Marx & Erasmus-Kritzinger 2007).

Low-context cultures prefer to use low-context messages, in which the majority of the information is vested in the explicit code (Lustig & Koester 2006:110). According to Conrad and Poole (2005:388) the result is that the messages constructed by people from low-context cultures seem to be blunt and excessively detailed to people from high-context cultures; messages from high-context cultures seem to be excessively vague, confusing, or noncommittal to people from low-context cultures.

The diversity of people in the UFS organisational environment necessitates typical low-culture actions. Agreements are documented, and procedures, policies and contracts are formulated to guide activities at the UFS. The meaning of messages shared by people is not necessarily in the context. Because of the different cultural backgrounds of people at the UFS, it is important to agree on the meaning of messages and not to take any meaning for granted.

In summary, it can be said that the complexity of organisational culture is demonstrated by the preceding discussion. Apart from being a highly complex phenomenon (Miller 2006), organisational culture is also emergent. Cultures are socially created through the interaction of organisational members. This idea is central to a communication perspective on culture in which culture is not merely transmitted through communication but in which communication is “constitutive of culture” (Eisenberg & Riley, in Miller 2006:101). Putman (in Miller 2006:101) argues that “social reality is a symbolic process created through **ongoing actions** and **intersubjective** meanings attributed to those actions”. The communication process, through which culture is created, is seen as very important in the emergence thereof.

Most authors on organisational culture agree that it is impossible to characterise an organisation as having a single culture. Organisations are seen by these scholars as a **multitude of subcultures** that “co-exist in harmony, conflict or indifference to each other” (Miller 2006:102). These sub-cultures exist at different sites in the organisation. Louis (in Frost *et al.* 1985) identified “vertical slice”, “horizontal slice”, or a specific work group. It is also explained that each sub-group could have its own culture.

Other aspects of organisational culture that should be mentioned is the fact that it is not unitary and often **ambiguous**. Martin (in Miller 2006) states that there is not always a clear picture of the organisation’s culture. There may be various manifestations of culture, which make it difficult to interpret. This phenomenon is known as the **fragmentation perspective** of culture.

3.4.7 Methods to establish, change and/or reinforce organisational culture

Collins and Porras (in Werner 2007:2) introduced a list of methods by which cultures are established and cemented in organisations, and transmitted to new organisational members. According to them, visionary companies translate their core ideology into tangible mechanisms that are strategically designed to reinforce that ideology. According to these authors it entails a process of teaching or influencing to ensure a fit between the employee and the organisational culture and at the same time creating a sense of specialness and belonging. Their list includes:

- Commitment of senior leadership to a specific organisational culture
- Orientation and training programmes with ideological as well as practical content
- Internal “universities” and training centres
- On-the-job socialisation by peers and immediate supervisors
- Rigorous policies of up-through-the-ranks promotions

- Exposure to legendary stories of “heroic deeds” and corporate exemplars
- Unique language and terminology
- Corporate songs, cheers, affirmations or pledges
- Tight screening processes – employing high achievers who embrace diversity and who value ethics
- Incentive and advancement criteria explicitly linked to corporate principles
- Awards, contests and public recognition for those who support the corporate principles, and tangible and visible penalties for those who do not
- Tolerance for honest mistakes that do not interfere with the company’s ideology; but punishment for mistakes that breach the principles
- Financial and time investments to create “buy-in” on corporate culture
- Celebrations that reinforce successes, belonging, and specialness
- Plant and office layout that reinforce norms and ideals. An open office environment emphasises networking, while formal offices create a sense of structure, power, and bureaucracy
- Constant verbal and written emphasis on corporate values, heritage, and the sense of being part of something special.

3.4.8 Strong vs weak organisational culture

The more deeply entrenched an organisational culture, the more difficult it is to change it. Deeply entrenched cultures are referred to as strong culture (Werner 2007:27). In such a culture, there is greater commitment to core values and norms and higher organisational commitment. In such an organisational culture, the group members share the same values, beliefs, and attitudes. They can easily communicate with each other and can depend on one another in meeting individual needs (Mead 1998:124). According the strong theory of culture formulated by Deal and Kennedy (1982), an organisation with a strong culture is begin described as having:

- A strong, unifying corporate philosophy and mission
- Trusted and trusting leaders
- Open communication channels and access to top management
- An emphasis on the importance of people and productivity relationship
- A general sense of accomplishment and belonging by all
- Commonly shared rites, rituals, and ceremonies
- An uplifting general feeling about employees' work, the place, and the future
- Satisfied with rewards, performance and efforts (Sae 2005:142)

Intercultural organisational communication should not only be considered within the group context of the organisation, i.e. the organisational culture, but also on a personal level. In the next section aspects that could enhance an individual's intercultural communication competence will be discussed.

3.5 INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE (ICC)

As reflected in literature, intercultural communication competence is a very difficult concept to define. Gudykunst and Kim (1997) suggest that people who are effective in communication across cultural boundaries possess an unusual degree of stability, a central organisation of the extrovert type, a value system that includes the value of all men and women, a character socialised on the basis of cultural universals, and a marked telepathic or intuition sensitivity. The same authors consider an effective communicator as someone who sees people first and culture second, "knows" people are basically good, knows the value of other cultures as well as that of his/her own, has control over his/her visceral reactions, speaks with hopefulness and candor, and has inner security and feel comfortable being different from other people. Kim (1990) supports this notion and emphasises the fact that intercultural competence should be located within a person.

Gudykunst (1994) took an interactive perspective and argued that judgement of competence emerges from the interaction in which people engage. This author noted that one communicator's view of his/her communication competence may not be the same as that of the person with whom he/she is communicating. Together, Gudykunst and Kim (1997:252) state that "understanding communication competence, therefore, minimally requires that we take into consideration our own and the other person's perspective".

Essentially, intercultural communication competence is about minimising misunderstandings (Sae 2005:131). Spitzberg and Cupach (in Sae 2005:131) suggest that intercultural communication competence is "an individual's ability to adapt effectively to the surrounding environment over time" while interacting with individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds. From the above discussion, it is clear that it is important for all members of an organisation with a multi-cultural employee composition (and multi-cultural stakeholder groups) to develop the ability to be flexible, adapt to different contexts, and be sensitive when communicating with people from different cultures. The following section provides an overview of intercultural communication competence indicators identified in the literature.

3.5.1 ICC indicators

Examining the wealth of literature by prominent authors in the intercultural communication domain (Samovar, Porter & McDaniel 2007; Hall 2005; Conrad & Poole 2005; Sae 1998; Samovar & Porter 1995; Trompenaars 1993; Hofstede 1991, 1984; Gudykunst 1984, 1983) highlights the challenges intercultural interaction yields. However, although cultural diversity is a significant feature of any organisational environment in South Africa, cultural diversity is seldom expressed as a feature in the core values of organisational cultures (Sae 2005). To address this shortcoming, Sae (2005:276) formulated a model of best practice for intercultural communication competence that

highlights key indicators for achieving intercultural communication competence (ICC).

The first indicator, ***non-verbal communication***, is every possible external message source, other than words, to which people respond (Hall 2005; Kreps 1990:42). Conrad and Poole (2005) opine that some nonverbal cues are easy to manage; others are not. Individuals need to develop an understanding and sensitivity to nonverbal cues and their meanings across cultures. They need to be culturally aware of their own nonverbal communication, as well as that of other people, especially when interacting with multi-cultural employees or other stakeholders. Nonverbal communication is divided into two categories: nonverbal cues the individual combines with the setting, such as time, space and silence, and nonverbal cues produced by the body, such as facial expressions, posture, gestures, touch, appearance, body movements, eye contact, dress and voice (Samovar & Porter 1995; Samovar, Porter & McDaniel 2007).

Knowledge regarding ***psychological theories of adaptation processes***, and ***uncertainty reduction*** for strangers is essential. Another intercultural communication competence indicator is the ability to ***establish meaningful interpersonal relationships*** with members of other cultures, and the ability to deal with psychological stress within an intercultural context. The ability to display behavioural dimensions like ***respect, empathy, openness, nonjudgementalness, tolerance of ambiguity***, ability to perform ***role behaviours***, and ***interaction management*** adds to intercultural communication competence. ***Trust, effective listening skills, equity, and equal treatment*** of all people are additional indicators. Furthermore, applying ***education, patience***, competence in a ***second language, open mindedness***, and ***understanding cross-cultural dimensions*** to management functions in an organisation, should contribute to the organisation's effective functioning in a culturally constituted environment.

3.5.2 Incorporating ICC into managerial functions

In order to make the ICC indicators more tangible and integrate them into organisational functions, Saeed (2005) developed a model of managerial excellence in a culturally diverse environment. In this model, the ICC indicators listed above were applied to eleven primary managerial functions, namely planning, workplace communication, recruitment/promotion, induction, training, supervision, industrial relations, change management, customer service, financial management, and marketing.

The first function, namely *planning*, entails the setting of goals, assigning tasks and coordinating activities. Planning can only take place through *workplace communication*. Workplace or business communication includes the means for giving instructions, delegating, and sharing information in order to reach the organisational goals. Organisations consist of people, therefore *recruitment and promotion* is another function that includes the searching and obtaining of appropriate people to fill the jobs. Promotion is defined in terms of recognising and rewarding staff members who show consistently superior performance (Saeed 2005). The process by which employees are quickly and effectively integrated into the organisation is known as *induction*. After being introduced into the organisation employees must be trained to perform successfully. *Training* includes policies to improve current and future employees' performance by increasing, through learning and education, employees' ability to perform, usually by increasing their skills and knowledge. Employees' efforts must continuously be coordinated, directed, and guided, in other words *supervised*, to achieve organisational goals.

Due to the dynamic nature of the workplace, managers and employees conduct *industrial relations* where from time to time they discuss conditions of employment. Changing conditions inside and outside the organisation are addressed through *change management* – the development and implementation of policies to deal with the changing conditions. Clients are the

lifeblood of an organisation. Through *marketing* an organisation, customers' needs and wants are satisfied by developing appropriate products and services. *Customer service* describes the ability of organisations to respond to client expectations and demands. Finally, the *financial management* function entails related financial methods, budgets, and audits used to evaluate an organisation's effectiveness (Sae 2005:278-281). This model informs the discussion of the integration of intercultural competence components into IC that will be presented in chapter 8.

3.6 SUMMARY

All customer touch points affect the brand and brand equity of an organisation. When the individuals touching the company are from different cultures, their experiences of the touch will vary – making it very difficult for the organisation to manage these experiences and perceptions effectively. The challenge each organisation, and the UFS, face, is to gain cultural competency by developing an understanding of how individuals perceive and react to their different cultural rules. It is important to acknowledge that differences are not deficiencies, state Conrad and Poole (2005). The examined literature points towards the fact that an organisational culture that is sensitive to cultural diversity could contribute towards the organisation's cultural competence. Rensburg (1993) opines that South African organisations need an organisational culture that will incorporate the new spirit of a changing South Africa.

The first section of this chapter recognises the growing importance of cultivating an organisational culture that is accommodating to diversity. Although the UFS has come a long way towards transformation and integration, it still has some way to go towards cultivating an organisational culture that accommodates diversity.

Most modern organisations in South Africa and around the world are faced by cultural diversity. Through integrating the basic principles of integrated

communication and the intercultural communication competence indicators, guidelines are provided to use as practical tools to address aspects of integrated communication in a multi-cultural marketplace. Although these guidelines do not presume to be a quick fix to intercultural challenges, it will create an awareness of the importance thereof to deal with intercultural aspects in a practical manner. In chapters seven and eight these issues will receive further attention.

CHAPTER 4

INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION: THE CONTEXT, CONCEPT, PROCESSES AND PRINCIPLES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

“Communication integration in which every aspect of the marketing and communication mix is brought together in a master strategy, is the future of effective organisations,” suggests Mulder (2004:235). Communication as it exists in an organisational context is of course a complex phenomenon. Organisations exist of multivariate emergent properties (Kreps 1990:94) and effective communication at its simplest form is an intricate wonder. Any analysis of aspects of these two concepts (organisation and communication) combined therefore provides for challenging hunting ground. No wonder the successful implementation of integrated communication still seems somewhat idealistic to most organisations, and most major organisations have yet to fully implement the foundational ideas contained in IC (Pettegrew 2000).

Integrated communication (IC) has changed dramatically since the first efforts to formalise the concept of integrated marketing communication, from which IC evolved. Kitchen, Brignell and Tao (2004) suggest that IMC is the major communications development of the last decade, and that it is a potential driver of competitive advantage. Comprehension of the core concepts of IC will help determine the conceptual foundation thereof. This knowledge will give an indication of the IC scenario at present and might inform more effective practising of IC in the future.

The aim of this chapter is thus to contribute towards a better understanding of the conceptual underpinning of IC. This chapter will give an overview of the complexities of organisational communication and determine the position of integrated communication (IC) therein.

4.2 THE EVOLUTION OF INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION

To understand this new approach to marketing communication, one has to go back to its roots and scrutinise the path of development. Innovation begins with abandonment. “It’s not what you start; it’s what you stop that counts,” say Drucker (in Schultz, Tannenbaum & Lauterborn 1994:1). This statement underlines the importance of knowledge concerning the development of marketing communication in order to understand the importance and effective application of this new approach called integrated communication.

In this section, the origin and development of integrated communication will be discussed, and then charted. The inception and nature of integrated marketing communication and integrated communication will also be explored.

4.2.1 The production orientation (1960s)

The discussion on the development of integrated communication starts in the 1960s with what became known as the production stage. In the production-orientated phase the production function was considered to be the most important in a successful enterprise (Cant & Machado 1998:1).

In the late 1960s the word promotion became prominent (Downing 1971; Boyd & Levy 1967; Stanton 1967; Tousley, Clark & Clark 1962). The promotional mix was seen as the most strategic combination of advertising, personal selling, sales promotion and other promotional tools that could be devised to reach the goals of the sales programme (Stanton 1967:493). Brink and Kelly (in Boyd & Levy 1967:1) defined promotion as “the coordination of all seller-initiated efforts to set up channels of information and persuasion to facilitate the sale of a good or service, or the acceptance of an idea”. Basically, promotion was seen as an exercise in information, persuasion, and influence.

During this period the two most widely used methods of promotion were personal selling and advertising (Stanton 1967:494). Selling and marketing were often used as synonymous terms. Hence, a lot of emphasis was placed on personal selling.

The production orientation was followed by the sales orientation, where selling activities gained in importance. The reason for the change to the selling orientation was because products were not made to order but produced in mass. The supply of these products eventually became greater than the demand. According to Strydom (1998:17) this resulted in a change in management perception of the importance of marketing.

4.2.2 The sales orientation (1970s)

Mass marketing was invented to sell standardised mass-produced products to a similarly standardised, undifferentiated mass of consumers (Kotler 1980). A top-down, in-out approach was followed, that is, it was imposed from the top and was product – rather than consumer – orientated. The manufacturer decided to make a product because it could, priced it to cover costs and to yield as much profit as possible, placed it on store shelves through the distribution chain and promoted it shamelessly (Schultz *et al.* 1994:5). Although the promotional mix was still seen as a blend of personal selling and advertising (Boyd & Massy 1972:442), at this point in time discussions on the promotion element started to include sales promotions and publicity (Robin 1978; Baker 1971; Downing 1971).

4.2.3 The marketing orientation (1980s)

After the sales orientation phase, the focus moved to marketing as the important function with much emphasis on the so-called marketing mix and the four marketing instruments (product, price, place and promotion). Marketers

now recognised that the importance of marketing lies in the fact that to be successful in the marketplace, companies must meet and exceed their clients' or consumers' needs rather than try to reshape it (their needs) to fit existing products or services (Burnett 1993; Berry & Parasuraman 1991; Farquhar 1990). A change from sales-oriented management to marketing-oriented management resulted in an emphasis not only on the sales message and the price but also on the quality of products, the packaging thereof, the methods of distribution and the necessity to provide information by means of advertising (Strydom 1998:18). Consumers also developed more sophisticated needs and were financially in a better position to satisfy these needs. There were also a large variety of competing products from which they could choose. All of this led management to realise the importance of the marketing function. Schultz *et al.* (1994:6) coined this course of action "demassification".

Discussions on the promotion mix now almost always included some mention of communication or the communication process (Kotler 1987,1988; Baker 1985; Assael 1985) or even the term marketing communication (Koekemoer 1989). The basic elements of the promotional mix were at this point regarded as advertising, personal selling, sales promotion and publicity (Assael 1985; Kotler 1984:603). But it gradually became clear that the consumer should, in fact, be the focus of all marketing activities (Cant & Machado 1998:1; Pitt & Bromfield 1994). A consumer orientation thus became one of the main principles of the marketing concept (Naisbitt 1982). Furthermore, the customer orientation became one of the key business and management issues of the 1980s and in most sectors companies adopted some form of "customer care" programme.

Marketing communication was now seen as fundamentally concerned with the needs and wants of people, both as individuals and in groups (Koekemoer 1989). As Koekemoer (1989:23) suggests:

Successful marketers understand people or, more technically, consumer behaviour. Knowing what makes his customers "tick" and formulating a

product/service offer to satisfy their needs, wants, hopes, aspirations, dreams and desires is the hallmark of the successful marketer. The means by which this is achieved is effective marketing communication.

Marketing communication was seen as the holistic approach that included the promotional mix. Koekemoer (1989:23) implied that an effective marketing communication strategy must encompass the whole promotion mix. The author also pointed out that the elements of the promotion mix must work in total harmony. This was one of the first suggestions of the integration of the four elements of the promotion mix in a South African textbook.

According to Cant and Machado (1998:2) the lack of success achieved by companies that pay only lip service to consumer orientation can perhaps be ascribed to a very narrow interpretation not only of the four marketing instruments, but also of the necessary contribution to customer service that must be made by all, even the non-marketing departments, in the business enterprise. What was needed was a broader perspective of the marketing task. Relationship marketing was born.

4.2.4 Relationship marketing (1990s)

In the nineties there was an increased acceptance of the relationship concept. In the mid-1990s it became clear that one-way forms of communication were no longer effective in terms of trying to influence consumers (Peck, Payne, Christopher & Clark 2000; Godin 1999; Blem 1997; Schultz 1993(b); Keegan, Moriarty & Duncan 1992). In this period we cross the threshold where it was not so much a matter of consumers being apathetic toward marketing communication, but of consumers being more conditioned to not accepting an agenda set for them (Taylor 1998). The media systems have changed so dramatically that two-way systems were required (Schultz *et al.* 1994:52).

Most marketers realised that they need more than just a one-time exchange or transaction with customers. The focus of market-driven companies shifted to developing and sustaining relationships with their customers. That led to a new emphasis on relationship marketing, which involves creating, maintaining, and enhancing long-term relationships with individual customers as well as other stakeholders for mutual benefit (Belch & Belch 1998:8). According to Cant and Machado (1998:2) and Sinclair (1997) there was an increased emphasis on consumer retention, product benefits, a long time-scale, high customer service, high customer commitment, high customer contact and quality in the relationship-marketing phase.

The move toward relationship marketing was due to several factors. First, companies recognised that customers have become much more demanding. Schultz *et al.* (1994:8) described this stage as the empowerment period. Customers wanted personalised products and services tailored to their specific needs and wants. They also desired superior value, which they defined as high-quality products that are competitively priced and supported by excellent customer service (Belch & Belch 1998:8). Another major reason why marketers were emphasising relationships was that it was often more cost effective to retain customers than to acquire new ones. The *lifetime value* of customers became increasingly important to marketers (Bernstein 2000/2001; Baker & Mitchell 2000; Mader & Semenchuk 1999/2000; Rogers 1998; Ropes 1998; Duncan 1995).

Schultz *et al.* (1994:52) believe that relationship marketing is the key to all future marketing efforts. "If you understand that your best customer is the one you already have, then creating a rational system for deepening customer relationships is the logical next step," suggest Lepla and Parker (1999:13). It is only through integrated marketing communication, however, that relationships can be built and deepened. So while relationship marketing was the buzzword of the 1990s, integrated marketing communication became the manner to make relationship marketing possible.

4.2.5 Integrated marketing communication (2000s)

Integrated marketing communication is a comprehensive approach to internal and external organisational communication. It combines the power of all the marketing and marketing communication techniques to deliver consistent communication messages to the organisation's different stakeholders. It begins with analysing the needs and priorities of stakeholders, and then tailoring marketing and communication programmes to address those needs and priorities. A definition of IMC is hard to come by, but if one analyses existing definitions, you will see that it is nothing less than the management of all organisational communications that builds positive relationships with all stakeholders (Duncan 2005; Mulder 2004; O'Guinn, Allen & Semenik 2003; Baker & Mitchell 2000; Gonring 2000).

Integrated marketing communication is more than the expansion of the promotion element of the marketing mix (Watras 1995). It is essentially the recognition of the importance of creating dialogue, long-term relationships through inter alia trust and communicating the same message to stakeholders. In addition, it is the recognition that all of the IMC techniques communicate and that there is an overlap in the communication these variables provide.

Each of the IMC variables affects the overall marketing programme, so they all must be managed to exploit their effectiveness. Successful marketing requires managing and coordinating marketing messages at every contact point the brand or company has with its target audiences. Burnett and Moriarty (1998:8) differentiate between planned and unplanned messages, where planned messages are delivered through the five formal marketing communication techniques, namely advertising, sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing and personal selling. Other forms of communication that is also considered as delivering planned messages are point-of-purchase or merchandise materials, packaging, specialties (like free gifts), sponsorships, licensing (the practice of selling the right to use a character or logo – e.g.

Mickey Mouse on products) and customer service. Unplanned messages include all the other elements associated with the company or brand that are capable of delivering implicit messages to customers.

Viewing the activities of marketing from an integrated perspective, Lauterborn (in Schultz *et al.* 1994:12) suggested that the four Ps of the marketing mix should change to four Cs where the **p**roduct becomes the **c**ustomer/**c**lient, **p**lace becomes **c**onvenience, **p**rice becomes **c**ost and **p**romotion becomes **c**ommunication. In 2001 Schultz claimed that the historic four Ps moved to five Rs. He contended that the five Rs of 21st century marketing are **r**elationship, **r**elevance, **r**eceptivity, **r**ecognition and **r**esponse (Schultz 2001:*ibid*) (also see chapter 5). These suggestions were designed to refocus, redirect and examine the true market engine – the customer (Reich 1998:27).

Sophisticated IMC planning focuses on the task to be done and is a disciplined way of searching for the big idea. Determining which marketing communication functions to use and to what extent, requires zero-based communications planning (Duncan 1993:11). According to Duncan (1993:*ibid*) this means not starting with last year's plan (tradition driven), but rather with what needs to be done (task driven).

The benefits of integrated communication are numerous. By using this approach the *customer becomes the primary focus* of everyone in the organisation – the bottom line of integrated communication. There is *no needless duplication of services*. The PR messages combine with advertising, marketing and internal communication, therefore everything is congruent and clearer to customers. There is almost no likelihood of “the left hand not knowing what the right hand is doing”.

It fosters *inter-departmental co-operation* in the company. The workers will experience more harmonious working relationships with their peers and senior management. Studies even verify increased productivity, which positively

impacts on the bottom line. The core processes of the organisation become much clearer and people start pulling together rather than in several directions at once. Marketing programmes become more effective because they are focused and more efficient. They are more powerful in *delivering the key message without waste and overlap to no effect*.

However, the integration of the communications function in advertising, public relations, promotions, direct marketing, and personal selling is not complete if the integration is only among these fields. Integration implies (and a managerial approach to communications demands) that communications be regarded as a strong element in the total management process. This insight led to the recognition that the practice of integrated marketing communication is not negotiable, it is of crucial importance. IMC development went to a new, strategic level called IC.

4.2.6 Integrated communication (IC)

Marketers realised that the integration process should extend beyond marketing to blend the full spectrum of communication disciplines and help senior management best preserve a company's corporate reputation (Drobis 1997/1998:1). In companies where there is no effective coordination, the lack of truly integrated communication can lead to a gradual or sudden deterioration of the company's credibility and reputation (Drobis 1997/1998:2). This comes about when all stakeholders do not receive the same messages. Credibility is only derived by telling all stakeholders the same thing in a timely fashion. Consistency is critical. Inconsistent messages create confusion, contribute to misinformation and speculation. All of this damage corporate reputation, trust and inevitably relationships. The process became a full range of relationship management, both internally and externally (Duncan & Caywood, in Thorson & Moore 1996:32) and gave rise to the popularity of CRM (customer relationship management) or SRM (stakeholder relationship management) in the stakeholder century.

At the core of SRM, as its name implies, is the stakeholder. By using nearly every tool and resource at their disposal, companies that practise SRM strive to build unbreakable relationships with their stakeholders. A large and important component of SRM is software and technology products used to build stakeholder data collection and analysis infrastructures that help manage relationships with stakeholders. Given the highly visible role of technology, SRM has become synonymous with database/data mining collection and analysis type systems. However, the foundation of SRM is not technology, but the underlying business strategies and objectives. SRM is forged by anticipating and learning stakeholder needs, then serving them in the best possible way (Cross 2001:51). As Harbison (in Anon 1997:8) puts it: "This involves tracking and managing all customer (*stakeholder*) moments, and getting the resulting information into a usable, productive format." Reich (1998:29) argues that it is these relationships that provide the glue for bonding loyalty and sustained long-term revenues.

Because in marketing, stakeholder perception is reality, people involved in communication management must be sure to create the correct expectations for the customer and all other stakeholders and then try to exceed them. According to Cross (2001:53) CRM is being revived as an efficient, effective way to develop closer, more beneficial links to clients. However, this is not an easy task. For this to happen, every member of the organisation have to be involved in the IC processes and have to understand what is being communicated to the stakeholder.

With the inception of the integrated marketing phenomenon, managers started to recognise the importance of the role employees play in the whole marketing process. If employees are viewed as the internal stakeholder group, it enables the company to upgrade its capability for satisfying the needs of the external stakeholder groups.

This was a brief overview of integrated communication. Later on in this chapter the concept will be explored in more depth.

4.3 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TRADITIONAL APPROACHES VERSUS AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

In the following table (table 4.1) the differences between a traditional approach to marketing and communication and an integrated approach are summarised.

	Basic principles of IC	Basic principles of the traditional approach
1	Holistic business approach	Functioning in isolated units/silos
2	Relationship management	Once-off customer encounters
3	Brand integration	"Skin-deep" branding - "look and feel" focus
4	Stakeholder-centricity	Internal focus by organisation and employees
5	Strategic consistency	Employees unaware of mission of organization
6	Stakeholder focus	Target audiences are identified
7	Sustainable success	Short-term survival
8	Corporate mission / mission marketing	Cause marketing
9	Stakeholder-conscious employees	Product focused employees
10	Message consistency	Inconsistency in messages
11	Contact synergy	No integration in contact points
12	Purposive dialogue	One-way communication
13	Financial accountability	Simply adjust prior year's plan and budget
14	Cross-functional planning	Isolated planning
15	Core competencies	Specialisation
16	Database management	Mass communication

Table 4.1: Integrated vs traditional approach to marketing and communication

Strydom (1998:18) as well as Duncan and Moriarty (1997) wholeheartedly support these findings. Strydom (1998) points out that in traditional marketing communication (TMC) the focus was on a single sale where product features were normally highlighted. This led to short-term relationships with little emphasis on customer service. Little customer contact took place and there was very little commitment by customers. Above all, the general feeling of employees was that quality is the concern of the production department only.

As apposed to the approach followed when practising TMC, in IMC the focus moved to the customer, and most recently stakeholder retention. Product benefits are now stressed and high stakes are placed on long-term relationships with stakeholders. High emphasis is placed on service; regular contact with stakeholders is an imperative and high stakeholder commitment a major objective. In a truly integrated organisation, quality becomes the concern of all.

4.4 TRENDS THAT NECESSITATED NEW WAYS OF COMMUNICATING

What really is changing IC and how IC increasingly is being practised is not coming from or being driven by communicators. Instead, the demand for change is coming from two separate, but distinct, forces. One of these change drivers is external to the organisation – it is information technology in all its many and varied forms. The second is internal – it is senior management's new requirements for accountability and stewardship by communication practitioners (Schultz 1998:2).

Some of the events driven by information technology (Schultz & Barnes 1999:9-10) that played an important role in America and Europe almost ten years ago is playing an important role in South Africa at present. They are:

- universal product codes (UPC) in combination with optical scanners;
- new forms of communication and message distribution became available (cellular telephones, faxes, e-mail and the World Wide Web); and

- a shift of power from marketer and channel to consumer (stakeholders can search the world easily and quickly).

Thorson and Moore (1996:15-16) added to these matters and highlighted the following trends and changes as primary factors driving organisations to adopt integrated marketing communication, namely:

- decreasing message impact and credibility,
- decreasing cost of using databases,
- increasing client expertise,
- increasing mergers and acquisitions of marketing communication agencies,
- increasing “mass” media costs,
- increasing media fragmentation,
- increasing audience fragmentation,
- increasing number of “me-too” products,
- increasing power of the retailer,
- increasing global marketing, and
- increasing pressure on bottom line.

Whatever the driving or major forces are, fact of the matter is that new ways of communicating within a marketing context became essential and the name given to these new ways is IC. However, even though IC and the fundamental principles thereof make perfect sense, it is still not widely practised in South Africa (Niemann 2005; Store & Mulder 2001). This scenario can be ascribed to several barriers to the implementation thereof. This chapter will conclude with a discussion of these issues.

In the next section, organisations as context within which integrated communication is practised, will be addressed.

4.5 ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION: AN OVERVIEW

Organisations are typically regarded as specific contexts (Kreps 1990:13). They do not merely exist. Some authors perceive them as scientifically managed in order to attain predetermined goals and objectives (Harris 1993; Schein 1993). According to Werner (2007:3) an organisation is “a collection of people who work together to achieve a wide variety of goals. The organisation as a whole also tries to accomplish goals.” Mersham and Skinner (2001:9) define an organisation as a relatively stable system of individuals who work together to achieve, through a hierarchy of ranks and a division of labour, common goals.

The hierarchy of ranks, or different levels that exist in organisations are described by Steyn (2003, 2002), and Steyn and Puth (2000) as the enterprise, corporate, business unit, functional and operational levels. At the enterprise level the organisation’s mission, purpose and role in society is outlined. Activities on the corporate level tend to be financially oriented and focus on the portfolio of businesses the organisation should compete in and how they should be integrated. On the business unit level it is determined how a product or group of related products should compete in the market. Digman (1990) indicates that the primary focus at the functional level is to implement strategies to support the enterprise, corporate and business level strategies, and finally the previously mentioned organisational strategies are implemented at the operational level (Steyn, Grobler & Cilliers 2005). As communication takes place on all these different levels, it is obvious that organisational communication is complex and multifaceted.

Kreps (1997:11) suggests that organisational communication is a process whereby members gather pertinent information about the organisation and the changes occurring within it. According to Antonis (2005:44) communication within the organisational context is fundamentally a data-gathering function for members as it provides them with relevant information, which helps them to

understand the organisation's activities in order to accomplish individual and organisational change and goals, and fulfil their personal needs.

The general systems theory perspective to organisations represents the organisation as a complex set of interdependent parts that interact to adapt to a constantly changing environment in order to achieve its goals (Littlejohn 2002; Kreps 1990). Focus is placed on several key components that make up organisations, namely the individual organisation member, structural and functional groups in the organisation and organisational technologies and equipment. The key element of the systems theory approach to organisations is the emphasis on the functional integration of system units in the accomplishment of organisational activities (Kreps 1990:100). It is argued that the entire system functions and yields better results than the different parts of the system. According to Miller (1995:87) the interdependence, permeability and interrelatedness between the different parts of the system forms the three main characteristics that define the systems concept. Rensburg (1997), Harris (1993a) and Checkland (1995) support this view.

At the most basic level a system can be seen as an assembly of components, which in an organisational context are the members of the organisation in the different departments. Members at all levels of an organisation are involved in formal and informal, internal and external communication with colleagues, customers, shareholders, the media and other stakeholder groups. Therefore, no organisation can function properly or reach organisational goals without a good system of communication, suggest Van Staden, Marx and Erasmus-Kritzinger (2007:10). Antonis (2005) suggests that there are very specific functions that underline and define organisational communication in that it is informative, it regulates and it persuades and integrates people, processes, systems and structures. Rensburg (1997) supports this view and argues that organisational communication is functionally oriented and centres around four

functions, namely an informative function, a regulatory function, an integrative function and a persuasive function.

As mentioned earlier, the study of organisational communication is highly diverse and fragmented. It spans communication at the micro (interpersonal communication), meso (group, organisational, inter-organisational communication), and macro (mass communication) levels (Baker 2002:5). One often finds descriptions of organisational communication to include both internal processes of communication (among the members of the organisation itself) and communication towards the outside (how the organisation presents itself and exchanges information with external stakeholders). Rensburg (1997) as well as Kreps (1997) describe four levels of communication that can be identified in these contexts, namely the:

- intrapersonal communication level (where the individual process information);
- interpersonal communication level (where individuals establish and maintain relationships);
- small groups communication level (where members of different units co-ordinate activities); and
- interorganisational level (where different functional units of organisations co-ordinate efforts).

It is obvious that organisational communication involves communication and organisations. Views of organisational communication can be categorised as those that view organisational communication as one aspect of an organisation versus those that see it as the underlying basis of the organisation itself. The competitive environment in which organisations have to compete has forced them to evolve in directions that make the latter view more appropriate. Supporting this view, Myers and Myers (1982:42) suggest that organisational communication is “the central binding force that permits coordination among people and thus allows for organised behaviour”.

As the previous discussion on the different functions and levels of communication in organisations indicates, organisations are complex systems of elements that cannot exist in isolation. Communication is therefore seen as the foundation of modern organisations and has always been very important to overall organisational functioning and success.

4.5.1 Fields of organisational communication

Organisational communication is a sub-discipline within the larger field of communication studies. Although Cheney, Christensen, Zorn and Ganesh (2004) uses the term organisational communication and management communication as synonyms, an analysis of organisational communication literature reveals that the focus is much broader and usually includes theoretical and methodological issues, internal and external environments, patterns of organisational interdependence and behaviour in organisations. Key distinctions with respect to organisational communication involve levels, formal versus informal, direction (vertical, horizontal, diagonal) and internal versus external focus. The focal point of organisational communication literature in the past was formal, top-down communication. Informal communication was often seen as a potential hindrance. According to Baker (2002) this is no longer the case. Ongoing, dynamic, and non-formal communication has become part of the communication mix to ensure effective conduct of work in modern organisations. It seems that organisational communication has largely grown in response to needs and concerns of businesses (Baker 2002).

The literature on organisational communication has classified communication according to different criteria, namely the level of formality, direction of informational fluxes, content of messages, function that it performs, and purpose that it has, as discussed by Cuel and Ferrario (2006). **Level of formality** distinguishes between formal and informal communication (Miller 2006; Cuel & Ferrario 2006; Kreps 1990). The typology based on **informational**

fluxes includes vertical (top-down and bottom-up), horizontal (between individuals on the same level), and transversal (similar to horizontal, but involves the wider organisation) communication (Cuel & Ferrario 2006). **Message content** singles out political messages (strategies, correct behaviour, etc.), basic messages (information aimed at enhancing the functioning of the organisation) and messages related to the image (definition of the style of the organisation). The typology based on the **function of the communication** sees properly functional communication in charge of guaranteeing the correct functioning of the organisation “machinery”, informative communication as in charge of the visibility of the enterprise, with its products and services, and creative communication as the function of establishing a sense of belonging through presentations, meetings, parties, etc. (Cuel & Ferrario 2006). These same authors see the last typology, based on the **purposes**, including messages to inform, create involvement, and sell products and service.

In short: Communication is the means by which information flows into, through, and out of an organisation (Rensburg 1997; Van Riel 1995). Communication is the heart of an organisation’s ability to do its work. Organisational communication, as a discipline, is an intention or attempt to ensure that the flow of communication is unhampered, and the quality of the information and knowledge shared is excellent. Literature depicts that organisational communication is frequently described as the theoretical study of the role and functions of communication in an organisation (Miller 2006; Cuel & Ferrario 2006; Kreps 1990). It is argued that it is an overarching term that has more substance than being just one field of communication on the same level as business communication or marketing communication. This description shows several similarities with the integrated communication phenomenon. As suggested in chapter one (see 1.5.2) Niemann (2005:99) defines integrated communication (IC) as “the strategic management process of organisationally controlling or influencing all messages and encouraging purposeful, data-driven dialogue to create and nourish long-term, profitable relationships with

stakeholders”. Against this background, it is argued that effective organisational communication will always be integrated communication.

By means of a literature review, the different functional areas of communication in organisations were analysed to form a better understanding of the communication mix in organisations. Ströh and Leonard (1999) use public relations and communication management as synonyms as Grunig (1992) argues that the terms public relations and communication management are broader than specialised public relations programmes and communication techniques. Grunig (1992:4) opines that “public relations and communication management describe the overall planning, execution, and evaluation of an organisation’s communication with both internal and external publics – groups that affect the ability of the organisation to meet its goals”. Barker and Angelopulo (2006) identified the more prominent fields that deal with communication in the organisational context as *organisational communication*, *business communication*, *management communication*, *corporate communication*, and *marketing communication*.

In the previous discussion it is argued that organisational communication is the umbrella concept for all communication that takes place in the organisation. Rensburg and Bredenkamp (1991:12) differentiate between a rational perspective and a humanitarian perspective towards business communication. Weich (in Rensburg & Bredenkamp 1991) considers the systems approach to business communication as a rational perspective to the activities of business and especially to the application of business communication. In line with the systems approach followed in this study, the rational perspective to business communication will be adopted in this study. Van Deventer (2005) supports this view and describes business communication as the pragmatic study of various forms of written, oral and interpersonal communication within a business environment. In this light, business communication is seen as a field within corporate communication rather than as a distinctive field on its own. In this study the term corporate communication will be used as synonym for the

broader application of public relations or then communication management. Against this setting, organisational communication thus embodies the following interrelated, sometimes overlapping, often inseparable and converging areas. These areas are *managerial communication*, *corporate communication* and *marketing communication*. In the following section, a brief overview of these three fields of organisational communication will be provided.

4.5.1.1 Managerial communication

Authors on this subject matter are in agreement that management in an organisation can only be achieved through communication. Thus, management and communication go hand in hand. According to Puth (1994:11) the paradox in managerial communication is that, although it is natural and easy to communicate, it still remains difficult to communicate effectively to ensure that meaning is shared.

An uncomplicated definition of managerial communication is that it is the study of communication between managers and employees. Barker and Angelopulo (2006:13) defines it as management's use, adaptation and creation of languages, symbols and signs for the effective and profitable management of the corporate enterprise. According to Smeltzer (1993) management communication deals specifically with the communication of management and managers, communication variables that affect management, and the practise of communication by managers. Barker and Angelopulo (2006) opine that, by definition, management is an organisational phenomenon, therefore all management communication occurs within the organisational sphere.

When discussed within the context of this study and against the background of the systems approach, certain basic assumptions are made (Puth 1994:21), namely:

- The general systems theory, with its emphasis on structure, interdependence and relationships, is concerned only with the parts of the organisation as they relate to the whole;
- Communication is considered an essential process which permits interdependence among the parts of the organisation;
- According to the concept of boundaries, an organisation is differentiated from and dependent upon the environment in which it exists;
- In open system organisations, energy comes into the organisation from the environment, is transformed within the organisation, and is returned to the environment;
- Managers spend more time communicating with employees and with one another than with people from outside the organisation;
- At the lower levels of an organisation, employees in a given department spend more time and energy communicating with one another than with employees from other departments in the organisation;
- Managing is a complex process which can be done effectively in a number of different ways, and there are various effective leadership styles;
- The effectiveness of a leadership style depends on, amongst others, the situation and the people concerned;
- Social communication is crucial in an organisation, because structures are essentially held together by a system of attitudes, perceptions, beliefs, expectations and motivation and by meanings shared by the people who are part of that system; and
- There are no simple recipes for dealing with the human problems encountered in organisations.

4.5.1.2 Corporate communication

Corporate communication provides focus and direction for an organisation's communication with stakeholders, building symbolic and behavioural relationships with its strategic stakeholders (Steyn, Grobler & Cilliers 2005:33).

Corporate communication can be described as an outside-in approach to strategic management, conducting environmental scanning to gather information on stakeholder, publics and issues from the environment and anticipating their consequences for the organisation's policies and strategies – specifically with regard to the stakeholder and societal environment (Steyn, Grobler & Cilliers 2005:34).

Corporate communication's inputs should support all organisational levels Steyn (2000). According to Skinner and Von Essen (1999:98) it should create a climate of belief. Van Deventer (2005) suggests that the overall goal of corporate communication is to plan, initiate, develop, integrate, optimise and manage specialised forms of communication with internal and external stakeholders of an organisation. Steyn and Puth (2000) opine that corporate communication practitioners should demonstrate knowledge of their organisation's mission, strategies and goals, and their communication solutions must answer real needs and reflect the greater picture. Steyn and Green (2001) support this notion and add that it is in the identification of stakeholder concerns and issues, and the management of communication with those strategic stakeholders, that the corporate communication function could make its biggest contribution to organisational effectiveness.

Corporate communication can be distinguished, but not always separated from managerial and marketing communication. The main implementation areas of corporate communication are:

- research
- public relations
- employee communication
- crisis communication
- business communication
- institutional/corporate advertising
- media liaison

- investor relations
- management counselling
- corporate affairs (focus on the positive projection of corporate culture)
- communication auxiliary (provides specialised and technical support to other areas) (Van Deventer 2005).

In all instances, the functions and techniques of each implementation area, as described by experts in each field (Rensburg & Cant 2002; Matera & Artigue 2000; Skinner & Von Essen 1999; Mersham *et al.* 1995; Seitel 1992; Wilcox *et al.* 1989; Jefkins 1986; Cutlip *et al.* 1985) are included in the equation.

4.5.1.3 Marketing communication

Egan (2007:1) describes marketing communication as the means by which suppliers of goods, services, values and/or ideas represent themselves to their target audience with the goal of stimulating dialogue leading to better commercial or other relationships. Du Plessis *et al.* (2003) describe marketing communication as communication to customers specifically about products and services. The marketing strategy includes four variables known as the marketing mix, namely the product, price, distribution and marketing communication. Marketing communication is the most visible of the marketing mix elements. It influences the other three elements and *vice versa*. The ultimate goal of marketing communication is to reach some members of the audience to affect its behaviour. Du Plessis *et al.* (2003) suggest that, in order to inform, persuade and remind targeted customers effectively, marketers rely on one or more of the major elements of the marketing communication mix. The most prominent elements of marketing communication are:

- advertising
- public relations
- sponsorships
- direct/interactive marketing
- personal selling

- sales promotions (Egan 2007; Koekemoer 2004; Clow & Baack 2004; Burnett & Moriarty 1998)

4.6 MARKETING IN THIS MARKETPLACE

Marketing is more than the sum of many management activities. It is argued that it should be the guiding principle of how the whole organisation should operate. The need for marketing is universal. However, the fundamental tenets of marketing have shifted to a large degree. As Reich (1998:27) points out, it is by necessity that marketing is an evolutionary process. It must satisfy the ever-increasing demands and emphasis placed on it as the single surviving, sustainable, competitive edge in the marketing environment.

Marketing means many things to many people. Some people think that it means the same as personal selling, while others think that marketing and advertising is one and the same thing. As seen in the previous discussion (see 4.2), marketing includes all of these activities and more. Strydom, Jooste and Cant (2000:5) describe marketing as the process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, marketing communication and distribution of ideas, products, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organisational goals. Simply stated, marketing means that a company should satisfy stakeholder wants and needs at a profit. In other words, the company or organisation will aim all of its efforts toward giving its stakeholders the services and products that they want or need. By doing so, the organisation creates happy relationships, which translates to increased sales and profits.

The marketing system is the set of significant institutions and flows that connect an organisation to its markets, says Kotler (1984:32). Understanding the environment and marketing system in which a company and its competitors, suppliers and all other stakeholders do business, is central to effective marketing. Managers must fully appreciate the business environment, in other words; the conditions (primarily economic, political, cultural and technological) under which the marketing system(s) exists or is developed.

4.6.1 Marketing defined

There are many alternative definitions of marketing. Most have certain basic features in common, especially the notion of looking at the organisation from the point of view of the customer or striving to ensure mutual profitability from the marketing exchange. Other definitions place their emphasis on the essentially managerial nature of marketing. This can be seen in the definition put forward by the Chartered Institute of Marketing (UK) that marketing is the management process which identifies, anticipates and supplies customer requirements efficiently and profitably (Cannon 1997). A complementary but more directive approach was adopted by Stapleton (1975:10). This author suggests that marketing is a “fundamental policy-forming activity devoted to selecting and developing suitable products for sale – promoting and distributing these products in a manner providing the optimal return on capital employed”.

Recently, an increasing number of writers have emphasised the process perspective on marketing, i.e. defining it in terms of the process of moving goods from concept to consumption in the most effective way (from both the customer’s and the supplier’s point of view). Runyon (1982:4) captures this nicely with his description of marketing as the performance of business activities that direct the flow of goods and services from producers to consumers. Even this falls short of the all-encompassing approach, increasingly used to bring out the wider applicability of marketing. It still reflects an emphasis on one-way flow of information that was the norm in the traditional marketing paradigm. Since the inception of integrated marketing, a broader view to marketing has been adopted. Sevier (1998: vii) defines it as follows:

Marketing is the analysis, planning, implementation, and control of carefully formulated programmes designed to bring about voluntary exchanges of values with target markets for the purpose of achieving organisational objectives.

From the previous discussion it is clear that the marketing phenomenon has moved through an evolution of thought with the recent phase that of integrated marketing. Integrated marketing takes relationship marketing, the previous phase in marketing strategising, one step further. Moving the focus from the customer and customer service to all stakeholder groups, and adding to the scenario the fact that the marketing function should be integrated into the core of the organisation with all marketing and communication activities coordinated to deliver a strategic consistent message to all the stakeholders.

All of the definitions in the previous discussion share certain basic characteristics that are the major elements of modern marketing, namely:

- *It is operational.* Managers must take action to achieve results. Benefits will not emerge from a passive attitude to the exchange.
- *It is customer-orientated.* It makes the firm look outside itself, focusing on the needs or requirements of the customer. Its effectiveness lies in finding solutions to the challenges posed by these demands.
- *It emphasises mutuality of benefit.* The exchanges work and persist because it is in the best interest of both parties to continue. Through this, both prosper as needs are satisfied by goods and services which suppliers will continue to supply because they profit and which are bought because customers' benefit exceed costs.
- *It is value driven.* The culture of the company, the values espoused by its leaders and communicated to all those involved in the firm, are based on a desire to build the business through meeting needs and responding to the market (Cannon 1997:3).

Baker (1994) supports and elaborates on Cannon's view when he argues that marketing has four key features namely a customer orientation, a strategic perspective (focus on long term goals), it makes use of all the company's resources and is innovative in nature.

4.6.2 The marketing mix

The term marketing mix describes the important elements that make up the marketing programme. Every aspect of the marketing mix – product, price, place and promotion as seen from the traditional marketing perspective; or customer, cost, convenience and communication as seen from an integrated marketing viewpoint – affects customers' response and inevitably an organisation's success. Lauterborn formulated the four Cs model (referred to in 4.2.5) and suggests that marketers:

- forget product – study *customer* wants and needs. One can no longer sell whatever you can make. You can only sell what someone specifically wants to buy.
- forget price – understand the customer's *cost* to satisfy that want or need.
- forget place – think *convenience* to buy.
- forget promotion – the word in the 90s is *communication* (Schultz, Tannenbaum & Lauterborn 1994:12-13).

The system's view of the market reflects a series of interrelated processes made up of a number of parts (subsystems) operating in a more or less complex environment. The parts of the system demonstrate an ordered pattern of behaviour designed to achieve certain goals, either their own or that of the system (Cannon 1997:51-52).

Figure 4.1 illustrates how the general environmental forces – economic, political, cultural and technological – shape the marketing system and the relationships within it.

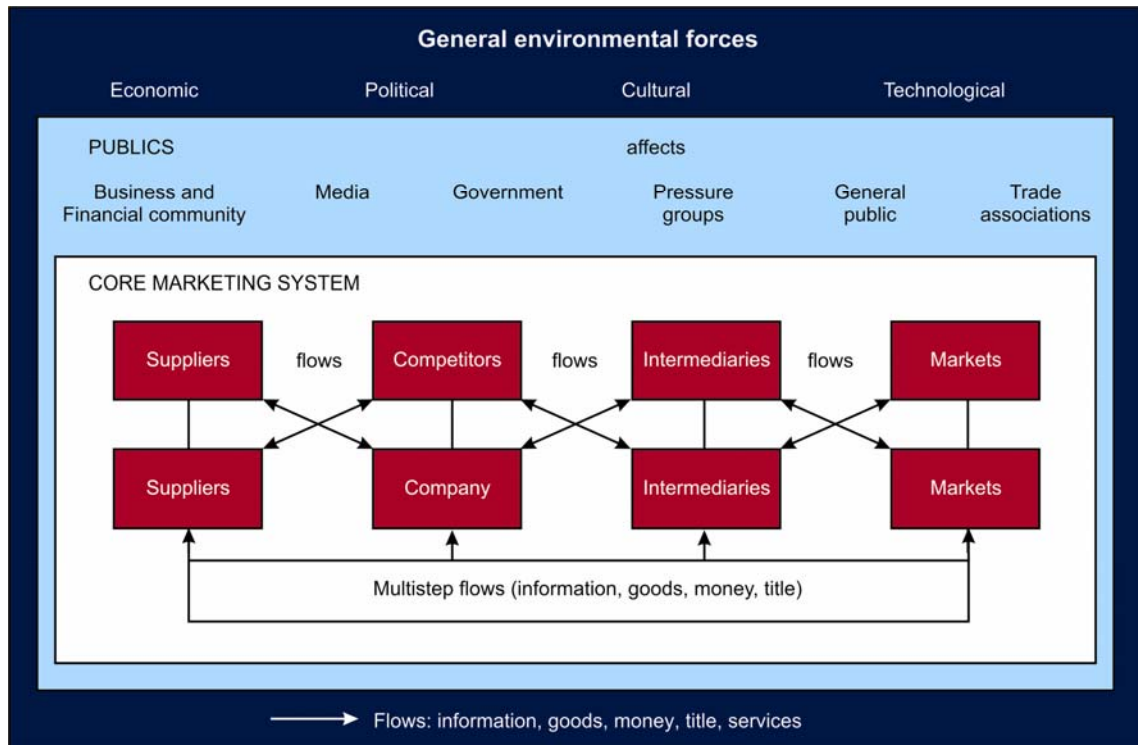


Figure 4.1: Interaction between different levels in marketing system (Cannon 1997:55)

From this illustration it is clear that marketing relationships involve sets of interrelationships, many of which go far beyond the specific transaction or immediate customer. These relationships are continually changing as they are influenced by, and in turn influence, their environment. Thus, in the marketing system there are interconnected and interdependent relationships that as a whole are greater than the sum of its parts.

4.7 THE INTEGRATED ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION SPIRAL

To demonstrate the position of each of the different functional areas (and the prominent components thereof) of organisational communication in an organisation practising IC, an illustration is provided (figure 4.2).

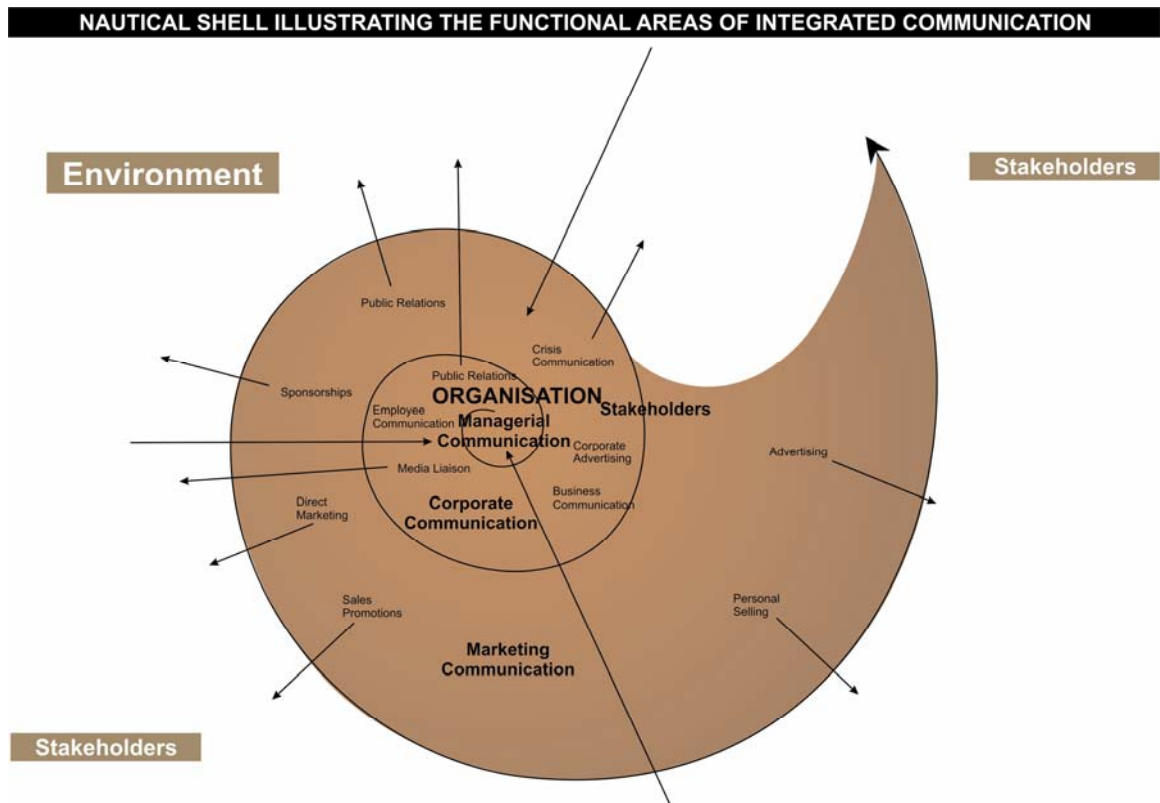


Figure 4.2: Functional areas of integrated organisational communication (Mulder 2007a)

A swirl or nautical shell is used as metaphor to represent the organisational communication context within which managerial, corporate and marketing communication are practised. A swirl model is used as analogy because of the resemblance between the intrinsic characteristics of a swirl and that of integrated organisational communication. The main trust of the swirl model is the fact that IC should be an organisation-wide endeavour implemented on a strategic level, as suggested by Niemann (2005). As mentioned the beginning of this discussion, communication is not a separate function, but underlies the bases of the organisation itself. This model (Figure 4.2) illustrates these characteristics.

Managerial communication is positioned at the heart/core of the swirl, as it is at the centre of an organisation. The managerial communication techniques carry

the communication on issues relevant to employees. The evolving nature of the swirl reflects the true nature of IC as it is also dynamic and ever changing – adapting to the environmental and stakeholder input. Both are thus open to the environment and in a state of constant change.

The three main component or functional areas of integrated organisational communication, namely managerial communication, corporate communication and marketing communication are interrelated, overlapping and often inseparable. They offer converging areas between the organisation and its stakeholders (e.g. advertising, personal contact), but also amongst stakeholders themselves (e.g. managerial communication with employees).

4.8 DRIVERS OF INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION

The first formal definition of IMC formulated by the American Association of Advertising Agencies (Schultz & Schultz 1998) is:

A concept of marketing communications planning that recognises the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of a variety of communication disciplines – general advertising, direct response, sales promotion, and public relations – and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency, and maximum communication impact.

This definition has been most widely used and is most often cited by academics and practitioners (Koekemoer 2004; Peltier, Schibrowsky & Schultz 2003; Russell & Lane 2002; Kallmeyer & Abratt 2001; Anantachart 2001; Kitchen & Schultz 1999; Burnett & Moriarty 1998; Sirgy 1998; Shimp 1997; Duncan & Caywood 1996; Petrisson & Wang 1996; Belch & Belch 1995). This definition was used as point of departure for the analysis in this study. The research strategy employed was discussed in chapter 2 (see 2.5), but in short:

Theoretical sampling (Babbie 2007; Charmaz 2006; Strauss & Corbin 1990), the grounded theory strategy of obtaining further selective data (IMC definitions in this instance) was used to refine and fill out the major categories, until theoretical saturation (indicating that no new properties of the category or concept emerged from the definitions during data collection) was reached.

The purpose of theoretical sampling was to obtain data to help explicate the categories (Charmaz 2006:100). With IMC definitions as units of analysis (Fraenkel & Wallen 2003), data was systematically coded in order to create categories that “emerged” from the data. Then the fitness of these categories with each other as described by Babbie (2007:297) was described. The constant comparative method suggested by Charmaz (2006:5) was employed to make comparisons during each stage of the analysis. The general theme in each category became the concept that describes the meaning of the constructs of the cluster or category.

The scrutinising of the theoretical sample of IMC and IC definitions found between 1989 and 2006, led to the emerging of the most prominent constructs that form the foundation of IC. The constructs were categorised to present the subsequent concepts. These concepts, which seem to outline the primary values and philosophy of the IC phenomenon, are:

- Holistic business approach
- Brand integration
- Stakeholder-centric
- Stakeholder-conscious employees
- Contact synergy
- Message consistency / Strategic consistency
- Use of technology
- Financial accountability
- Stakeholder segmentation
- Sustainable success

In the following discussion each one of these fundamental principles of IC is explored to reflect on the true nature and scope thereof, and the task it has to perform in IC. As indicated before, it should be noted that IC developed from IMC, therefore in the following discussion, different authors' reference made to IMC were kept in tact. In most cases IMC can also be read as IC as IC is the context within which IMC takes place.

4.8.1 Holistic business approach

An important milestone in the conceptual development of IMC was introduced by Schultz and Schultz (1998), where they proposed a shift in focus from marketing communication tactics and operations to viewing IMC as a “business process”. Marketing communication is no longer a peripheral function. Schultz and Barnes (1999:63) call it “the move from functions to processes”. There is an increased focus on integrated business strategies that promote organisational growth (Wiscombe 2005; Yeshin 1998). IMC has to be part of the core decision-making processes of a company; otherwise the true value of IMC, including all the basic principles thereof, will not be a viable option for a company. If IMC is to make a real contribution, then Kitchen (2005) suggests that it has to move from tactical promotional component to strategic business partner. Hutton and Mulhern (2002) say the best marketing communications are integrated at every level to create a unified, cohesive, effective programme.

As Duncan and Moriarty (1997:xii) put it, “making marketing less a function and more a philosophy of doing business”. Although these authors did not include a holistic business approach as one of their drivers, it is implied by several of the criteria identified by them – especially by stating that cross-functional rather than departmental planning and monitoring should be employed. However, this specific aspect is categorised as an infrastructural concern. Nevertheless, this principle is of such great importance to the whole planning process of IC that it

is suggested that a holistic business approach should be distinguished as a separate criterion within the corporate focus domain (Niemann 2005).

4.8.2 Brand integration

Within an IC context, brand communication is more than a name, term, sign, symbol, or any other feature. A product or company becomes a brand through communication. Overton-de Klerk (1993:187) is of the opinion that a strong brand image can establish a “fund of goodwill” or “brand equity” from which future benefits can be reaped. This author suggests that goodwill or brand equity is often equated in the industry with the term “communication stock”.

Communication is the means through which value is added to the product or company, and the product or company is entrenched as a “symbol” within the mind of the consumer. To obtain this “position” in the consumer’s mind, Oosthuizen (2007:9) notes that an organisation should “stick to what they are known for”. Marketers should pay attention to brand differentiation and analyse how their product or services differ from their competitors (Oosthuizen 2007:8). According to Schultz and Barnes (1999:44) “the brand has become a part of the relationship between the marketing organisation and the consumer”. The brand represents the bond between the buyer and the seller and is a relationship that only the consumer can create. Ratnatunga and Ewing (2005), and Christiani (1995) outlined the potential role of IC in enhancing brand equity. These authors provide a new construct called “*brand capability*” to indicate what can be achieved with the brand as asset (Ratnatunga & Ewing 2005:37).

A brand, according to the global branding consultant Interbrand Schechter, is the promise of an experience (Moriarty *et al.* 1995). A powerful brand enhances awareness, differentiates the organisation and commands a premium in today’s highly competitive marketplace, suggests Mariotti (1999). Oosthuizen (2008) agrees that one should remain true to the core values of the brand, yet he argues that “consumers should be challenged and the engagement of the

consumer should be extended without boring them to death with simplistic repetition”.

The opinions viewed strongly support the notion that the brand should be entrenched in all organisational activities. Although Duncan and Moriarty (1997a) address this issue when claiming that strategic consistency should be maintained, they consider it as a process only and not as a business philosophy. By adding brand integration to the corporate focus category in the above-mentioned authors' model, this void is addressed on a managerial level but is still kept operational because of its presence in the process category within the strategic consistency criteria.

This deliberation, and specifically Oosthuizen's (2008) perspective on brand management through consumer or stakeholder engagement instinctively leads to the discussion of a stakeholder-centric approach to marketing communication.

4.8.3 Stakeholder-centric

Common knowledge in marketing is that the customer is the ultimate determinant of product or company success. As many authors suggest, the concept of integrated marketing communication begins with the consumer (Shimp 2000; Hansted & Hemanth 1999/2000; Schultz 1998; Burnett & Moriarty 1998). It's the process and strategic approach of marketing from the consumer standpoint rather than from a product or service standpoint. The thrust starts at understanding what consumers are interested in – what they want – then building or adjusting the products or services to meet those needs. After understanding what the consumer wants, the marketer should ensure that the communications being developed are relevant to them [the consumer] (Schultz 1998). Customers are increasingly being viewed as assets, with tangible equity (Blattberg & Deighton 1996) and lifetime value (Pitt, Ewing & Berthon 2000).

According to Lauterborn and Curran (2000) it is important to recognise the fact that “all customers are not created equal”. In recent years, customers have become significantly more empowered. Yastrow (1999/2000) identified three major factors that caused this increase in customer power, namely a significant increase in purchase options; improved access to objective, plentiful product information; and consumers have become savvy, more self-reliant and sceptical, trusting themselves more than sellers. Several authors (Niemann 2005; Lin 2000/2001; Gronstedt 2000) argue that organisations should move from an inside-out thinking to a outside-in thinking approach. The main stake of this shift in approach is that organisations should not only focus on their key customers, but include all their stakeholders – in other words, every individual that could have a direct or indirect impact on the organisation.

Every IC strategy should therefore begin with an intense consideration of the stakeholders. This approach goes far beyond basic demographics to uncover the customer segments and consumer motivation that drive purchasing decisions. Companies often restrict themselves to statistical measures such as population size, net disposable income and purchasing power. While this might have been an adequate method to use ten years ago, it is not the best approach in today’s competitive business environment. Advocates contend that IMC is the crucial first step in transitioning from “primarily out-bound, product-driven communication to the more interactive, customer, and ultimately stakeholder-oriented, and behaviour-oriented approaches of the 21st century” (Kitchen & Schultz 1999:24).

A stakeholder-centric approach in IC necessitates the discussion of two closely related and undeniably important aspects, namely dialogue or stakeholder engagement, and the consequent building of long-term relationships. Marketers should move towards communication efforts that are packed with information that can form the basis of a dialogue with the customer. In IC all stakeholder contacts, planned and unplanned, take on the role of communicating the brand’s marketing message. One of the latest trends in marketing is customer

experience management. This concept is defined as “the process of strategically managing a customer’s entire experience with a product or a company” (Schmitt 2003:17). The challenge now becomes to manage the ongoing stream of contacts, or “moments of truth”, a company has with each member of a stakeholder group as an integrated marketing dialogue. According to Harbison (Anon 1997) customer intimacy is one of the key components of IMC and involves the tracking and managing of all customer moments. In IC the view will be broadened to include all stakeholder moments. Marketers need to regard each point of contact with a stakeholder as an opportunity to create a relationship and live up to the promises made while in that relationship.

The aspects highlighted in the preceding discussion have implications for the running of a company. An aspect that Duncan and Moriarty included in their model and that bears relation to being stakeholder-centric is the generation of purposeful dialogue, however, being stakeholder-centric is an aptness needed to create the context for this purposeful dialogue or engagement mentioned. Stakeholder-centricity is therefore considered a supplementary criterion that is essential and as a result added to the Duncan and Moriarty model (1997) within the corporate focus category. According to Duncan and Moriarty (1997) companies will have to set up cross-functional processes and make other structural changes to better manage brand relationships.

As will be seen in the next section, an aspect that goes hand in hand with the changes in the internal environment is the predisposition of employees. The internal marketing process in IC is of the utmost importance to establish an effective base from which a company can operate.

4.8.4 Stakeholder-conscious employees

The experience each customer has when buying and using a company’s product or service and interfacing with its employees is an integral part of his or her perceived value. Brand experience starts with attracting employees who

have an affinity for the product and are themselves satisfied and loyal (Robinette & Brand 1999/2000). Studies show that employee satisfaction is correlated with customer satisfaction (Ahmed & Rafiq 2002; Freemantle 1998; Feig 1997; Maddock & Fulton 1996; Grönroos 1985). A customer and other stakeholder members respond positively to an employee who is passionate about his or her job and the products the company provides. This indicates the importance of an integrated internal marketing communication programme in any organisation that wants to employ effective marketing actions (McGoon 1998/99).

Today's consumer simply cannot be sold and stakeholders cannot be positively influenced through mass media alone. As a result, leading marketing strategists are focusing on creating one-on-one, customised stakeholder relationships that utilise every possible advertising, promotional and relationship medium to enhance the brand experience. However, this stakeholder-orientated approach has serious implications for the management of communication and the human resources of a company. Murray and White (2005:356) rightfully refer to internal communication as the "sleeping giant" of strategic communication.

The previous discussion reflects back on the holistic business approach that should be followed, but even more important is the fact that employees should be made stakeholder-conscious in order to comply with a stakeholder-orientated approach. The key assumption underlying internal communication in an IC context is based upon the notion that to satisfy stakeholders, the firm must have satisfied employees.

The importance of internal marketing is also reflected in the next discussion on contact synergy. As stated repeatedly in the previous discourse, an organisation should strive to direct each contact point between the organisation and its stakeholders.

4.8.5 Contact synergy

The significance of this concept is the notion that a marketing communicator should manage contact between a company and the stakeholders in such a manner that synergy is created. A whole array of tools can be used to communicate and persuade intended stakeholder groups. These tools are called the marketing communication mix and traditionally included advertising, sales promotion (directed at both consumers and the resellers), personal selling, direct marketing and public relations. But increasingly marketers are coming to understand that integrated communication is not just based on what the organisation sends out or delivers to customers and stakeholders, in other words planned messages. Communication also occurs through the brand contacts or experiences customers and stakeholders have with the brand and the organisation in the general marketplace (Schultz & Kitchen 2000). In truth, it is the total sum of the brand contacts the stakeholders have over time that determine their response to planned and controlled communication programmes. Therefore, to plan effective programmes the communication manager must have some idea of the totality of contact points that currently exist in the marketplace. The goal of the IC programme is not just to manage the contacts but also to manage the process (Schultz & Kitchen 2000). Understanding the venues in which stakeholders come into contact with the brand is one of the key steps in IC.

The bottom line of contact synergy is the fact that many marketing communication techniques should be combined to present a unified message with a feedback mechanism built into the process to make the communication a two-way flow of information. Two of the criteria identified by Duncan and Moriarty (1997) have relevance to the above discussed concept. Firstly, these authors refer to strategic consistency and state that the communication dimensions for all brand contacts and the sources of these messages are critical because they impact on stakeholders' behaviour. The more the brand's

position is strategically integrated into all the brand messages, the more consistent and distinct the company's identity and reputation will be (Duncan & Moriarty 1997).

Furthermore, these authors highlight core competencies as another important IMC driver. These criteria support the notion in the above discussion that marketing managers must have a basic understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the major marketing communication functions or techniques. They must objectively evaluate and respect these strengths and weaknesses and apply them in a mix that maximises the cost-effectiveness of each function (Duncan & Moriarty 1997). However, the concept contact synergy refers very strongly to the expected outcome of the process. Although the core competency criterion obviates the infrastructure need, the author suggests that this concept should be added to the operational process category to underline the operational importance thereof.

4.8.6 Message consistency / strategic consistency

A key guideline for building strong brands is to have an identity, position, and execution that are consistent over time (Aaker 1996; D'Alessandro 2001; Ries & Ries 1998). Strategic consistency is the coordination of all messages that create reputations, as well as images and positions, in the minds of customers and other stakeholders. Without consistency these critical identity cues will be unfocused and diffused. Oosthuizen (2007) argues that the low level of creative consistency for most brands may be ascribed to the fact that marketers do not really have a clearly defined brand blueprint or positioning to begin with.

Having executional consistency in marketing communication is important, but what is even more important is to create strategic consistency in the fundamental areas of core brand values, business philosophy, and corporate mission (Dewhirst & Davis 2005). These are the areas that demonstrate corporate integrity and provide a platform for integrated communication.

Strategic consistency then means making these fundamental business philosophies actionable by integrating them into all aspects of the organisation's performance and communication (Moriarty 1997). In other words, to ensure that the various elements of the communication programme have a common, strategic objective (Low 2000). Maintaining strategic message consistency is a very complex management process. If a cross-functional management system is not in place in an organisation, it is almost impossible to coordinate the effort (Duncan 2002). Consequently, the importance of the links between the different concepts discussed in this article is once again highlighted.

The preceding discussion highlighted the fact that consistency should be incorporated at all levels in an organisation. Therefore strategic consistency is moved to the corporate focus category and message consistency is added to the process category.

4.8.7 Use of technology

Technology touches every part of our lives, making our world faster, smarter and more mobile than ever before. These technological trends have a profound impact on today's fragmented marketplace. It means marketing communicators have to adopt new and better ways to understand, reach and connect with ever-more-elusive consumers (Nowak & Phelps 1994).

Many leading marketing communication theorists and practitioners feel that an integrated marketing communication approach offers the ways and technological means to achieve these ends (Kitchen 2005; Dewhirst & Davis 2005; Duncan & Moriarty 1997; McGoon 1998/99). As Reich (1998:28) suggests, "a multifaceted relational database-driven approach packs a far more potent wallop than any single advertising component in terms of positioning, brand building/product awareness, and cementing that all important bond – customer loyalty,". However, this same author maintains that a mix of traditional

marketing communication techniques and interactive programmes should blend to yield a more powerful IMC programme.

Database management is accommodated in Duncan and Moriarty's model (1997) in the infrastructure category. The essence of the arguments presented on the use of technology is captured in this concept and therefore it shall be maintained.

4.8.8 Financial accountability

One of the biggest problems facing marketing communication managers is the fact that they are more and more pressurised to be accountable for the money they spend on marketing activities (Shimp 2000; Thorson & Moore 1996; Duncan, Caywood & Newsom 1993). A simple argument for IMC is that "there are financial, competitive and effectiveness benefits to be achieved through the synergy afforded by the process of integration" (Pickton & Hartley 1998:458). IMC should be results driven, as suggested by Kliatchko (2005). This author considers financial measurement as a pillar of IMC.

Analysing the Duncan and Moriarty model (1997) it becomes apparent that zero-based planning addresses the financial approach and management aspect in IMC. However, to allow for a broader application of financial planning it is suggested that zero-based planning is replaced with financial accountability in the process domain of IC.

4.8.9 Stakeholder segmentation

The increased sophistication of audience segmentation has provided marketers with a completely new way to reach target audiences more efficiently (Reich 1998). Stakeholder segmentation is a very important concept in IC. In essence, stakeholder segmentation in IC entails the identification and formulation of meaningful and profitable niches and includes all stakeholders of the

organisation. Kliatchko (2005) describes IMC as audience-focused. As indicated in 4.8.3 the use of the term audience rather than consumer is deliberate as it gives prominence to the fact that IC programmes are not directed solely to consumers, but to all relevant publics of an organisation (Kliatchko 2005:26). To be audience or stakeholder focused means IC programmes are directed at the multiple markets that have a direct or indirect impact on the business of an organisation (Moore & Thorson 1996), internal as well as external (Kliatchko 2005; Burnett & Moriarty 1998). Another issue raised by Thomas and Sullivan (2005) concerning stakeholder segmentation is the fact that segment-specific communication strategies should be developed in IC.

Duncan and Moriarty (1997) included stakeholder focus in their model at the corporate focus level. The main idea behind this criterion is that gaining the support of key stakeholders in the short term generates greater long-term profits for investors. These authors also underline that the number and quality of relationships that a company has, not only with customers, but also with all its stakeholders determine brand equity. This notion upholds the argumentation line that was followed in the discussion on stakeholder segmentation.

4.8.10 Sustainable success

All marketing communication is goal directed in the IC paradigm; even more so than in the traditional marketing communication context, because of the emphasised importance of efficiency (Burnett & Moriarty 1998) and financial accountability (Rensburg & Cant 2002). Whether aimed at existing or prospective stakeholders, the communication strategy must have an objective that can generally be interpreted as the achievement of a substantive goal. The ultimate goal of the marketing communication strategy is to help sell the product or service to keep the company in business (Burnett & Moriarty 1998). Duncan and Moriarty's (1997) proposed mission marketing links up with sustainable success. A mission creates an integrity platform and helps define and humanise a company. One of the benefits thereof is that it keeps employees focused on

the company's fundamental objective of growing profitable relationships. Mission marketing is a long-term corporate activity with company-wide buy-in.

Subsequently, the drivers or basic principles identified and discussed in the previous section were compared with, and integrated into a model that was formulated by Duncan and Moriarty.

4.9 INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION (IC): THE QUINTESSENCE

As mentioned, in 1997 Duncan and Moriarty identified criteria that successful companies use to integrate their marketing communication activities. The criteria proposed by Duncan and Moriarty (1997) offered a valuable theoretical framework consisting of ten drivers. In the next section, this model will be elaborated on and the principles discussed in the previous section will be included in this model to offer a more inclusive approach to the integration of communication into an organisation's communication environment. In chapter 3 it was determined that a strong corporate culture can contribute towards an intrinsic intercultural communication awareness. Figure 4.3 presents a graphic illustration of the elaborated model and indicates the position of corporate culture components in the three categories.

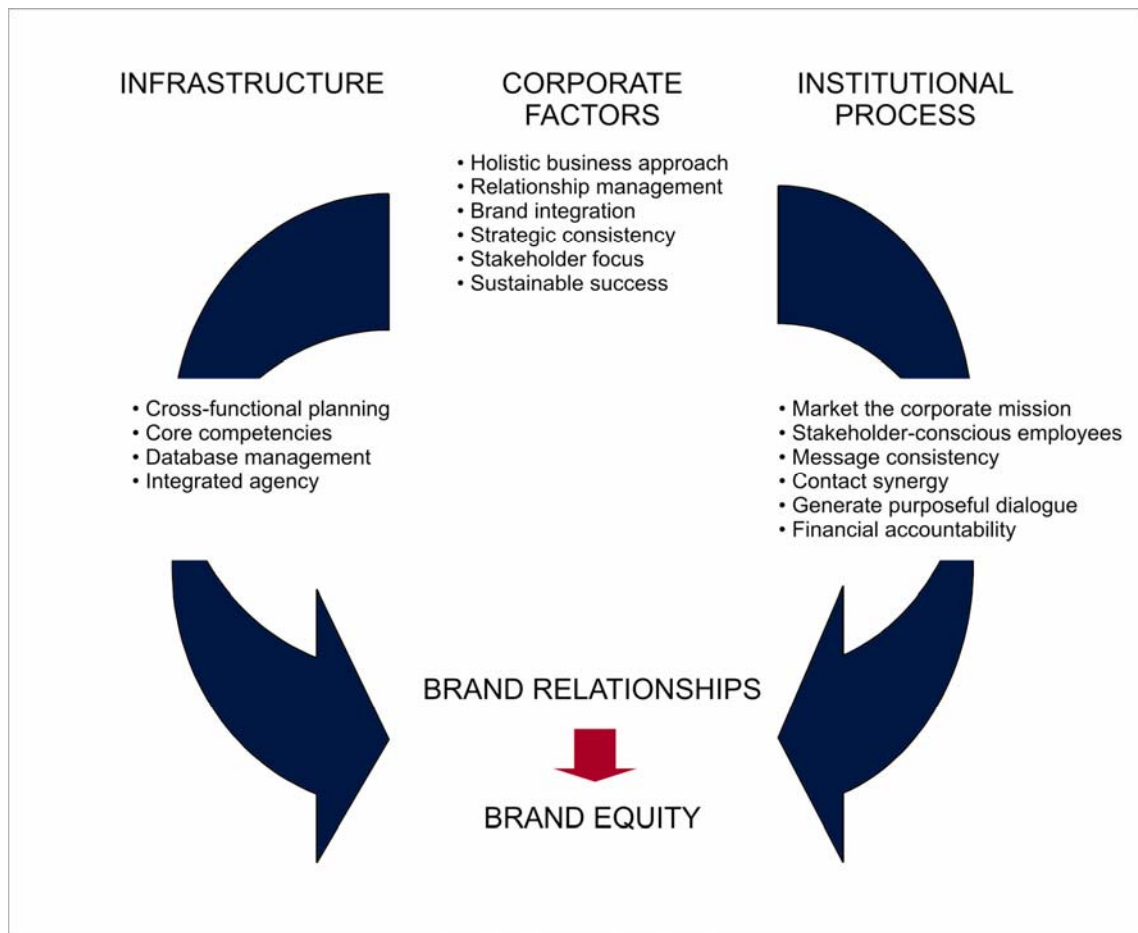


Figure 4.3: Elaborated IC driver model (Mulder 2007b), adapted from Duncan and Moriarty (1997)

In this model each one of the drivers (as Duncan & Moriarty called them) or principles falls into one of three integration categories. The first category, corporate focus, includes seven drivers: (1) *holistic business approach*, (2) *relationship management*, (3) *brand integration*, (4) *customer centricity*, (5) *the maintenance of strategic consistency*, (6) *stakeholder focus*, and (7) *sustainable success*. The second category, institutional processes, includes six drivers: (1) *marketing the corporate mission*, (2) *stakeholder-conscious employees*, (3) *message consistency*, (4) *contact synergy*, (5) *generation of purposeful dialogue*, and (6) *financial accountability*. The third category, infrastructure, includes four drivers: (1) *cross-functional planning*; (2) *the development of core*

competencies; (3) database management; and (4) the use of an integrated agency.

This elaborated IC driver model (Mulder 2007b) underwrites the strategic approach that should be followed, the operational process that must be employed and the infrastructure that should be available to facilitate effective IC practices in an organisation. According to Duncan and Moriarty (1997), the integration that results from the implementation of these drivers includes customer retention, interactional, ongoing communication, the expansion of marketing beyond the marketing department to the whole organisation, and improved brand equity.

In the following discussion, the three categories in the model (figure 4.3) are explored to reflect on the true nature and scope thereof, and the task it has to perform in IC.

4.9.1 Categories driving IC in organisations

As mentioned earlier (see 4.5) organisational structures are formal systems created to enable organisational members to achieve organisational goals. The corporate focus level of the model entails approaches, processes and activities that aim to create an environment in which an organisation can grow and develop to maximise its long-term ability to create value (Jones & George 2003). It defines the set of businesses that should form the organisation's overall profile and is financially orientated.

The second category consists of institutional processes that should be implemented to take advantage of opportunities to compete effectively in the marketplace. The principle responsibility on this level is to establish processes and procedures to execute the strategies of the organisation by developing annual objectives and short-term strategies. The infrastructure category suggests the different resources and means necessary to support the

processes' level activities in order to reach the corporate level focus. Subsequently, a brief discussion of each of the categories is provided.

4.9.1.1 Category one - Corporate focus

Viewing IC as a **holistic business approach** or “business process”, as suggested by Schultz and Schultz (1998), means marketing communication is no longer a peripheral function. It has moved from functions to processes (Schultz & Barnes 1999:63) and focuses on integrated business strategies that promote organisational growth (Wiscombe 2005). Niemann (2005) opines that the strategic intent of the organisation as a whole should drive all the communication of the organisation. If IC is not part of the core decision-making processes of a company, the true value thereof cannot be realised and it will not be able to make a real contribution to an organisation's bottom-line. Kitchen (2005) as well as Hutton and Mulhern (2002) suggest that it has to move from tactical promotional component to strategic business partner where the marketing communications are integrated at every level of the organisation to create a unified, cohesive, effective programme. An important corporate culture component (CCC) that underscores this approach is that corporate culture (**ethos**) is the driving force behind the successful operation of the organisation.

Within this context, **brand communication** is more than a name, term, sign, symbol, or any other feature. A brand is the promise of an experience (Moriarty *et al.* 1995). A product or company becomes a brand through communication (Overton-de Klerk 1993). Communication is the means through which value is added to the product or company, and the product or company is entrenched as a “symbol” within the mind of the consumer and other stakeholders. According to Schultz and Barnes (1999:44) “the brand has become a part of the **relationship management** process between the marketing organisation and the stakeholders”. The brand represents the bond between the buyer and the seller and is a relationship that only the stakeholder can create. Ratnatunga and Ewing (2005) also accent the potential role of IC in enhancing brand equity. A

powerful brand enhances awareness, differentiates the organisation and commands a premium in today's highly competitive marketplace, just as a strong corporate culture projects an organisation's **uniqueness** and **differentiates** it from other organisations. Overton-de Klerk (1993:187) is of the opinion that a strong brand image can establish a "fund of goodwill" or "brand equity" from which future benefits can be reaped. The opinions viewed, strongly support the notion that the brand should be entrenched in all organisational activities and that **strategic consistency** should be maintained.

As the customer and other stakeholders are the ultimate determinant of product or company success, **stakeholder-centricity** therefore also forms part of the corporate factors category. As many authors suggest, the concept of integrated communication begins with the stakeholders (Shimp 2000; Hansted & Hemanth 1999/2000; Schultz 1998; Burnett & Moriarty 1998). It's the process and strategic approach of marketing from the consumer and stakeholder standpoint rather than from a product or service standpoint. The thrust starts with determining stakeholders' wants and needs, then building or adjusting the products or services to meet those needs. After understanding what the stakeholders want, the marketer should ensure that the developed brand communications are relevant to them [the stakeholder] (Schultz 1998). Stakeholders are increasingly being viewed as assets, with tangible equity (Blattberg, Getz & Thomas 2001; Blattberg & Deighton 1996) and lifetime value (Pitt, Ewing & Berthon 2000). Every IC strategy should therefore begin with an intense consideration of the customer, going far beyond basic demographics to uncover the customer segments and consumer motivation that drive purchasing decisions. A strong corporate culture recognises that **close relationships** with the stakeholders are essential.

A stakeholder-centric approach in IC necessitates the discussion of two closely related and undeniably important aspects, namely dialogue or two-way communication and the consequent building of long-term relationships. Marketers should move towards communication efforts packed with information

that can form the basis of a dialogue with the customer. In IMC all customer contacts, planned and unplanned, take on the role of communicating the brand's marketing message to the customer. One of the latest trends in marketing is customer experience management. This concept is defined as "the process of strategically managing a customer's entire experience with a product or a company" (Schmitt 2003:17). The challenge now becomes managing the ongoing stream of contacts, or "moments of truth", a company has with each customer as an integrated marketing dialogue. According to Harbison (in Anon 1997) customer intimacy is one of the key components of IMC and involves the tracking and managing of all customer moments. In line with organisations that accommodate a strong corporate culture, **positive and respectful relationships** are encouraged. Marketers need to regard each point of contact with a customer as an opportunity to create a relationship and live up to the promises made while in that relationship.

The aspects highlighted in the preceding discussion have implications for the running of a company. An aspect that bears relation to being customer-centric is the generation of purposeful dialogue (that will be discussed in the next category). However, being customer-centric is an aptness needed to create the context for this purposeful dialogue mentioned and should be present at the corporate focus level.

The increased sophistication of audience segmentation has provided marketers with a whole new way to reach target audiences more efficiently (Reich 1998). **Stakeholder segmentation** is a very important concept in IC. In essence, stakeholder segmentation in IC entails the identification and formulation of meaningful and profitable niches and includes all stakeholders of the organisations. Kliatchko (2005) describes IMC as audience-focused. The use of the term audience rather than consumer is deliberate as it gives prominence to the fact that IC programmes are not directed solely to consumers, but to all relevant publics of an organisation (Kliatchko 2005:26). To be audience or stakeholder focused means IC programmes are directed at the multiple markets

that have a direct or indirect impact on the business of an organisation (Moore & Thorson 1996), internal as well as external (Kliatchko 2005; Burnett & Moriarty 1998). The main idea behind this criterion is that gaining the support of key stakeholders in the short term generates greater long-term profits for investors. Duncan and Moriarty (1997) also underline that brand equity is determined by the number and quality of relationships that a company has, not only with customers, but with all its stakeholders. An excellent corporate culture acknowledges that **people are important**. Another issue raised by Du Plessis and Rousseau (1999) with regards to stakeholder segmentation is the fact that segment-specific communication strategies should be developed. This links up with the message consistency aspect that will be discussed in the second category.

All marketing communication is goal directed in the IC paradigm; even more so than in the traditional marketing communication context, because of the stressed importance of efficiency (Burnett & Moriarty 1998) and financial accountability (Rensburg & Cant 2002) and ultimately **sustainable success**. Whether aimed at existing or prospective stakeholders, the communication strategy must have an objective that can generally be interpreted as the achievement of a substantive goal. The ultimate goal of the marketing communication strategy is to help sell the product or service to keep the company in business (Burnett & Moriarty 1998). A corporate culture component that links up with this viewpoint is that employees and managers share the same **core value** of productivity and performance.

4.9.1.2 Category two – Institutional processes

A company with a strong and excellent corporate culture demonstrates a strong and **unifying philosophy and mission**. Duncan and Moriarty's (1997) proposed **mission marketing** links up with sustainable success in the corporate focus category. A mission creates an integrity platform and helps define and humanise a company. One of the benefits thereof is that it keeps

employees focused on the company's fundamental objective of growing profitable relationships. Mission marketing is a long-term corporate activity that requires company-wide buy-in. An aspect that goes hand in hand with the changes in the internal environment is the growing importance of employees. The internal marketing process in IC is of the utmost importance to establish an effective base from which a company can operate, i.e. a strong corporate culture. The experience each customer has when buying and using a company's product or service and interfacing with its employees is an integral part of his or her perceived value. Brand equity starts with attracting employees who have an affinity for the product and are themselves satisfied and loyal (Robinette & Brand 1999/2000). Studies show that employee satisfaction correlates with customer satisfaction (Freemantle 1998; Feig 1997; Maddock & Fulton 1996). A customer responds positively to an employee who is passionate about his or her job and the products the company provides. This indicates the importance of an integrated internal marketing communication programme in any organisation that wants to employ effective marketing actions (McGoon 1998/99) and foster **stakeholder-conscious employees**. Today's consumer simply cannot be sold through mass media alone. As a result, leading marketing strategists are focusing on creating one-on-one, customised relationships with stakeholders that utilise every possible advertising, promotional and relationship medium to enhance the brand experience and include **purposeful dialogue**. However, this stakeholder-orientated approach has serious implications for the management of communication in a company. Murray and White (2005:356) rightfully refer to internal communication as the "sleeping giant" of strategic (or integrated) communication. The key assumption underlying internal communication in an integrated communication context is based upon the notion that to satisfy stakeholders, the firm must have satisfied employees.

The importance of internal marketing is also reflected in the discussion on **contact synergy**. As stated repeatedly in the previous discourse, an organisation should strive to direct each contact point between the organisation and its stakeholders. The significance of this concept is the notion that a

marketing communicator should manage contact between a company and the customers in such a manner that synergy is created (Egan 2007). A whole array of tools can be used to communicate and persuade intended stakeholder groups. These tools are called the marketing communication mix and traditionally included advertising, sales promotion (directed at both consumers and the resellers), personal selling, direct marketing and public relations (also referred to in 4.5.3). However, marketers are increasingly coming to understand that integrated communication is not just based on what the organisation sends out or delivers to customers, prospects or other stakeholders, in other words planned messages. Communication also occurs through the brand contacts or experiences stakeholders have with the brand and the organisation in the general marketplace (Schultz & Kitchen 2000). In truth, it is the total sum of the brand contacts with stakeholders over time that determines the response to planned and controlled communication programmes. Therefore, to plan effective programmes the communication manager must have some idea of the totality of contact points that currently exist in the marketplace.

The goal of the IC programme is not just to manage the contacts but also to manage the process (Schultz & Kitchen 2000). Understanding the venues in which stakeholders come into contact with the brand is one of the key steps in IC. The bottom line of contact synergy is the fact that many communication techniques should be combined to present a unified and **consistent message** with a feedback mechanism built into the process to make the communication a two-way flow of information. The more the brand's position is strategically integrated into all the brand messages, the more consistent and distinct the company's identity and reputation will be (Duncan & Moriarty 1997). This also underwrites the notion of **purposeful dialogue** stressed by these authors. A key guideline for building strong brands is to have an identity, position, and execution that are consistent over time (D'Alessandro 2001; Ries & Ries 1998; Aaker 1996). **Strategic consistency** is the coordination of all messages (based on the organisation's mission) that create reputations, as well as images and positions, in the minds of customers and other stakeholders. Without

consistency, these critical identity cues will be unfocused and diffused. Having executional consistency in marketing and communication is important, but what is even more important is to create strategic consistency in the fundamental areas of core brand values, business philosophy, and corporate mission (Dewhirst & Davis 2005). These are the areas that demonstrate **corporate integrity** and provide a platform for integrated communication.

One of the biggest problems facing marketing and communication managers is the fact that they are more and more pressurised to be **accountable for the money** they spend on marketing activities (Shimp 2000; Thorson & Moore 1996; Duncan, Caywood & Newsom 1993). A simple argument for IMC is that “there are financial, competitive and effectiveness benefits to be achieved through the synergy afforded by the process of integration” (Pickton & Hartley 1998:458). IMC should be results driven, as suggested by Kliatchko (2005). This author considers financial measurement as a pillar of IMC. In the initial Duncan and Moriarty (1997) model it became apparent that zero-based planning addresses the financial approach and management aspect in IMC. However, to allow for a broader application of financial planning in IC, zero-based planning was replaced with financial accountability in the process domain.

4.9.1.3 Category three – Infrastructure

Core competencies are another important IC driver. As corporate culture component employees are encouraged to stay focused on what they do best and avoid radical diversification. Considered from a strong corporate culture viewpoint, it encourages employees to stay focused on what they do best and avoid radical diversification. This criterion supports the notion in the above discussion that marketing and communication managers must have a basic understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the major marketing communication functions or techniques. They must objectively evaluate and respect these strengths and weaknesses and apply them in a mix that

maximises the cost-effectiveness of each function (Duncan & Moriarty 1997). However, the concept contact synergy refers very strongly to the expected outcome of the process. Although the core competency criterion obviates the infrastructure need, the concept also belongs in the operational process category to underline the operational importance thereof.

Strategic consistency then means making these fundamental business philosophies actionable by integrating them into all aspects of the organisation's performance and communication (Moriarty 1997a); in other words, to ensure that the various elements of the communication programme have a common, strategic objective (Low 2000). Maintaining strategic message consistency is a very complex management process. If a **cross-functional management system** is not in place in an organisation, it is almost impossible to coordinate the effort (Duncan 2002). In an organisation with a strong corporate culture, complex structures and division of labour are avoided. Consequently, the importance of the links between the different concepts discussed in this article is once again highlighted.

Technology touches every part of our lives, making our world faster, smarter and more mobile than ever before. These technological trends have a profound impact on today's fragmented marketplace. It means marketing communicators have to adopt new and better ways to understand, reach and connect with ever more elusive consumers and other stakeholders. Many leading marketing communication theorists and practitioners feel that an integrated marketing communication approach offers the ways and technological means to achieve these ends (Kitchen 2005; Dewhirst & Davis 2005; McGoan 1998/99; Duncan & Moriarty 1997). As Reich (1998:28) suggests, "a multifaceted relational database-driven approach packs a far more potent wallop than any single advertising component in terms of positioning, brand building/product awareness, and cementing that all important bond – customer loyalty". However, this same author maintains that a mix of traditional marketing communication techniques and interactive programmes should blend to yield a

more powerful IC programme. **Database management** is accommodated in the infrastructure category. The essence of the arguments presented on the use of technology is captured in this concept. It also encapsulates the importance of being able to **react quickly** and not spend excess time on planning and analysing. Finally, an **integrated agency** should be employed to drive all these activities.

In the previous discussion, several aspects and principles were highlighted that can contribute towards the implementation of more effective integrated communication strategies. Still, this model only addresses the basic marketing communication applications. As all marketing communication takes place within an organisational setting, it is essential to take notice of this more holistic environment. The next section will provide an exposition of the challenges in implementing integrated communication.

4.10 CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION

IC is a concept that has caused considerable debate since its theoretical inception. Since the inception of integrated communication, there has been much more emphasis placed on the implementation of an integrated communication *programme* than on the *organisational* implementation of integrated communication as concept (Niemann 2005:148-149). Although most academics and practitioners regard IMC, and more recently IC as major communication development, it is not fully accepted by academia nor fully adopted in the communication industry, largely because of its supposed difficulty to implement (Egan 2007:337).

Several authors have recommended the advantages of the concept, for example "it makes good sense" (Pettegrew 2000:29), "creates unified messages" (Clow & Baack 2004:21), is "a blueprint for success" (Burnett &

Moriarty 1998:13) and “critical to success” (Egan 2007:337). Smith and Taylor (2002:15) listed numerous advantages like it creates a competitive advantage, cements a bond of loyalty with customers, boosts sales and profits, save time and stress, nurture long-term relationships with customers and finally it is said that IMC, and therefore also IC, saves money. However, most observers agree that IC is a good idea in theory but hard to implement in practice (Egan 2007:338). Indeed, even its most keen supporters would be forced to admit that translating the theory into practice could present organisations with immense problems (Egan 2007:*ibid*). Niemann (2005) opines that resistance to change could be a factor that plays a role. This author states that in most organisations there are established “ways of doing things”, solidified positions, turf and budget concerns, and corporate cultures that have grown to be accepted as “the right way to do things” (Niemann 2005:166). The development of IC requires change, and not simply change within the marketing function but change that stretches across the organisation (Egan 2007:342). In these organisations the adoption of IC is problematic. Apart from these aspects, additional barriers to the implementation of IC have been identified. The following section provides an exposition of these barriers.

4.10.1 Organisational structures

Schultz *et al.* (1994) suggest that organisational structures are one of the largest barriers to integrating communication in organisations. Burnett and Moriarty (1998:62) postulate that there is a need to change the organisation of the business. When different divisions or departments of an organisation function in isolation (or silos) it will be difficult to implement integrated communication. Smith and Taylor (2002:16) suggest that rigid organisational structures are infested with managers who protect both their budgets and their power base. Information sharing across divisions like these is a problem and a serious obstacle for companies trying to implement integration (Burnett & Moriarty 1998:67). These organisational structures isolate communication, data, and even managers from each other (Smith & Taylor 2002:*ibid*). Re-

engineering, a process that businesses use to break down rigid, departmentalised structures to create more fluid and flexible organisations that can respond quickly to marketplace challenges, addresses organisational structures as barrier to integrated communication (Burnett & Moriarty 1998:65).

Percy (1997) identified specific structural factors that make integration problematic, namely the low standing of marketing communication personnel, and the fields of specialisation.

4.10.2 Low standing of marketing communication

Marketing communication is often seen as a luxury and the first place where cut-backs are made when an organisation experiences financial difficulties. It is not surprising then that those responsible for marketing communication occupy lower-level positions within an organisation (Niemann 2005:168). Senior management is very seldom involved in the planning of marketing communication campaigns, but have to approve these campaigns. Not being part of management means that the communication departments will not have the final say and suggestions are authenticated only by managers outside the communication field (Gonring 1994:47).

4.10.3 Decentralised decision-making

Another barrier that has relevance to organisational structures is that of decentralised decision-making (Schultz 1993b:16). Niemann (2005:169) states that more and more people at lower and lower levels are empowered to make decisions regarding marketing and communication. It makes it difficult, if not impossible, to ensure an integrated communication approach in these circumstances. Kitchen and Schultz (1999) support this notion that taking decision-making down to the lowest possible level in the organisation is counter-productive to integrated communication.

4.10.4 Communication specialisation fields

To manage integrated communication effectively, those in charge should ideally be communication generalists (Niemann 2005:169). However, in the communication field, people are increasingly specialising in a particular area; and rarely communicate with each other (Niemann 2005:169). They manage their own budgets and guard their own area. Schultz *et al.* (1994:158) and Egan (2007:344) refer to this as turf battles. Yarbrough (in Niemann 2005:170) states that most people are reluctant to give up some of the power and prestige to which their positions entitle them. Burnett and Moriarty (1998:69) add that attitude poses another problem, as one function is often considered better than another. This will continue to be a hindrance to integration implementation. IMC (and IC) must be treated as investment and not a departmental function, state Clow and Baack (2004:13).

4.10.5 Culture of the organisation

According to Niemann (2005:172) literature on management addresses the idea that an organisation will have its own defining corporate culture, and that the employees of the organisation will absorb that culture. Organisational culture determines the way in which an organisation does its business. The culture of the organisation will to a certain extent determine the way in which managers think (Percy 1997:176). This could be disadvantageous to integrated communication planning and implementation.

4.10.6 Stifled creativity

An advertising agency may not be so enthusiastic about developing a creative idea generated by someone else (Smith & Taylor 2002:17). IC can be restrictive to creativity as all ideas have to fit into the overall integrated communication

strategy. However, it can also be argued that IC promotes greater creativity as one has to come up with customer-engaging ideas within specific parameters.

4.10.7 Lack of IC know-how

This barrier consists at different levels within, and outside the organisation. Duncan and Moriarty (1997:29) argue that the lack of core IC competence among those responsible for managing this process has serious repercussions for the implementation thereof. Niemann (2005:178) supports this notion and suggests that the organisational communicator should have a comprehension and knowledge of the core organisational competencies in order to align communication objectives with those of the organisation as a whole. Furthermore, this communicator should have knowledge regarding the basic principles of IC to be able to manage and coordinate the process effectively.

A lack of knowledge regarding the basic principles of IC amongst employees will hinder the integration process, as anyone who has contact with stakeholders must reflect the image projected by the organisation's communication. This refers to the integrated message typology of Duncan and Moriarty (1997:98). What is said and done by an organisation must confirm one another. Percy (1997:176) opines that often only the people directly involved with the marketing communication programme are familiar with the intended corporate messages. Moriarty (1994:42) identified three important aspects in this regard, namely message consistency, interactivity and mission.

Unfamiliarity among top management regarding IC can also impede the implementation thereof. If top management is not aware of the advantages that an integrated approach can offer, they will be more reluctant to drive its implementation.

Another area where a lack of knowledge regarding IC could influence the implementation of IC is at agency level. In the past, several agencies have

indicated that they are practising IMC (and therefore IC), but upon closer examination, they did not understand the essence of the phenomenon (Store & Mulder 2001; Niemann 2005). The same reaction is experienced amongst clients (Schultz 1993:16; Percy 1997:80). This could have serious implications for IC, as both the agency and organisation might be under the impression that they are indeed practising IC, while in practice they are not.

4.10.8 Structure of the communication industry

Advertising agencies have dominated the marketing communication industry for a very long time. For this reason Egan (2007:344) is of the opinion that the structure of the communication industry in itself is also a barrier to integrated communication implementation. Advertising is often not the focus of integrated communication endeavours, but rather a supportive function in this context. However, advertising is the area where agencies reap most financial benefits. This could lead to subjective decision-making by agencies. Very few agencies are in the position to offer superior products and service across the entire communication field. A lack of true IC agencies can thus be considered another barrier to integrated communication implementation.

4.10.9 Financial emphasis

Percy (1997:176) identified a misguided emphasis on financial rather than consumer consideration in the development of communication strategies. Gronstedt (2000); Percy (1997), and Schultz (1993a) claim that managers often pay more attention to financial considerations when they formulate objectives, rather than stakeholder needs and wants.

4.10.10 Short-term planning

Marketing and communication functions often have to provide short-term solutions. Many organisations therefore have a short-term planning focus

(Percy 1997:178). Niemann (2005:178) suggests that it is essential for an organisation to have a long-term strategic planning approach for integrated communication, in order to align communication objectives with what the organisation is and where it is headed.

4.10.11 Integrity problems

Ethical behaviour is critical to the success of any organisation because actions speak louder than words. Any lapses in an organisation's ethical behaviour overshadow messages conveyed through an integrated communication programme. This directly affects the organisation's reputation. It is difficult to manage people and programmes so that ethical problems are minimized. Integration introduces many strangers into the mix so that controlling for such miscues appears next to impossible (Burnett & Moriarty 1998:70).

4.10.12 Technological barriers

In spite of the fact that technology has developed at an alarming rate over the past couple of years, there are still organisations that are not taking advantage of the possibilities that technology offers regarding the integration and management of their marketing and communication activities. Database development is one of the central aspects of customer relationship management and integrated communication. However, organisations have been slow to embrace the possibilities it presents. Schultz *et al.* (1994:158) consider the absence of a database as a barrier to the integration of communication.

4.11 IC UNITES ALL ENDEAVOURS

Niemann (2005:105) claims that the concept of integrated communication in brief means concord of endeavours. This author argues that it does not only refer to consistent messages, but includes concord of rationale for the

organisation, concord of organisational procedures, concord of an organisational purpose, and concord of achievements within the organisation. Niemann (2005:105) suggests furthermore that integration refers ultimately to everything the organisation does and does not do. In essence, integration intensifies the integrity of the organisation, advises this author. Integration produces integrity because an organisation that is seen as a whole rather than an anthology of incongruent, autonomous functions is perceived as being more sound and reliable (thus a concord of endeavour), and these are imperatives for sustainable relationships with the stakeholders.

4.12 CONCLUSION

Communication has been part of the organisational and marketing process for as long as goods have been exchanged from one person to another. However, the advent of technology and research, among other reasons, have made the communication process increasingly sophisticated and gave rise to integrated marketing communication (IMC) and the integrated communication phenomenon.

The customer has taken control of every market, and that is good news for marketers. We are entering a period where it's not so much a matter of consumers being apathetic toward organisations and their marketing communication efforts, but of consumers being more conditioned to not accepting an agenda set for them.

Marketers will be measured just as they measure other people in relationships, by the degree of sympathy they have for the things of value their customers hold on to. In the relationship business, consumers will judge companies from the point of view of what they do and what they stand for. The implication is that marketers need to regard each purchase by a customer as an opportunity to create a relationship and live up to the promises made while in that relationship, suggests Don Schultz, world leader in the field of integrated marketing communication.

The brand is essentially the personification of the relationship between a marketing organisation and its customers. Schultz (2001) states that relationships are very personal and they are not conducted on a mass basis. Marketers are only just beginning to understand how they can create and build upon those interpersonal relationships.

The importance of marketing lies in the fact that to be successful in the marketplace, companies must meet and exceed their clients' or consumers' needs rather than try to reshape their needs to fit existing products or services. The emphasis is always on the client or consumer.

The main thrust of this study is marketing and communication, and its integration in the organisational context. As Barker and Angelopulo (2006) pointedly states, it is now commonly accepted that organisations' communication should be integrated. Such integration is seen as the creation of synergy between marketing related activities, the coordination of planned communications, managerial communication coordination, strategic or corporate communication coordination, and the coordination of internal and external communication (Barker & Angelopulo 2006:viii).

The eventual outcome of successful integration of all of an organisation's communication is strong positive relationships between the organisation and its stakeholders. This induces loyalty and equitable corporate brand. According to Barker and Angelopulo (2006) the corporate brand is the consolidated outcome of every message about the organisation to which a stakeholder has been exposed, including planned, unplanned, service and product messages. These authors and many others (Egan 2007; Smith & Taylor 2002; Burnett & Moriarty 1998; Percy 1997; Schultz, Tannenbaum & Lauterborn 1994 to name a few) see the best way to ensure that the perception of the brand is that which the organisation intends, is to coordinate and align these messages. This coordination and alignment of messages is known as integrated communication.

CHAPTER 5

CRITICAL REFLECTION ON MODELS OF IMC AND IC

5.1 INTRODUCTION

As the business environment changed, traditional models of practice in organisations also had to change. Over the past 15 odd years, IMC evolved into IC and consequently, several models developed to reflect the latest knowledge and theory. As a result, several models have been developed over the years, but a limited amount of research has been conducted in the South African context.

In this chapter, several IMC and IC models will be discussed. As these concepts are studied from a variety of perspectives, a number of models were included in this discussion to inform the formulation of the new model. Models developed both in South Africa and abroad were explored. Only one model was found that caters specifically for an educational environment. This model was also critiqued.

5.2 THE NATURE OF MODELS

A model is simply a graphic illustration of a process. Models are sometimes also seen as simplifications used by people to make complex concepts more comprehensible. Models are generally built from concepts, constructs, variables, operational definitions and propositions. Models may be developed in two ways. First, they may be developed inductively, where the researcher moves from the particular to the general, and uses particular observations to build a general model. Secondly, they may be developed deductively. Here the researcher moves from the general to the particular, and uses inference to establish the particulars from a general model. Deductive or inductive reasoning leads to generalisations about a phenomenon, from which premises or theories are developed, and these lead to sets of relationships that constitute the models.

The major objectives of any model should be to be both valid and useful, and any model developed for marketing communication management purposes should comply with these two criteria. Validity means that the model describes and predicts reality accurately. However, some researchers have forgone the property of utility. A myriad of variables are included in the model for the sake of completeness and the model often becomes useless because data capture is infinitely time consuming, or the basic purpose of the model is buried and no manager has the time to use it.

At this point the reasoning should be reinforced that models do not make decisions, rather, they need to be simple and useful enough for people to deal with. In the final analysis, the value of a model lies in its efficiency in helping an individual come to a decision. If the person can make a better decision without the model, then the model is an inefficient one. It should not be used unless it can allow for faster, cheaper, and more valid decisions.

5.3 VARIOUS EXISTING IMC AND IC MODELS

The problem with understanding IMC is that it is both a concept and a process. On the one hand a company has to think about all the marketing communication needs in an integrated way, ensuring what has become known as the “one-voice, one-look approach” to how a brand, company, or service is presented. On the other hand this concept has to be successfully implemented. Thorson and Moore (1996) point out that one important way to consider IMC is in terms of the planning of the campaign. They believe that only by developing a comprehensive strategy for using the different persuasive tools, can effective linkages among them be built effectively.

In the following section some of the existing models of IMC will be scrutinised. The researcher will attempt to evaluate some prominent models and reflect on

variances, deviations and potential inadequacies thereof. The existing models will be used as a point of departure in the formulation of a new model for IC in a multi-cultural environment. The models are presented sequentially according to the year(s) that they were developed, starting in 1994.

5.3.1 Schultz, Tannenbaum and Lauterborn's integrated marketing communications planning model (1994)

According to the above-mentioned authors, the basis for an effective integrated marketing communications programme is based on the planning model illustrated in figure 5.1.

As can be seen in the diagram, the authors start with a database of information on both customers and prospects. While the database should be as complete as possible, they recognise that many companies, particularly those that market through retail channels, often have only limited information about their actual customers. This is especially true of large, high-penetration, fast-moving consumer products. Yet this type of information is critical to the future success of an integrated marketing communications programme. The model proposed is idealised, that is, it represents the best of all worlds.

The database should contain at a minimum such hard data as demographics, psychographics, and purchase history. In addition, attitudinal information such as the customer's category network and how consumers associate the products they use are vital for a solid integrated marketing communications approach. (It is important to note that the planning form developed in figure 5.1 was developed for a consumer product. The data-bases for a service or business-to-business model would likely be quite different.)

A major difference between the new integrated marketing communications planning approach and most traditional marketing communication planning

programmes is that the new focus is on the consumer, customer, or prospect, not on the organisation's sales or profit goals. Schultz, Tannenbaum and Lauterborn (1994) pushed the marketing objectives farther down in the planning process. They are convinced that all marketing organisations are totally dependent on their customers and their prospects for their volume and profit success. The customer and prospect base determines how successful an organisation can be. Given the level of competition and the amount of information available to customers and prospects, the major task of the marketing organisation of late is to serve customers.

A second major way in which Schultz, Tannenbaum and Lauterborn's IMC planning process differs from traditional methods is that they use customer and prospect behaviour whenever possible as their first segmentation approach. At the segmentation/classification level, they differentiate among loyal users of the marketer's brand, those who are loyal to other brands, and those who switch from brand to brand. They use an understanding of the customer's brand network as the next variable in the planning process. This understanding comes from using behavioural data such as that captured through scanners, consumer research or other sources.

The next step is what they call contact management. Contact management is based on the idea that finding a time, a place or a situation in which the customer/prospect can be communicated with may be one of the most important tasks of the successful marketing manager of the future. In the period when there was extensive consumer-marketer communication and consumers were actively seeking information about products and services, it was much more important to determine what should be said about a product or service than it was to determine when the contact could be made. The authors believe that in today's marketplace, with information overload, media proliferation and marketing communication clutter, the most critical variables in the process are how and when the customer or prospect contact can be made. The contact arrangement

will determine what will be communicated about the product or service. They highlight the importance of the conditions under which the communication will be delivered.

The next step in Schultz, Tannenbaum and Lauterborn's model is to develop a communication strategy. This involves the message that is to be delivered given the context (contact management) in which it will appear. In the communication management approach, they clearly state the objectives of the communication and what response is expected from the person contacted. Based on the communication objectives, they then define the specific marketing objectives for the integrated marketing communication plan.

Once the marketing objectives have been set, the next step is to determine which of the marketing tools should be used to achieve the previously stated marketing objectives. If one considers that the product, the distribution, and the price are forms of communication with customers and prospects, then the IMC planner has a wide variety of marketing tools at his/her disposal. The key is to select the tool that will achieve the communication objective. Commonly, most of these marketing tools are used in combination.

The last step in the process is to select the various marketing communication tactics that will help achieve the communication goals set forth in the earlier part of the planning process. Basic marketing communication tactics include advertising, sales promotion, direct marketing, public relations, and events. The critical issue is that each of these techniques must be used to help achieve the established marketing and communication objectives.

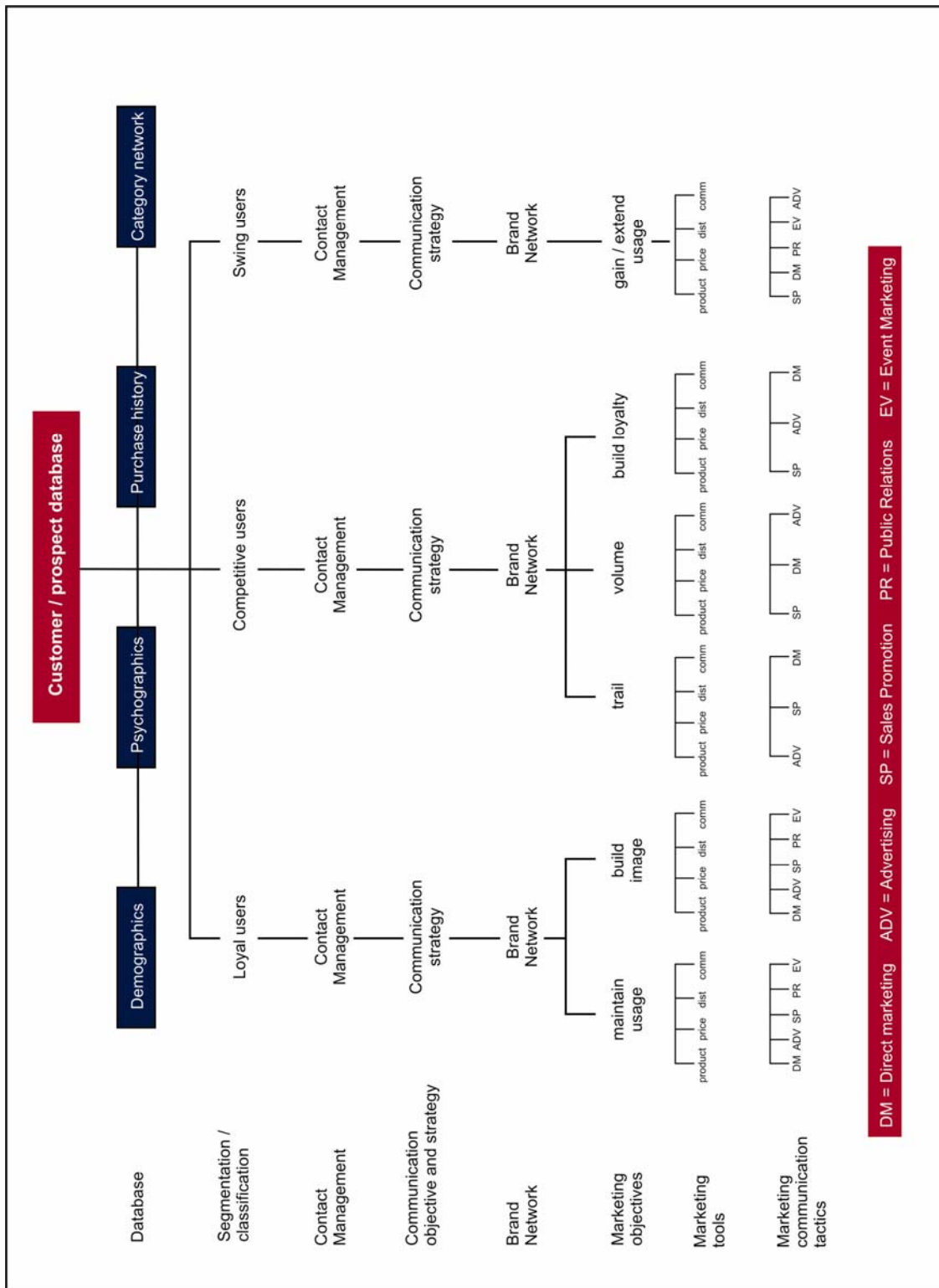


Figure 5.1: Schultz, Tannenbaum and Lauterborn's integrated marketing communications planning model

5.3.2 Gayeski and Woodward's model for developing integrated communication interventions (1996)

This model emphasises that business processes and management styles are changing and that there is a need to change the traditional models of practice in organisational communication. The model proposed by Gayeski and Woodward is based on concepts of market-based strategic communication, human performance technology, business process re-engineering, and a systematic method for analysis and development of communication interventions (Gayeski & Woodward 1996).

Market-based strategic communication represents the approach of designing proactive communication programmes that candidly inform employees about the requirements of their customers and the realities of the marketplace, and focus on organisational strategy. Performance technology or performance engineering describes systematic processes for solving organisational problems by analysing and improving selection, communication, instruction, work design, feedback, and incentive systems. The theoretical foundation for this approach is found in behavioural theories of psychology, including motivation and learning. This approach centres around identifying and solving “performance gaps” which are defined as “discrepancies between an organisation’s expectations and its actual performance” (Rogers & Agarwala-Rogers 1976:70).

The intent of this model is to carefully scrutinise and re-design basic business systems around work processes rather than bureaucratic “silos” and departments. The ComADD model – the communication analysis, design, and development model (Gayeski 1993) – is a system for identifying and operationalising performance gaps and for selecting and assessing communication-based solutions. It consists of five phases: initiating, descriptive, conceptual, prototypic, actual, and continuous improvement. This model is iterative rather than linear, and emphasises the development of a number of

alternative solutions that are selected by a process of rapid prototyping and determining optimum potential return-on-investment of time and money.

In summary, the Gayeski and Woodward model for developing integrated communication interventions proposed an examination of customer and market needs, an identification of performance goals and gaps, an examination and possible re-design of basic business processes to meet those goals, and the systematic identification, implementation, and evaluation of a coordinated set of communication solutions.

5.3.3 The evolutionary integrated communication model (1996)

Duncan and Caywood's evolutionary integrated communication (IC) model (1996) emphasises the time aspect in the integration process. These authors assume that integrated communication activities take place over time. The concentric circles suggested in the model demonstrate that one stage of integration may build on the experience of the previous stage. This model also pays attention to the competence of the communications professionals. It is mentioned that these professionals gain experience during each stage, adding value to their level of performance. According to Duncan and Caywood (1996) integrated communication starts with awareness integration and follows through to the most advance level of relationship management integration. The stages that follow in between are image integration, functional integration, coordinated integration, consumer-based integration and stakeholder-based integration.

5.3.4 Gronstedt's stakeholder relations model for integrated communication (1996)

Gronstedt's model explains and unites the main dimensions of public relations

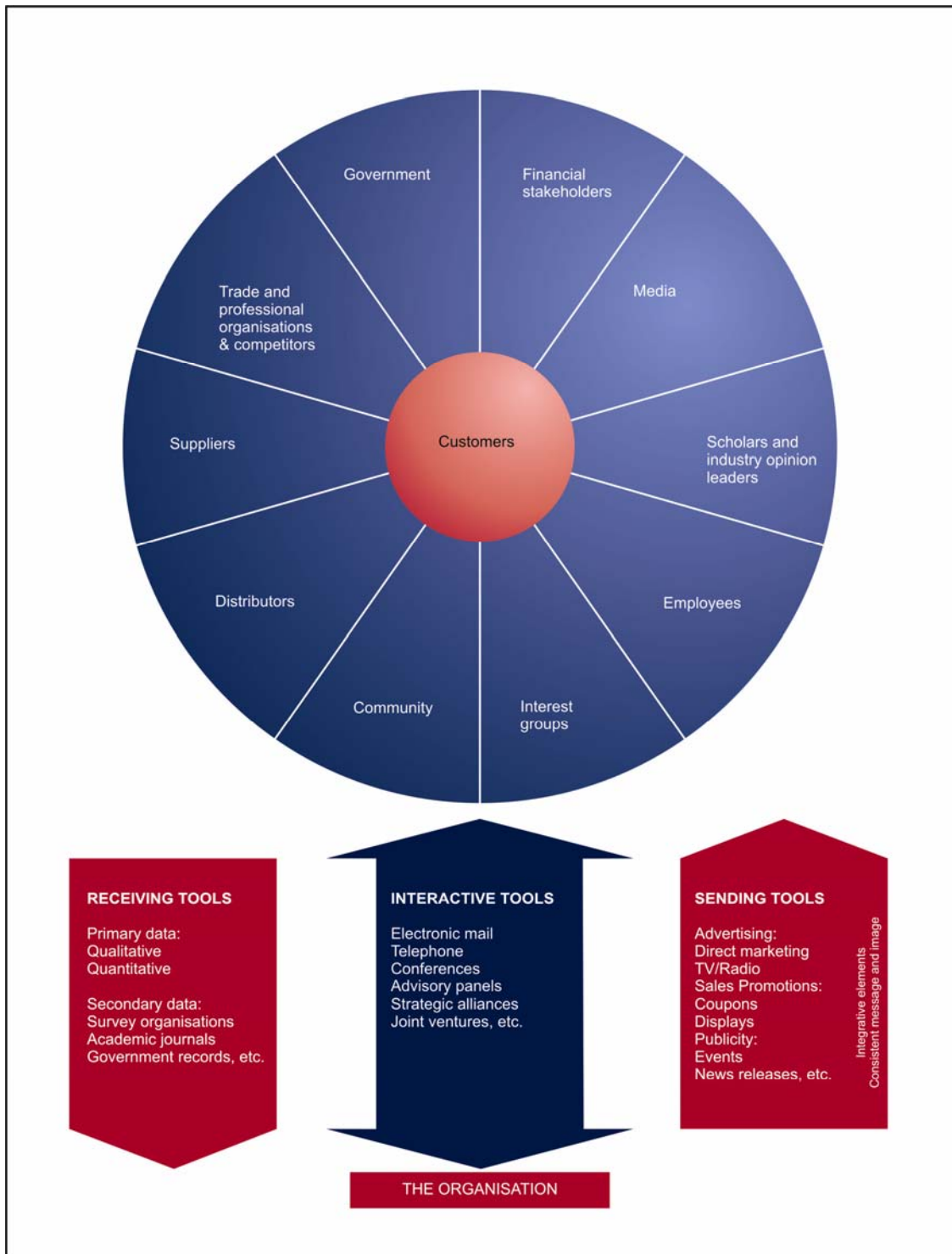


Figure 5.2: Gronstedt's stakeholder relations model for IC

and marketing communication. The circle at the top of figure 5.2 illustrates the merger of public relations' target audiences of publics and the marketing audiences of markets.

The right arrow of figure 5.2 joins the public relations tools and the marketing communications tools in a single communications tool box. The left arrow joins the research, or receiving tools from marketing with those of public relations, and the middle arrow joins the interactive tools.

The components part of the model consists of stakeholders, receiving tools, interactive tools, and sending tools. The circle at the top of figure 5.3 illustrates the fact that every organisation is linked to a complex system of interrelated individuals and organisations which have a stake in the organisation's deeds. Gronstedt (1996) avoids the term audiences, because it has a connotation of a homogeneous passive mass. The author prefers the term stakeholders and defines the term as any group or individual who can affect, or is affected by the achievement of a organisation's purpose (Freeman 1984). In the model the stakeholders are all attached to the inner circle of customers, illustrating the point that all the stakeholder groups have consequences for the customers in the centre. The integrated communications approach treats the communication with each stakeholder in the outer circle as an integral part of the customer communication.

Integrated communication activities with the entire system of stakeholders require a dialogue approach by which the stakeholders are recognised as receivers as well as senders of information. The stakeholders can be treated as senders of information through the use of receiving tools. The left arrow of figure 5.2 gives examples of the receiving tools at the integrated communicator's disposal. The starting point of formative stakeholder research, suggested by Freeman (1984), is to identify the generic categories of stakeholders and to rank their relative importance to the organisation. The next step would be to identify the specific

groups and individuals that have a stake in the organisation's purpose. Continual monitoring of a wide range of stakeholders with a wide range of receiving tools enables the communicator to anticipate and prepare for events that are likely to affect the organisation. Such a proactive approach will enable the organisation to see opportunities rather than to react to disasters. Furthermore, the integrated communicator uses research to evaluate stakeholders' perception of the organisation. He/she is concerned with insights into the thoughts and behaviours of various stakeholders.

The interactive tools represent the tools that facilitate a two-way dialogue between the organisation and the stakeholders, such as personal selling, advisory boards, in-house advocacy groups, etc. Emerging tools that combine communication and distribution functions, such as telemarketing, home shopping networks, and future interactive high-definition TVs should also be included in the interactive box. The integrated use of receiving tools and interactive tools marks the departure from the linear stimulus/response view of communication. The integrated use of the receiving, interactive, and sending tools facilitates a dialogue in which the stakeholders are active, interactive, and equal participants of an ongoing communication process.

The right arrow of figure 5.2 indicates the integration of the sending tools. Once the integrated communicator has identified the key stakeholders and set communication objectives for each group of stakeholders, it is possible to select the appropriate sending tools. Effective communication requires an optimal mix of sending tools for each identified group of stakeholders. Tools may be drawn from any communication discipline. The integrated communication approach will have to develop processes of "communication tools selection" to replace current "media selection". When an eclectic mix of sending tools has been selected it remains to make them work together according to three key integrated elements: consistent message and image, common creative elements, and coordinated timing (found vertically on the upward arrow of figure 5.2). Integrating message,

creative elements, and timing will cause the sending tools to enforce each other synergistically.

5.3.5 The Moore and Thorson customer-based approach to IMC (1996)

This model involves five basic steps, namely 1) identifying the market; 2) segmenting the market based on stage-of-purchase cycle; 3) identifying messages and communication vehicles for each target segment; 4) allocating resources; and 5) evaluating programme effectiveness. Moore and Thorson's (1996) customer-based approach to IMC is illustrated in figure 5.3.

The first step, identifying the market, is the process by which the marketer identifies those consumers who are most likely to buy the company product. The second step is segmenting the market based on stage-of-purchase cycle. The typical stages in the purchase cycle include awareness, acceptance, preference, search, purchase, usage, and satisfaction. The stage of the purchase cycle is then identified for each market segment.

The third step is identifying messages and communication vehicles for each target segment. Knowing at what stage most of the consumers are allows the marketer to identify the kind of message needed. Once both message and media are identified for market segment(s), the marketer will attempt to ascertain the cost of creating and placing a certain number of messages in certain media – that is resource allocation. The final step involves evaluating programme effectiveness. For example, tracking studies can be employed to monitor brand awareness, consumer attitude, and so on.

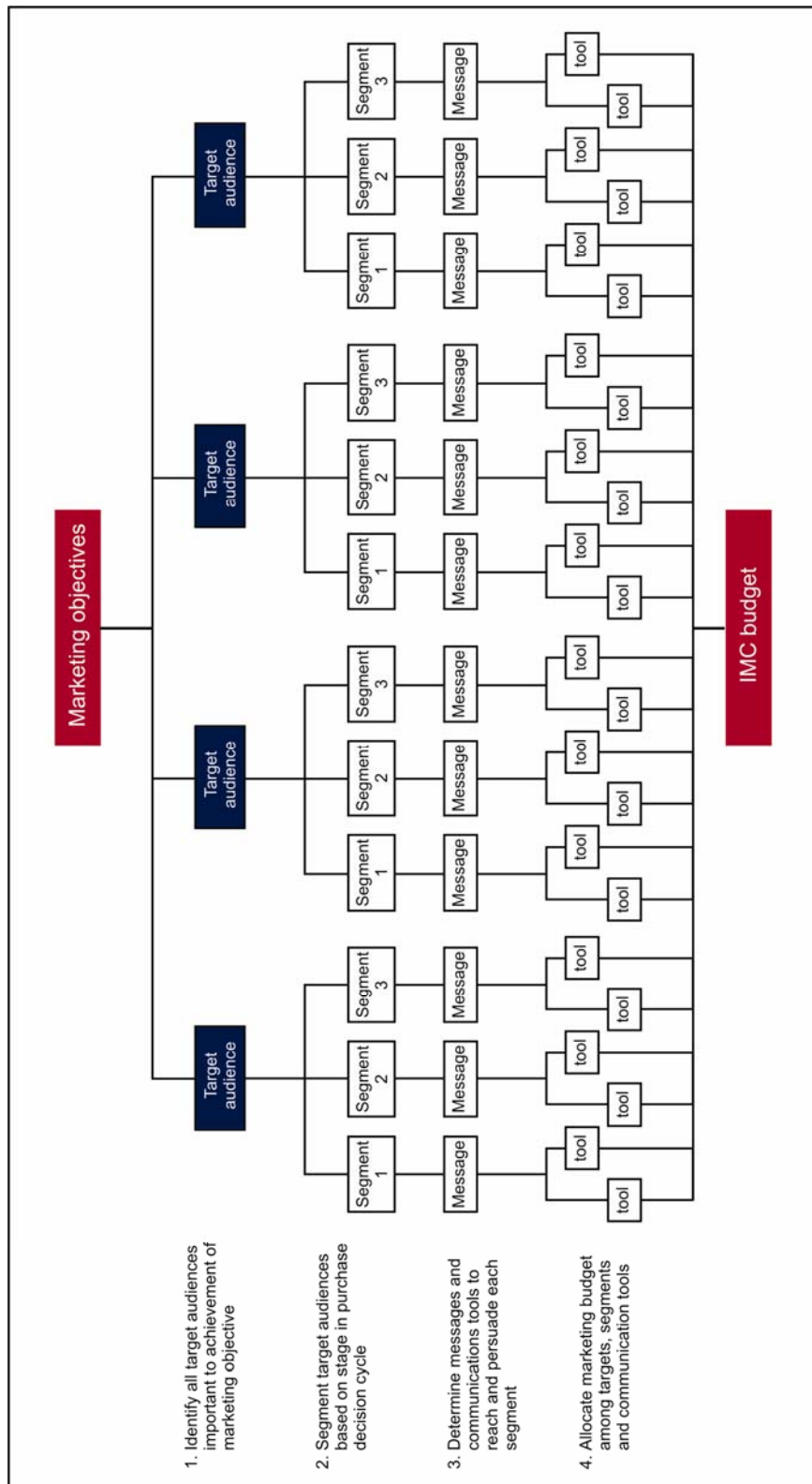


Figure 5.3: Moore & Thorson's customer-based approach to IMC

5.3.6 Percy's IMC strategic planning process (1997)

Percy's model (1997) is not concerned with the many organisational problems involved in trying to implement IMC, but is concerned with how best to match an understanding of the consumer and the market with the ability of some combination of marketing communication to reach the target market and satisfy the communication objectives. Percy (1997) suggests two primary tools available for delivering the message to the target audience: advertising and promotion, with the basic difference between the roles of these two tools suggested by their Latin origins. Advertising "turns the mind toward" purchase, while promotion is geared to immediately stimulating purchase. This fundamental difference is at the heart of how each is strategically used in an integrated marketing communication programme. The job of the communication or marketing manager is to use the vast array of advertising and promotion alternatives available to achieve the desired communication effects. Percy (1997) outlines a strategic planning process for implementing an effective IMC programme. According to Percy (1997), centralised strategic planning is at the heart of IMC.

The strategic planning process for IMC begins with consideration of the target markets. Consumers are at the heart of any communication programme, but with IMC they are much more. Once the appropriate target market has been identified in the marketing plan, one needs to know as much as possible about all of the influences in the market that contribute to a positive response to the product or service. The ultimate purchasers or users, along with all those who may influence their decisions, are potential targets for communication. The first step is thus to link the target audience to the marketing strategy. Once the general target audience is linked with the overall marketing strategy, one begins to address communication strategy. It is important to consider those involved in the ultimate consumer's decision process and the roles that they are likely to play. One should also begin to think about communication objectives in the light of the marketing strategy.

The third step takes the information developed and relates it to specific communication objectives. Five communication effects are considered: category need, brand awareness, brand attitude, brand purchase intention, and purchase facilitation. Once communication objectives have been established, Percy (1997) considers how best to accomplish the task, the fourth step in the strategic planning process. Important clues to where and how marketing communications can be effective in facilitating a positive decision to purchase or use the brand are: What stages does the consumer go through in reaching a decision? Who is involved, and what decision roles do they play? Where are the various stages in the decision process likely to occur, what is the timing, and how is it likely to occur? At this point in time the advantages and disadvantages of various advertising and promotion options for satisfying communication objectives are weighed. Once the communication options have been selected, it is time to develop a creative brief that guides the execution of the message and ensures that there is a consistent look and feel to the entire campaign.

The final step in the process is the actual selection of specific advertising or promotion media for delivering the marketing communication. Not all media are appropriate for all communication objectives. One must be careful to match media with objectives, or ensure that taken together various media work together to accomplish all of the marketing communication objectives.

Percy (1997) suggests that one's entire marketing communication programme must be integrated, that is, strategically planned, to ensure maximum impact. An illustration of Percy's model (Figure 5.4) follows:

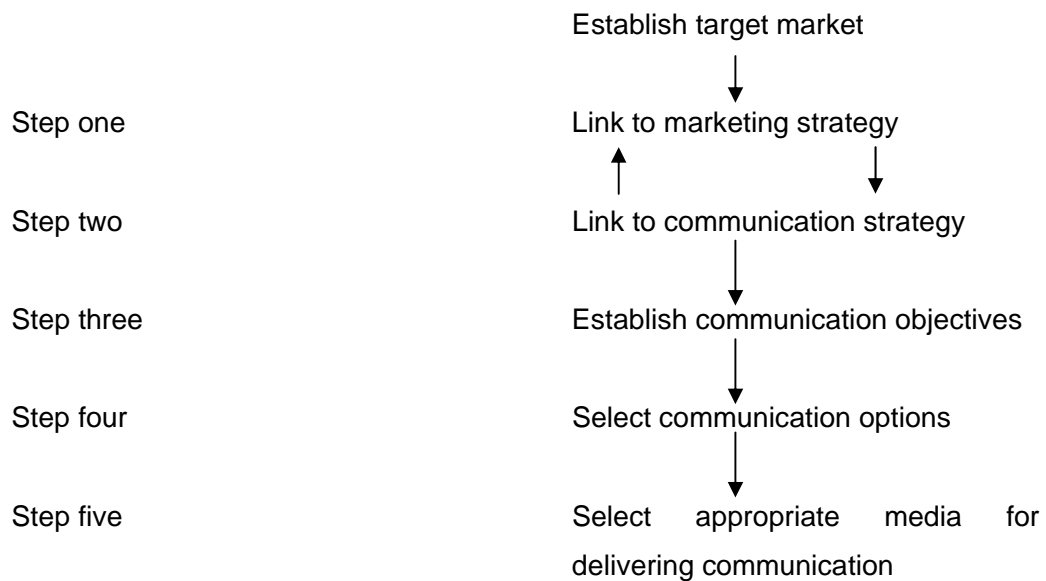


Figure 5.4: IMC strategic planning process (Percy 1997:11)

The strategic planning process proposed by Percy (1997) seems simple and the logic is rather straightforward, but the implementation requires a great deal of understanding and attention.

5.3.7 Duncan and Moriarty's integrated marketing business model for developing brand value (1997)

In this model ten basic drivers to build brand value are presented. This model was discussed in detail in chapter 4 (see 4.9) as it was used as point of departure for the deliberation on the underpinnings of IC. It will only be summarised in this section for the sake of completeness. According to Duncan and Moriarty (1997) these ten drivers are the core of integrated marketing (see figure 5.5). Two of the drivers relate to the corporate focus that must be on relationships and stakeholders. The next four drivers are related to integrated marketing process strategies. The first step is to identify sources of brand messages to control or

influence the information delivered at all brand contact points. The process strategies also explain how to have strategic consistency that creates trust in all brand messages. The strategies show how to develop purposeful and cost effective dialogue with customers. The last process strategy shows how to prioritise strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) to do zero-based planning which becomes the basis for profitable resource allocation.

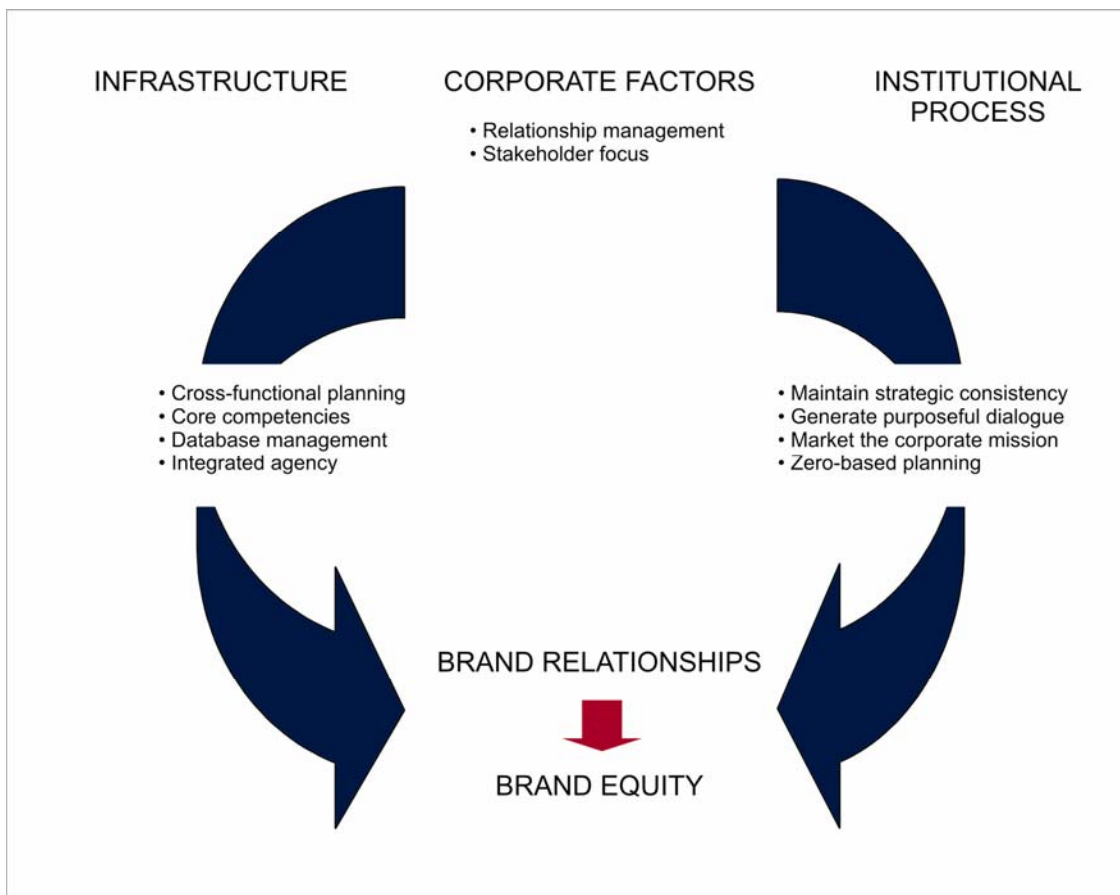


Figure 5.5: Duncan and Moriarty's IMC driver model

The final four IMC drivers are infrastructure strategies. If a company is not internally integrated, it will never be externally integrated. IMC starts internally to eliminate the knowledge gaps and lost opportunities that result from functional or silo organisations. The four infrastructure strategies show how to do cross-

functional planning and monitoring, create core competencies in those responsible for managing IMC programmes, and set up and use integrated databases to ensure universal customer information and create a learning organisation. Another of the infrastructure drivers is how to find, and then work with, an integrated communication agency.

5.3.8 Hunter's model for IC (1997)

Hunter (1997) offers an extensive analysis of the issues surrounding the integration of IC. This author developed a model for integration that consists of five stages. The steps suggested by Hunter (1997) are i) the coordination and cooperation between public relations and marketing; ii) the equal footing of public relations and marketing in the organisation; iii) the combination of marketing and public relations in one department, then called the communication department (this department consists of three sub-divisions – marketing communication, corporate communication and internal communication); iv) both the communication and marketing functions are placed on the hierarchical level immediately below the CEO; and v) buying from Duncan and Caywood (1996), Hunter suggests that the communication function should be integrated into the relationship management approach.

Another important suggestion from the Hunter model is that the senior officers from the communication department should form part of the “dominant coalition” of the organisation. Although Hunter (1997) did not offer a graphic illustration of this model, Niemann-Struwig and Grobler (2007:65) suggested the following graphical presentation as depicted in figure 5.6.

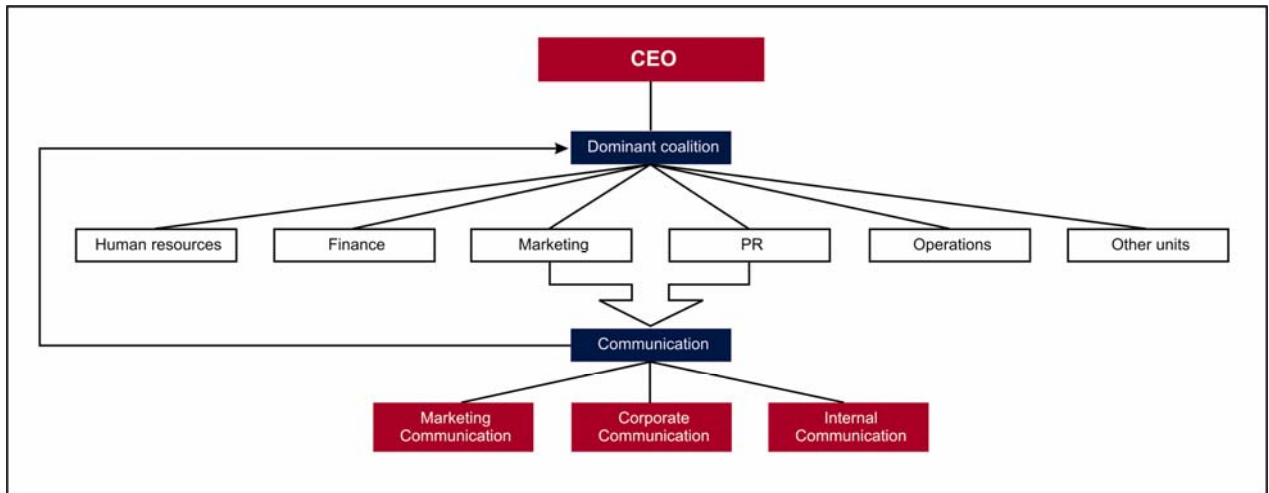


Figure 5.6: Hunter's five-stage model for IC

5.3.9 Burnett and Moriarty's IMC model (1998)

Figure 5.7 depicts the IMC process presented by Burnett and Moriarty (1998). It incorporates the marketing communication messages, both planned and unplanned, and illustrates how they relate to the marketing plan. According to Burnett and Moriarty (1998:22) marketing communication is determined by the overall marketing plan and its objectives. In a traditional marketing plan, four areas – marketing communication, distribution, price, and the product – make up the marketing mix. In the IMC plan, however, message planners recognise that the marketing communication element of the mix is not the only one that can send a message. In fact, the other three elements also communicate messages that can be more important in consumer decision-making than the planned marketing communication messages. In Burnett and Moriarty's IMC model they show communication as supporting the other three areas. In other words the marketing communication element ties together the other elements of the

marketing mix. The second half of the model details the marketing communication plan. That plan, however, takes an IMC approach, which includes planned and unplanned marketing messages.

Figure 5.7 shows a basic model for marketing communication that identifies the critical elements of a dynamic marketing programme, one that is both strategically sound and flexible enough to accommodate the demands of a changing marketplace.

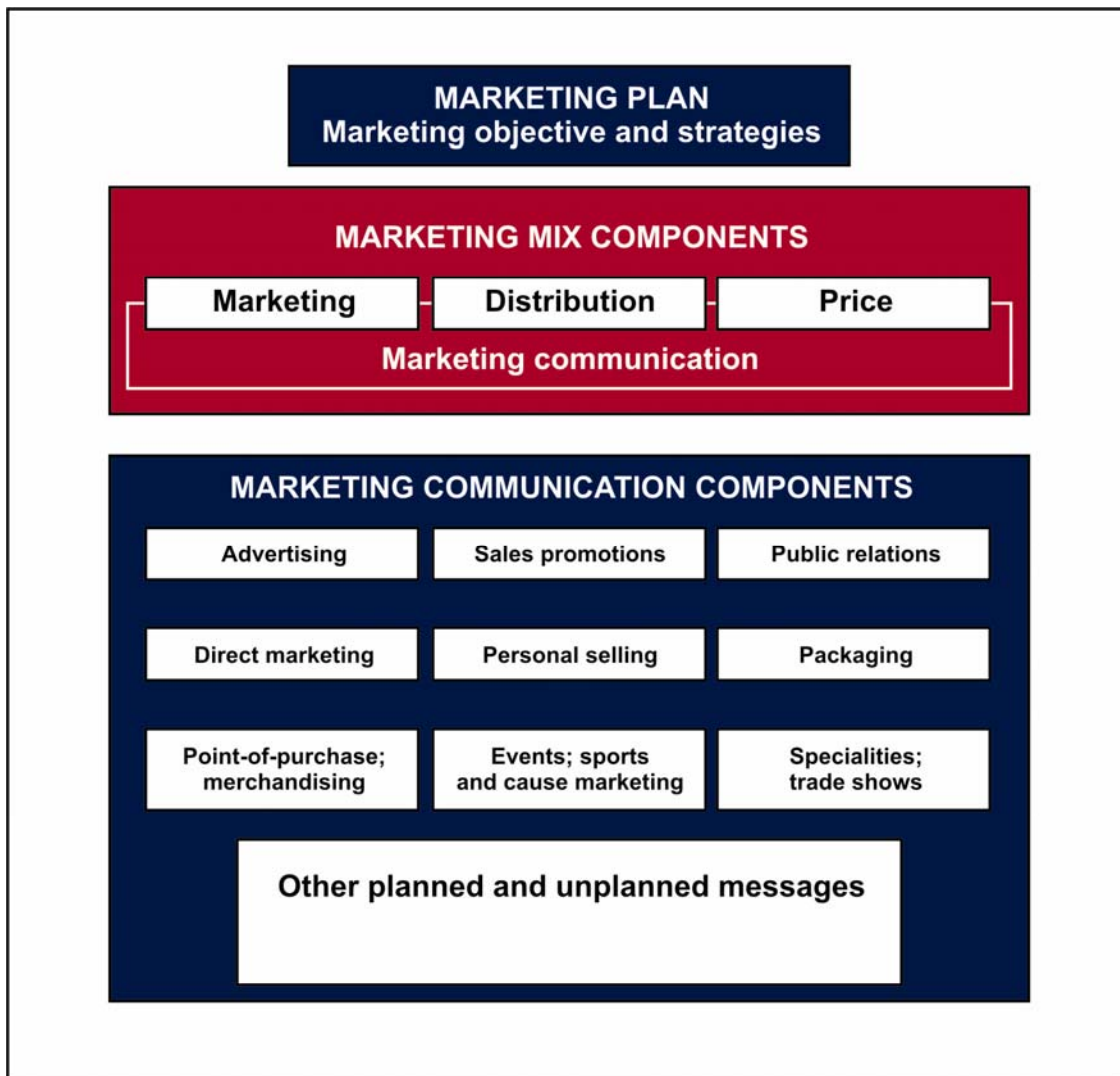


Figure 5.7: Burnett and Moriarty's IMC model

5.3.10 The IMC planning process by Belch and Belch (1998)

A model of the IMC planning process as suggested by Belch and Belch (1998) is shown in figure 5.8.

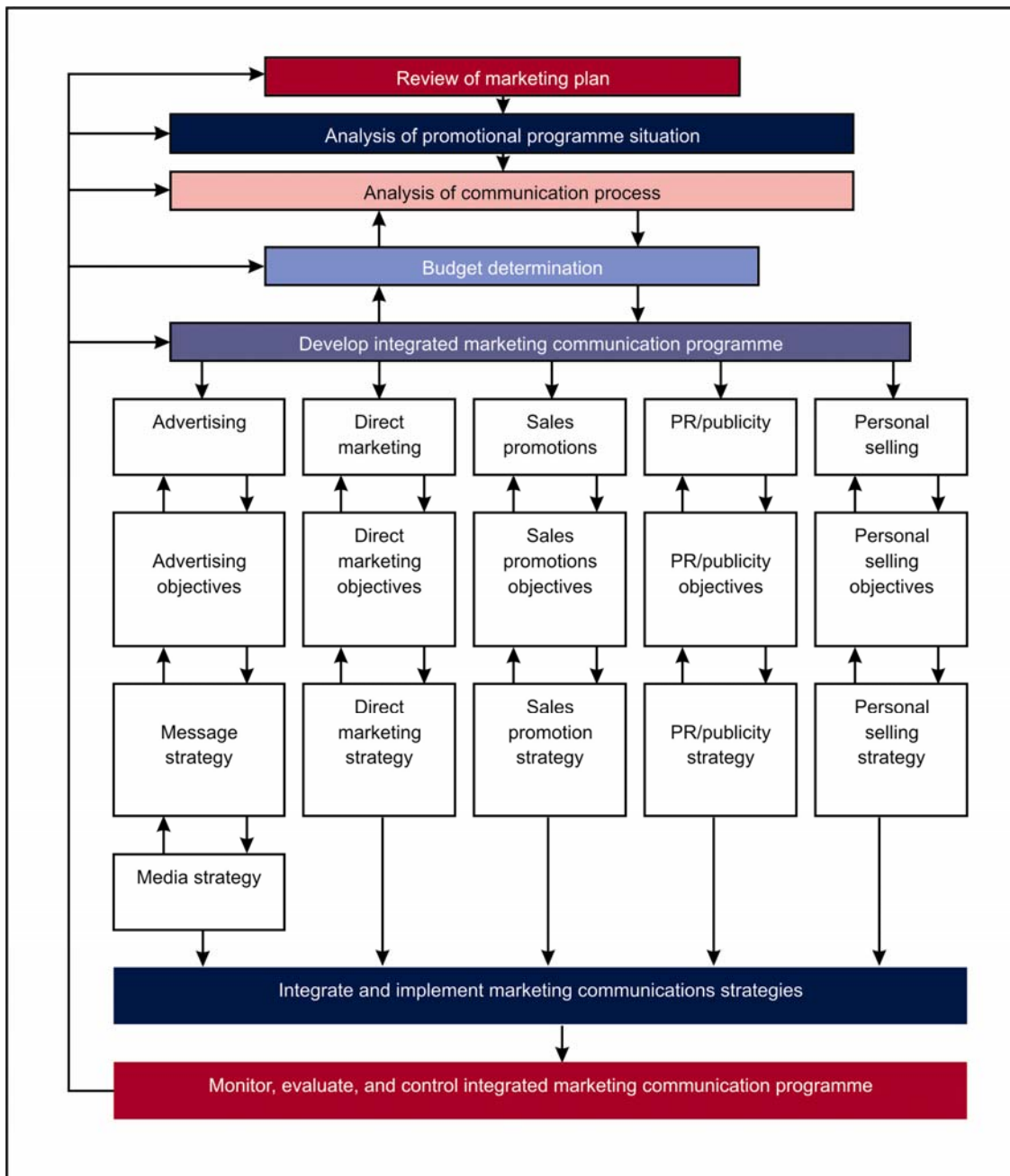


Figure 5.8: Belch & Belch's IMC planning process

According to Belch and Belch (1998:22) the first step in the IMC planning process is to review the marketing plan and objectives. Before developing a promotional plan, marketers must understand where the company (or the brand) has been, its current position in the market, where it intends to go, and how it plans to get there.

Most of this information should be contained in the marketing plan, a written document that describes the overall marketing strategy and programmes developed for an organisation, a particular product line, or a brand. Marketing plans can take several forms but generally include five basic elements:

1. A detailed situation analysis that consists of an internal marketing audit and review and an external analysis of the market competition and environmental factors.
2. Specific marketing objectives that provide direction, a time frame for marketing activities, and a mechanism for measuring performance.
3. A marketing strategy and programme that include selection of target market(s) and decisions and plans for the four elements of the marketing mix.
4. A programme for implementing the marketing strategy, including determining specific tasks to be performed, as well as responsibilities.
5. A process for monitoring and evaluating performance and providing feedback so proper control can be maintained and any necessary changes made in the overall marketing strategy or tactics.

As Belch and Belch (1998:25) point out, for most firms the promotional plan is an integral part of the marketing strategy. Thus, the promotional planners must know the roles advertising and other promotional mix elements will play in the overall marketing programme. The promotional plan is developed similarly to the marketing plan and often uses its detailed information. Promotional planners focus on information in the marketing plan that is relevant to the promotional strategy.

5.3.11 Sirgy's systems model for integrated marketing communication (1998)

Sirgy's systems model (1998) (figure 5.9) deals with the intersection between marketing communication and strategic marketing. It connects these two important topics using a systems approach. It focuses on the integration, or synthesis, of marketing communication with strategic marketing.

The systems model posits that all organisational processes are structured hierarchically. Each specific objective and subordinate process is identified as a direct function of a given process at any hierarchical level. Thus, marketing communication planning can be described in terms of a process hierarchy involving at least three levels: corporate, marketing, marketing communication and within each element of the marketing communication mix (advertising, public relations, direct marketing, sales promotions, reseller support, and word-of-mouth communication). Within each level of this process hierarchy, the marketing communication manager selects a strategy from a pool of optional strategies. The selected strategy at a given hierarchical level guides the manager to articulate quantitative objectives consistent with that strategy. Similarly, the marketing communication manager selects a strategic mix (subordinate processes) that is designed to meet the goal objectives of the selected strategy. Integration can be achieved by building and reinforcing links among the system's components within each level of the process hierarchy.

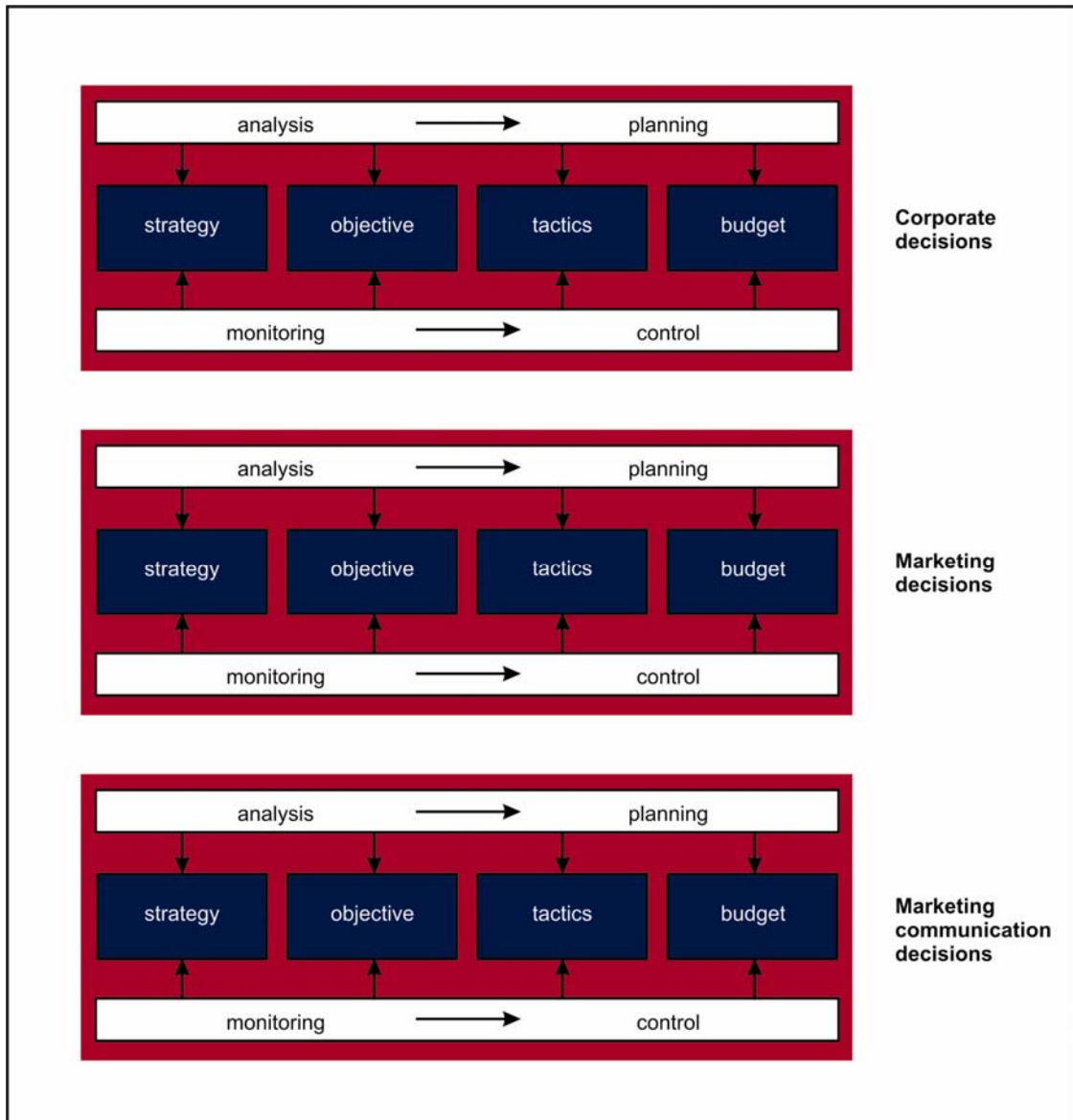


Figure 5.9: The marketing communication systems model (Sirgy 1998)

5.3.12 Ogden's marketing management flowchart and integrated marketing communication flowchart (1998)

The marketing management flowchart presented by Ogden (1998) indicates the position of IMC in the marketing management process. This author recognises that marketing and communication variables of an organisation affect one another. It follows then that all communication variables will have an effect on marketing. Because of this, all communications from an organisation must be integrated. The outcome of integration is the creation of synergy. The model also highlights that, in the process of effectively developing and implementing an IMC plan, the marketers should always follow the marketing concept. Consumers' wants and needs should always be the main focus of the programme. Ogden (1998) illustrates that the IMC model should be linked directly to the mission and vision of the company, and should be supported by a thorough situation analysis. Although implied, the market segmentation process suggested by Ogden (1998) cannot clearly be derived from the model, although it is mentioned in the marketing management flowchart. Figure 5.10 illustrates this model.

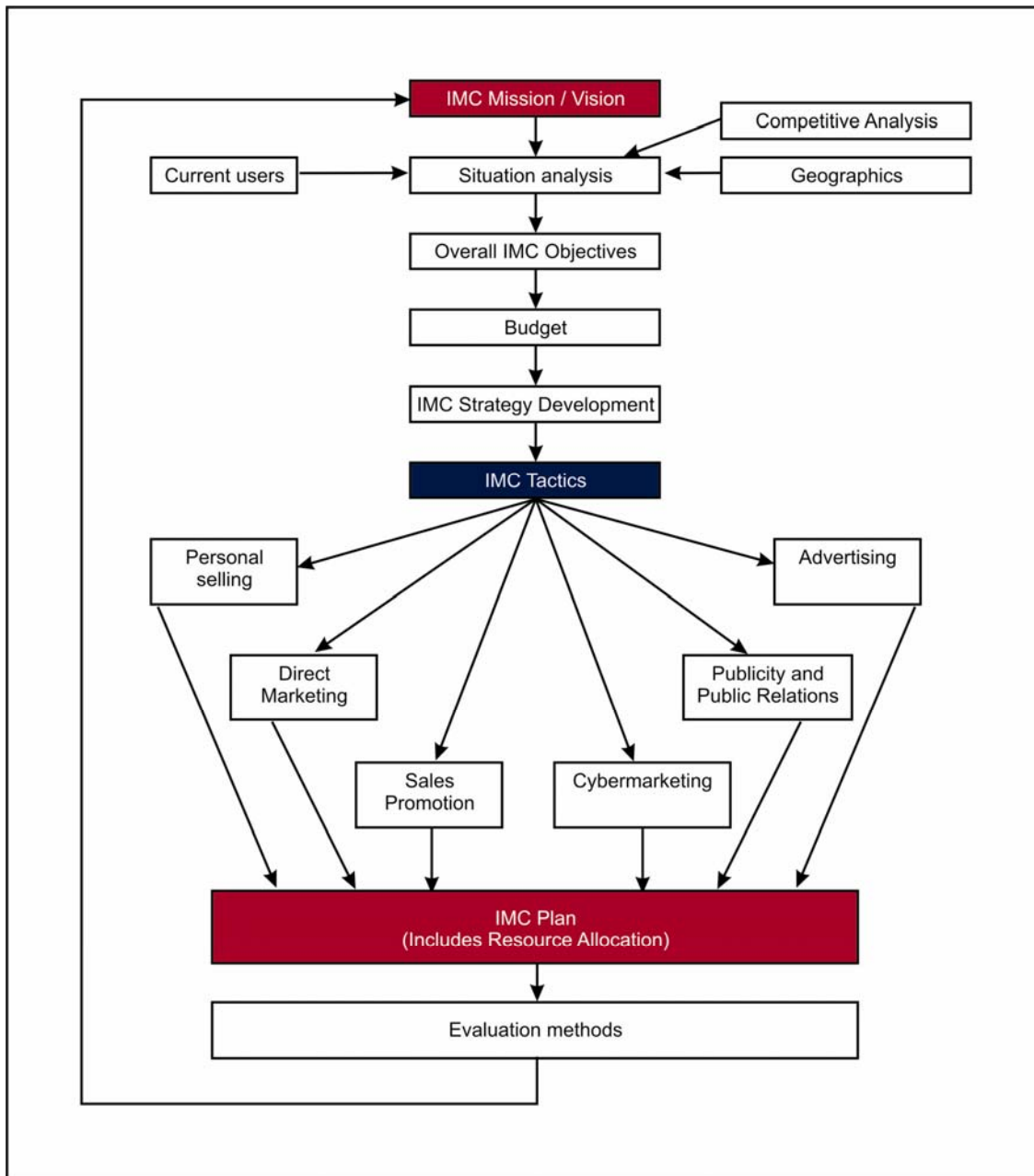


Figure 5.10: Ogden's marketing management flowchart and IMC flowchart

5.3.13 Sevier's integrated marketing model for colleges, universities and schools (1998)

This model was the only one found in the literature review that directly relates to the topic of this study. Sevier (1998) offers a practical step-by-step planning guide for educational institutions. The first steps in the model include market research, positioning and segmentation strategies. The next phase Sevier (1998) calls "building the foundation". This phase is of great significance in the current study, as it demonstrates the importance of creating the right environment from which to embark on the planning and implementation of an integrated strategy.

Figure 5.11 demonstrates the emphasis placed on the human resource factor in implementing the integrated strategy. The IC champion is positioned central to the marketing team with open channels to all stakeholders involved indicating the importance of effective relationships between the teams and constituencies (Sevier 1998:113). After setting the foundation, the situation analysis is undertaken, followed by research initiatives, establishing the marketing goals, clarifying the target audiences, writing the marketing action plans, establishing the budget and evaluating the plan.

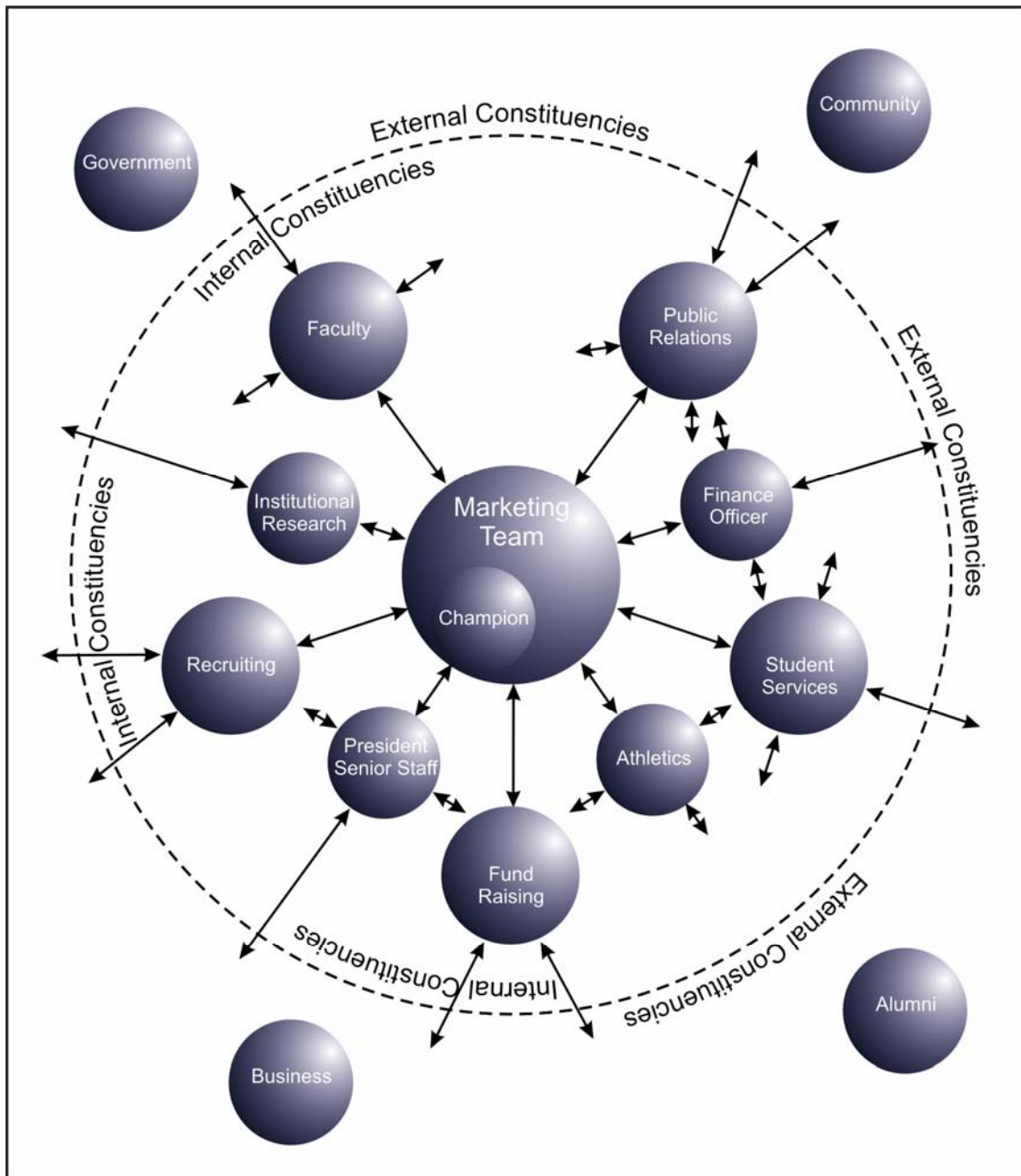


Figure 5.11: Sevier's integrated marketing for colleges, universities and schools

5.3.14 Schultz and Kitchen's eight-step global marketing communication planning process (2000)

This model shows the circular nature of the integrated global marketing communication (IGMC) planning process. It works through all eight steps and starts again at the first step. The first step entails the gathering of substantive, continually updated knowledge about customers and prospects. That generally comes from data and information stored electronically in a customer or prospect database or in databases that the organisation may maintain. The most important element for an organisation to capture and be able to use in planning is information that describes or illustrates the relationship the organisation has with the customer or prospect. This simple phrase *relationship with the customer or prospect* separates a database from a mailing list or various types of segmentation schemes.

The second step in this model is to assess customers or prospects. The reason for this assessment is that if the marketers are to invest the finite resources of the organisation in cultivating the best customers and prospects, they must have some way of assessing each of them as basis for this investment process. The best way Schultz and Kitchen (2000) have found to value customers and prospects is financially, that is by determining their purchases, or what they call "income flows". These authors argue that if a marketer knows the financial value of a customer or prospect, they have a solid base from which to determine the amount they are willing to invest either to retain, grow, or migrate that customer to other products or services in the company's portfolio.

The focus of the third step in the planning process is to attempt to audit and value the various ways in which customers already come into contact with the company. This model acknowledges that customers and prospects come in contact with the organisation in multiple ways in the marketplace. Often these

marketplace contacts come about with employees or channel partners or service groups or other non-marketing people. Yet these communication or brand contacts are often much more powerful messages or relationships than those the communication manager can develop or deliver. Another important part of understanding contact points is the impact of various internal and external stakeholder groups.

The fourth step in the model is to understand the relationship customers believe they have with the company. For the most part customers have relationships with brands; that is, they have confidence in the brand and organisation that produces it. To build effective communication programmes, the marketing communication planner must know what type of relationship the customer has with the brand. The next step involves the development of messages and incentives and the delivery systems. The delivery system is seen as extremely important because if the message or incentive cannot be delivered to the intended customer or prospect, it really does not matter what the message or incentive is or was. One of the major decisions at this point will be whether or not the marketing communication programme should be local, regional or global.

In step six the return on customer investment is estimated. Here the marketer approximates what type of return or response they might generate from their marketing activities. Schultz and Kitchen (2000) call this *return on customer investment* (ROCI), not the more familiar return on investment (ROI). The only return companies get from its communication activities is from customers and prospects. They are the ones who respond to the communication programmes by purchasing the firm's goods or services, thereby producing income. Therefore the approach in this model is to attempt to estimate what type of return one might get from investing in various customers or customer groups. Obviously, the better the customers or prospects chosen to invest in, the better the returns should be. Knowledge of the current value of the customer is thus a key ingredient in this model.

The next step is the actual determination of the financial investment the marketer plans to make in customers and prospects through various forms of IGMC programmes. Here the various marketing communication activities' costs and estimated returns are matched up. A zero-based budgeting approach is followed.

The final step is to set up systems of measurement to determine what really happened in the marketplace. This is the actual summation of the marketing communication programme, forming the basis of all evaluations and the beginning of a whole new process that is based on actual marketplace results. In the following figure (5.12) Schultz and Kitchen's model is illustrated.

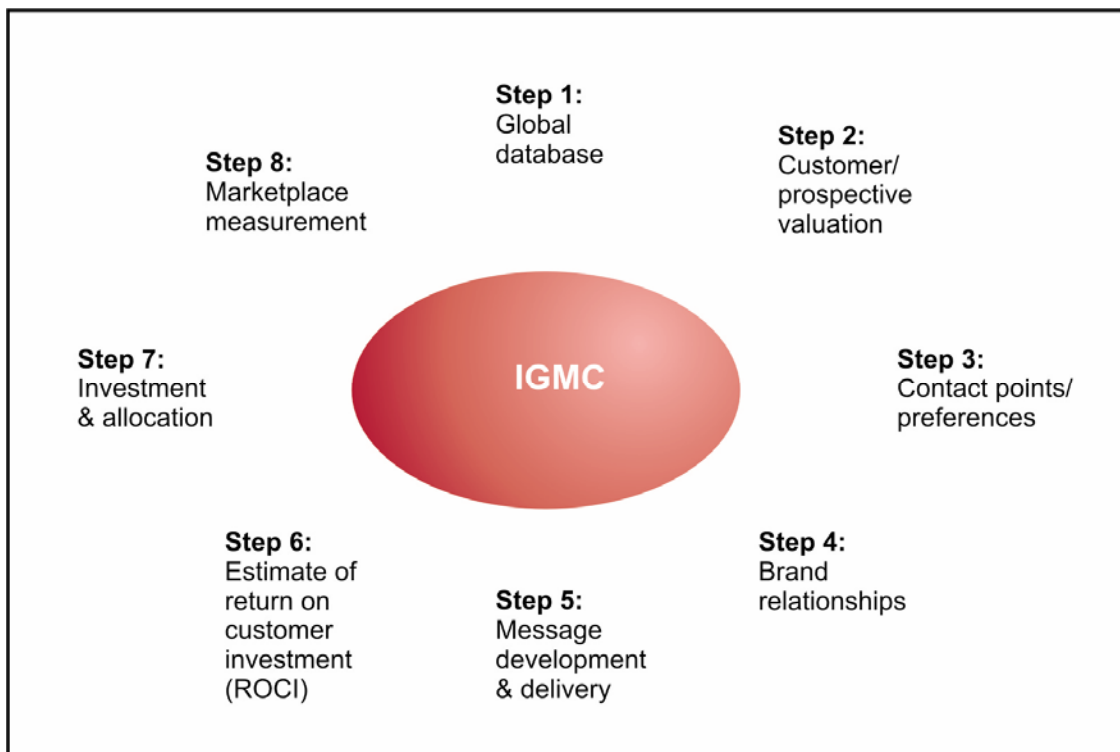


Figure 5.12: The eight step integrated global marketing communication process

5.3.15 Gronstedt's three-dimensional IC model (2000)

After evaluating the integration efforts of leading organisations in America and Europe, Gronstedt (2000) advanced his philosophy on IC and proposed a three-dimensional IC model. The main stake of this model is that the organisation must move from a “production century” organisation (inside-out thinking) to a “customer century” organisation (outside-in thinking). This model suggests that the organisation should integrate communication externally with key customers and stakeholders, vertically between senior management and frontline workers, and horizontally across departments, business units and geographical boundaries (Gronstedt 2000).

Figure 5.13 offers a graphic illustration of this model. The first triangle depicts the organisation with senior management at the top, middle management in the middle and front-line employees at the bottom. The next triangle represents stakeholders such as the local community, the media, investors and government regulators. The last triangle represents the customers. The groups are illustrated as overlapping triangles by Gronstedt (2000:17) to show that “customer century” organisations need to involve people from all ranks and from every department in ongoing dialogues with stakeholders.

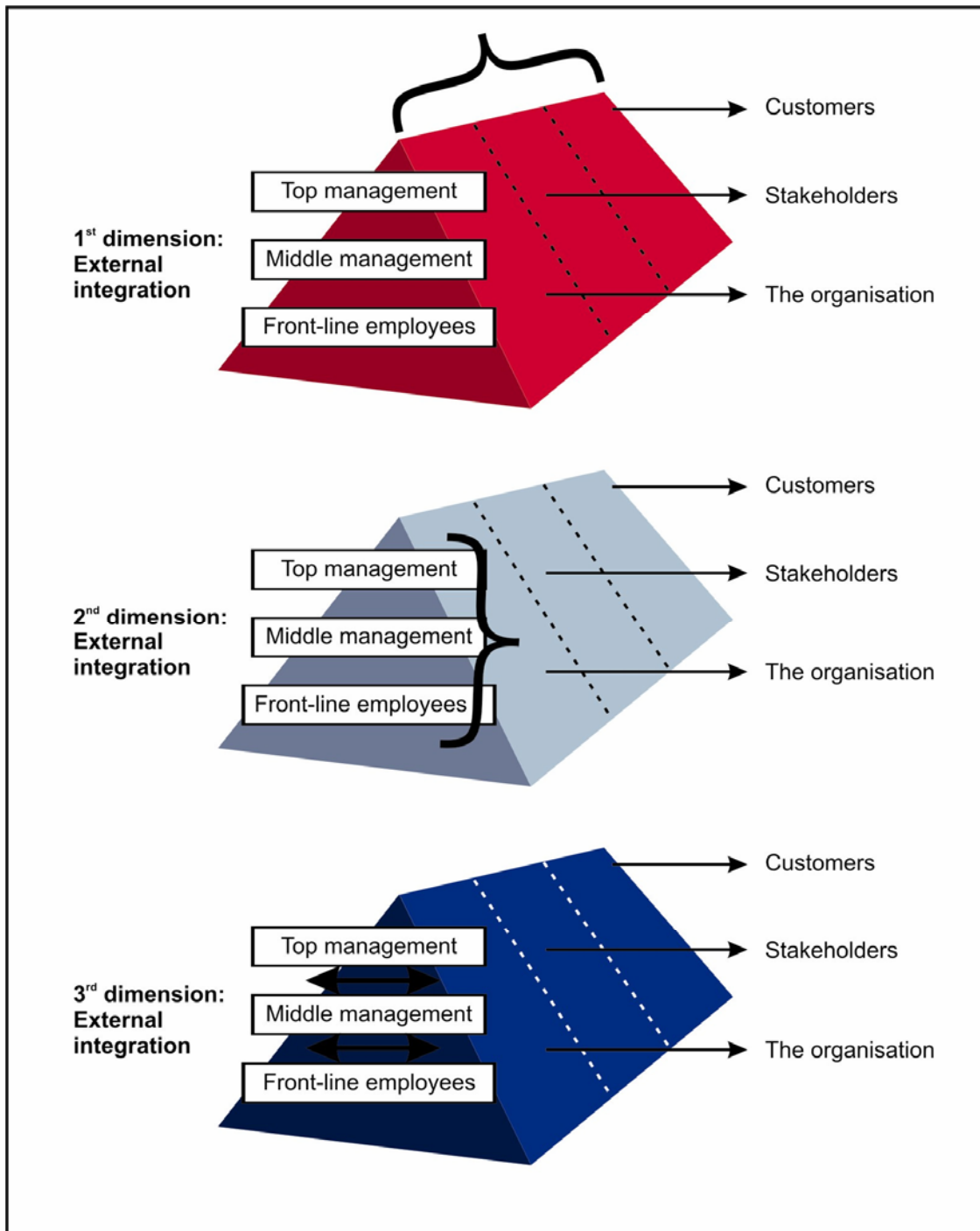


Figure 5.13: Gronstedt's three-dimensional IC model

5.3.16 Schultz's 5 Rs of marketing communication planning (2000/2001)

In the interactive or customer-driven marketplace that is emerging, the customer is in control rather than the marketing organisation. In this marketplace, the consumer has most of the power. The marketing communication planner must relate to the customer through various interactive systems where the customer must actively access the messages, as opposed to being interrupted by them. Where in the traditional system, marketers commonly selected the customer or prospects with which they wanted to communicate, the so-called "target market", in the interactive marketplace the customer does the choosing. The customer selects suppliers to fit his or her needs as much or more than the marketers select their "target markets". There is a dramatic difference in planning, but the way the plan is executed is often in the hands of the customer or prospect rather than that of the marketing communication manager. In this type of situation, Schultz (2000/2001:4) proposes that instead of using the 4 Ps as a format for planning, the marketing communication manager should use what he calls the 5 Rs.

The 5 Rs of marketing communication planning recognise the change in the marketplace power of the consumer and the interactive nature of the marketing communication systems. According to Schultz (2000/2001:5) the 5 Rs the planner must consider are:

- Responsiveness – How quickly and effectively the marketer can respond to the needs and wishes of the customer or consumer. Most marketing organisations are not constructed for speed of response. Indeed, they are organised to talk, not to listen.
 - Relevance – Relevance has to do with how relevant the marketing communication programme is to the persons to whom it is being addressed. This becomes a major issue when customers are expected or
-

- encouraged to access the marketing communication, not simply be interrupted by it. The more relevant the communication is to the intended audience, the more likely they are to access or accept it.
- Receptivity – The challenge for marketing communicators in the new interactive marketplace is being available or accessible when customers or prospects want to receive information, not necessarily when the marketer wants to provide information. The challenge of the new marketplace, therefore, is communication when the “buyer wants to buy”, not “when the seller wants to sell”. This changes many of the communication rules, such as choosing effectiveness over efficiency and pin-pointing where customers touch the marketing firm, not where marketers sent out messages or incentives.
 - Recognition – Brands become absolutely critical in the interactive marketplace. Brands provide instantaneous trust and knowledge. Brands work quickly and efficiently, allowing customers to make decisions based on past experience or recommendations from friends. Where so many voices are clamouring for attention or where so many alternatives are available, the brand often becomes the most important asset of the marketing organisation.
 - Relationships – There is little question that the new marketplace will be based on relationships – shared values between buyers and sellers. On-going give and take between the buyer and the seller where each side “wins” in every exchange will become a marketing goal, rather than a one-time sale. No longer can the marketing organisation “market a customer into submission”. It will be the customer who determines the length, strength and depth of the relationship the marketer is trying to create.

These 5 Rs radically change how the marketing communication planner thinks about and develops communication programmes. Inherent in the use of the 5 Rs for communication planning is the need for new tools and models. In traditional marketing communication the planner primarily relies on a Plan-Development-

Implement methodology. The planner gathers data, assembles a plan, develops it and then implements it in the marketplace. The interactive nature of the new customer-driven marketplace demands a new model. Using the 5 Rs methodology requires a customer-responsive model, not a marketer-driven model. Schultz (2000/2001:6) suggests the Sense-Adapt-Respond model. The new planning model is driven by the marketer's ability to sense and respond to customer needs and requirements. This means a focus on listening to customers, not just talking to them. It means a heavy emphasis on research and attempting to gain customer insight through a variety of feedback systems. The idea is for the marketer to communicate, customers to respond, they adapt their communication and talk again. The emphasis is on understanding customers' wants and needs, particularly as they change over time. The company must be able to align its resources to meet those needs. The key ingredient is the ability of the marketer to respond to customers. This often means changing the way the organisation operates, the products or service offerings it provides, or changing how the company serves customers to conform to the manner in which the customer wants to do business, not the way the firm wants to do business. In short, this approach flicks the present marketing communication planning process upside-down.

Finally, a new approach to the development of marketing communication messages and incentives is also needed. Historically, marketing communication planning has started with the development of the message, creative strategy or brand proposition. It has traditionally been assumed that the message or incentive was the most important area of a marketing communication programme. But that concept was developed for the traditional, mass communication, "interrupt the customer" media system. In the converging marketplace, a different planning model is needed as well. The new approach starts with how or through what system the message or incentive is or can be delivered. In other words, it starts first with what medium or delivery system

should be used and then progresses to what creative concept or message needs to be developed.

5.3.17 Lin's revised integrated communication model (ICM) (2000/2001)

The ICM has three modes of operation: 1) the critical review mode (CRM); 2) the problem solving mode (PSM); and 3) the critical reflection mode (CREFM). The revised ICM is illustrated in figure 5.14.

The problems of organisational process, design, culture, and politics in each aspect of IC must first be identified. These problems will be reflected to the three modes in order to get the best solution in a systemic view.

Six aspects of IC are considered within each of the three modes of operation in an interactive and interdependent way using the total system intervention (TSI) problem solving cycle of creativity, choice and implementation (Flood 1995). The CRM can help decision-makers to identify competence and effectiveness of the variety of approaches in IC, because it reviews critically methods in each aspect of IC through creativity, choice and implementation. The problem-solving mode employs a system of methods for solving IC problems in each aspect from the critical review mode. It also operates through creativity, choice and implementation. The critical reflection mode uses creativity, choice, implementation and critical appreciation to help IC problem-solvers to reflect upon the adequacy of the output of the problem-solving mode. This process involves asking the three questions of triple loop learning in each aspect of IC and using the problem-solving cycle of creativity, choice and implementation within each learning loop.

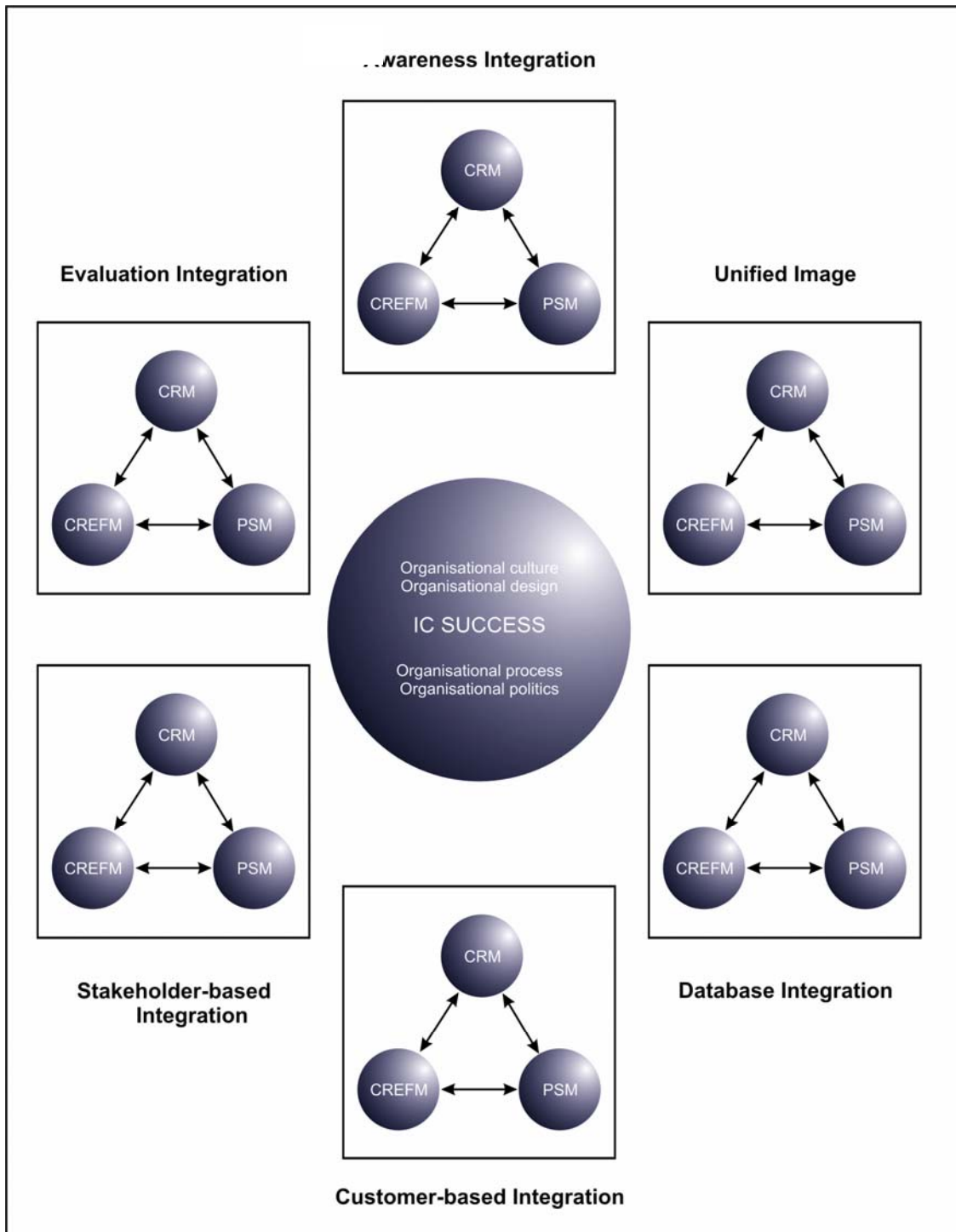


Figure 5.14: A model of ICM

The centre is IC success, which is surrounded by four dimensions of organisations. IC success cannot be achieved until all four dimensions of organisations have been considered. The lines from the three modes and six aspects, pointing to the centre (IC success), imply that each aspect can influence the success of an IC programme. The lines from the centre, pointing outward to the three modes indicate that the experience gained from an IC success can help to refine and improve the different aspects in an IC programme and hence help to increase the possibility of further IC success.

5.3.18 Framework for structuring integrated communication in South Africa

Ehlers (2002) proposes a framework for structuring integrated communication in South African organisations. She places a lot of emphasis on the organisations' stakeholders and suggests that the stakeholders should be the starting point of the process. This author's model strongly supports the notion that employees should be part of the stakeholder orientation. Ehlers (2002:339) opines that employees constitute various areas of expertise in an organisation, and genuine integration is possible only when cross-functional relations exist between the different parts of the organisation.

Furthermore, Ehlers (2002) describes integrated communication as part of the organisation's strategic planning process, with those driving the integration being competent and skilled to drive and manage the process. Therefore, Ehlers (2002:339) proposes that an "integrator" or "team of integrators" should be responsible for coordinating communication in the organisation. Ehlers (2002) also emphasises the use of a databases as an important strength in the integration process. She proposes that the database information should be kept centrally to use in strategy formulation and planning. This author concludes that traditional marketing communication tools and traditional public relations tools can be combined to provide the integrator(s) with a vast menu of tools that they

can apply in the process of stakeholder management. Ehlers' model is illustrated in figure 5.15.

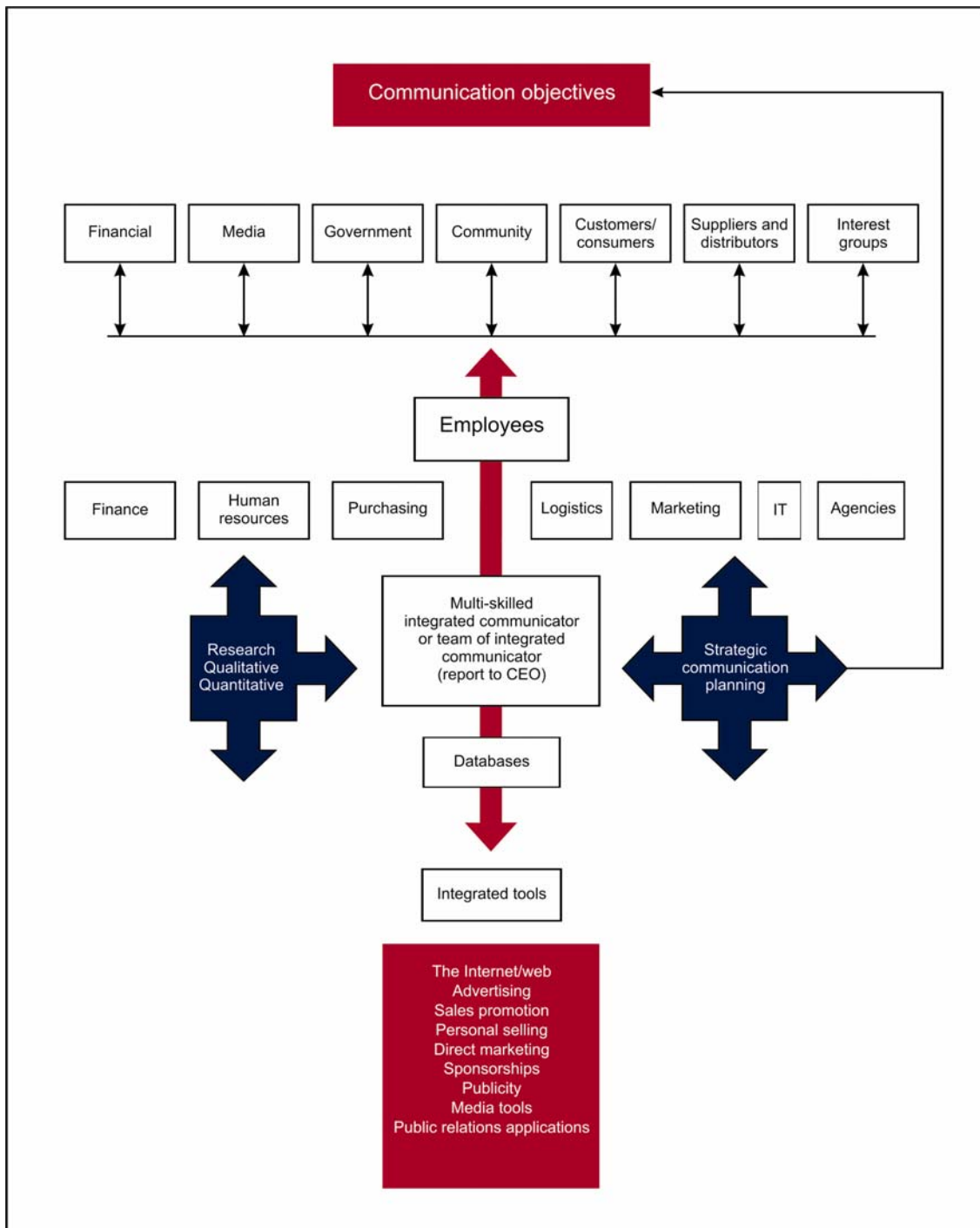


Figure 5.15: Framework for structuring integrated communication in SA

5.3.19 Niemann's conceptual South African model for the implementation of strategic integrated communication (2005)

As Niemann (2005) developed this model within a systems paradigm, it reflects a holistic perspective to the phenomenon of IC. The model is based on two distinct principles, namely that the strategic intent of the organisation drives strategic integrated communication and learning organisational principles continuously reposition the organisation (Niemann 2005:245). The model proposes that three areas of integration are imperative. Firstly, organisational integration represents two levels – CEO/top management integration and the renaissance communicator. The renaissance communicator plays a central role in the integration process in coordinating all communication and marketing management in the organisation. Niemann (2005) elaborated on Gayeski and Woodward's (1996:2) idea of the renaissance communicator.

The second area of integration is stakeholder integration. Once again this level is further divided into two levels, namely interactivity integration and brand contact point integration. The third area of integration of Niemann's model (2005) is environmental integration. This model is depicted in figure 5.16.

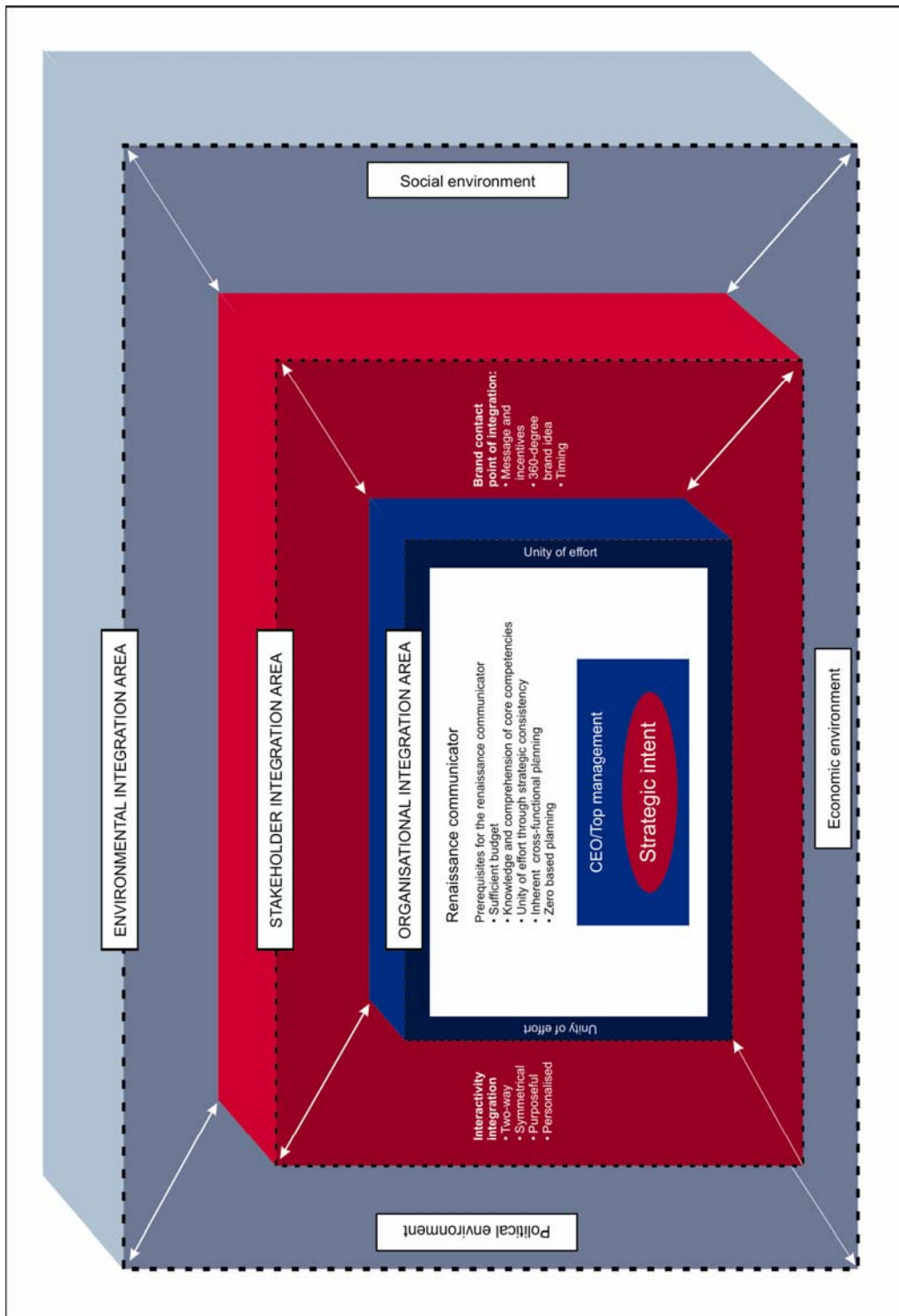


Figure 5.16: A conceptual South African model for the implementation of strategic integrated communication (2005)

5.3 A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE DISCUSSED MODELS

In the following section a critical analysis of the discussed models will be given. The models will be weighed against each other and against the theoretical underpinnings that were identified and discussed in chapter four. These principles will be used to identify gaps in the existing models.

- Schultz, Tannenbaum and Lauterborn's integrated marketing communications planning model

Although this model includes most of the IMC principles as identified in chapter four and is considered by most as the standard model of IMC, there are still a few restrictions that can be highlighted. As is the case with most of the other models, this model lacks in an internal focus that addresses issues like the necessity of a holistic business approach and the importance of stakeholder-conscious employees in IMC.

Even though the stakeholder-centric aspect is reflected very effectively, there is no integration of stakeholders other than customers or prospects in this model. This model addresses the issue of the use of technology directly. It thus clearly reflects the importance of data-driven actions in IMC.

The key ingredient in this integrated marketing communication approach is that all forms of communication are designed to achieve agreed-upon objectives. These objectives come from understanding how one can contact the customer or prospect and what one wants to communicate. Since the communication goals are driven by the behaviour they want to change, adapt, or reinforce, there is no way any form of communication can stray from that task. This model turns all forms of marketing into communication and all forms of communication into

marketing. All messages and goals have been integrated and a seamless stream of communication with the customer has been built.

The real value of this model is that it is circular in nature, is committed to two-way communication, adapts to customers' or prospects' communication wants or needs and develops a win-win situation for the marketer and customer or prospect. It focuses on the satisfaction of customer needs and not organisational sales and profit goals. Sustainable success is thus very highly regarded in this model.

- Gayeski and Woodward's model for developing integrated communication interventions

The focus of this model is the organisation's involvement in IMC. It is thus obvious that it will reflect the importance of a holistic business approach to IMC and the creation of stakeholder-conscious employees. Although it was not explicitly mentioned, financial accountability and sustainable success is implied.

However, the important external focus of IMC lacks in this model as no mention is made of aspects such as message consistency, contact synergy, market segmentation and focused branding.

- The evolutionary integrated communication model

The most important contribution of this model formulated by Duncan and Caywood (1996) is that it predicts the development stages of an organisation to the ideal stage - that of complete integration. Emphasis is thus placed on the fact that integration is a long-term process. This model could also be helpful to organisations to evaluate their current integration status.

Another important facet of this model is the value it places on all stakeholder groups and not just on customers. Even though customers are identified as the most important stakeholder group, the other stakeholders are explicitly mentioned and stressed.

Critique against this model is the fact that it advocates a silo approach, because it initially focus on specific sections of business and does not include the strategic intent of the organisation. The process thus lacks a sense of organisational purpose in the first few stages of the integration process.

- Gronstedt's stakeholder relations model for integrated communication

As the name implies, Gronstedt's model focuses primarily on the role of the stakeholder within the IMC process. Gronstedt (1996) identifies the major stakeholder categories that an organisation normally encounters in an integrated marketing communication programme. It also effectively illustrates the fact that overlapping between the different stakeholder groups often occur, and that this might have an influence on a marketing communicator's planning process. This model effectively integrates the use of traditional marketing communication techniques and new technologies and illustrates the importance of an interactive element in IMC.

Once again, this model does not include important aspects such as the broader context within which IMC must be implemented, in other words the holistic business approach that should be followed to make IMC really successful. Employees are promoted as equally important to other stakeholder groups.

- The Moore and Thorson customer-based approach to IMC

This approach to IMC is consistent with the systems approach as proposed by Sirgy (1998) (discussed in 5.3.9). However, the Sirgy model (1998) is more

comprehensive and rigorous than the Moore and Thorson model (1996). Sirgy's model shows in explicit ways how decisions made at the corporate level are tied to decisions made at the marketing level, which in turn are linked to decisions made at the marketing communications level.

- Percy's IMC strategic planning process

This model represents a very simplistic view on IMC. It focuses entirely on traditional marketing communication techniques and does not leave room to include contact points that is made between customers and organisations outside of the traditional parameters. Although the model starts with the establishment of the target market, there is no individualistic approach – this model does not explicitly address the importance of a stakeholder-centric approach, even though it is highlighted as one of the most important principles of the IMC approach by most authors that have written on the topic. It rather emphasises the customers' decision-making process and the influence thereof on marketing communication success.

Although Percy (1997) considers centralised strategic planning as the heart of IMC, the context within which this model is implemented is not indicated; neither the marketing environment nor the business environment is included. Therefore the important influence of the price charged for the product, the distribution of the product and the brand itself are not taken into consideration although it communicates important messages to the customer. The importance of message consistency is not pointed out.

No mention is made of budget allocation, financial accountability or evaluation processes; or of the importance of internal communication in the IMC process. In essence there is no element/s in this model that differentiates it from traditional marketing communication models.

- Duncan and Moriarty's integrated marketing business model for developing brand value

This model comes close to encompassing the theoretical concepts identified by the researcher in chapter four. Although the authors suggest a zero-based planning approach, there is no real emphasis on financial accountability and the necessity thereof. This model served as point of departure in the Elaborated IC drivers model that was formulated in chapter four.

- Hunter's model for IC

Hunter's (1997) contribution rests predominantly on the internal aspects of IC. Much attention is paid to the organisational structure needed to accommodate IC and the position of IC in the structure. The greater environment within which the organisation functions is not taken into account. Although a relationship management approach is suggested in the fifth stage, the focus is once again more internally (with other business units of the organisation) than external.

- Burnett and Moriarty's IMC model

This model presents the marketing communication process within the marketing mix and therefore indicates the importance of consistent messages sent by other elements of the marketing mix (product, place or price). It also emphasises the fact that messages are not only conveyed through traditional techniques, but that unplanned messages and contact points other than planned ones also play an important role in IMC. However, important issues such as market segmentation and a customer-centric approach are not reflected.

The all-important financial aspect is totally neglected in this model and no room for evaluation is allowed. The model does not even include marketing communication objectives, although mention is made of marketing objectives.

Another limitation of the model is the fact that the importance of a holistic business approach and employees being stakeholder-conscious is not addressed. In essence this model highlights only two of the principles of IMC (as identified in chapter 4), these being message consistency and contact synergy.

- The IMC planning process by Belch and Belch

The Belch and Belch model (1998) contextualises IMC within the marketing plan, but does not explicitly indicate the important influence of the other three elements of the marketing mix (product, place, price) on the marketing communication process or the importance of the operational business context. The model effectively indicates the cyclical nature of the IMC planning process, but the integration of the marketing communication strategies takes place on a very low level in the model. This could be problematic.

Although this model highlights the fact that the traditional marketing communication techniques should be combined and integrated in an IMC plan, it does not really reflect the true nature of IMC. No construct in the model refers to any of the important principles of IMC (e.g. consumer orientated, message consistency, management of all contact points). This could once again have been a model for a traditional marketing communication planning process.

- Sirgy's systems model for integrated marketing communication

The systems model is developed for the specific purpose of integrating the various elements of the marketing communication mix. Organisational process is viewed as a hierarchy of processes. At any given level of the process hierarchy,

there is a mix of process elements. Focusing on a given element of the process mix allows the identification of the subordinate elements.

More specifically, a process at a super-ordinate level is usually referred to as a “strategy”. Subordinate processes used to implement the super-ordinate process are referred to as “tactics” or “strategic mix”. Once one focuses on a process, it becomes a strategy, and the elements employed to implement that process are tactics (elements of the strategic mix). But then a tactic becomes a strategy by moving down the hierarchy and focusing on that tactic. Therefore, the distinction between a strategy and a tactic can best be appreciated from the vantage point of the decision-maker in an overall hierarchy of processes. Furthermore, to implement a strategy, the strategy becomes a goal, which is achieved through objectives. Thus, objectives are nothing more than quantitative goals that reflect a strategy. Objectives guide the formulation and the implementation of tactics.

This model highlights the very important issue of interdependency between the different variables in IMC, but does not succeed in integrating all the other important issues of IMC within the systems context.

- Ogden’s marketing management flowchart and integrated marketing communication flowchart

This model illustrates the position of IMC in the marketing management process and therefore indicates the position of IC in the organisation. This author also acknowledges the importance of the context within which the IMC function is performed as he stresses that the marketers should always follow the marketing concept. In following a marketing concepts approach, the consumer’s wants and needs are always the focus of the programme. Ogden (1998) points out that the IMC model should be linked directly to the mission and vision of the company, and should be supported by a thorough situation analysis. Although the market

segmentation process is mentioned in the marketing management flowchart, it is not clearly indicated in the model.

- Sevier's integrated marketing model for colleges, universities and schools

The main contribution of this model is the focus on the importance of the human resource element in the whole process. Sevier (1998) gives a detailed explanation of the position and function of the person that will have to drive the integrated strategy, and also highlights the support teams needed to effectively implement the strategy.

Although this model reflects the same environment as the one the model developed in this study will be implemented in, it does not offer any meaningful insight with regard to integrated communication. Although the model is called an integrated model, the principles of IC are not embedded in it. The nature of this model does not reflect an integrated communication approach.

- Schultz and Kitchen's eight step integrated global marketing communication process

The closed-loop system is an integral part of Schultz and Kitchen's IGMC process (2000). Through the closed-loop planning system, the learning from each step in the process and from each completed communication programme is included and combined with the data previously gathered and stored and provides a basis for planning the next stage of the communication plan or the next communication programme. The marketer continuously learns from marketplace experience.

A database is key in developing an effective IGMC programme. The typical marketing and communication tasks of implementing messages or gaining

awareness into solid financial decisions that allow the marketer to differentiate one customer or group of customers from another are converted. In this model high emphasis is placed on financial accountability and sustainable success.

Schultz and Kitchen (2000) also view each existing contact point between a customer or prospect and the company as useful methods of communicating in the future. One of the most dramatically different features of the IGMC process is that development of messages and incentives, generally at the heart of any marketing communication programme, is fairly far down in the development process. That reflects the basic premise of IMC: you cannot develop effective messages or incentives unless and until you understand the people or organisations you are trying to communicate with.

- Gronstedt's three-dimensional IC model

Gronstedt's latest model (2000) uses his 1996 model as point of departure, but adds several new elements to it to advance an integrated approach. This model focuses on branding and a stakeholder orientation as guiding principles of IC. The integration of the communication functions are also emphasised. A shortcoming of this model could be considered the lack of emphasis placed on the communication function, and therefore the unidentified source of communication in the three-dimensional integration.

- Schultz's 5 Rs of marketing communication planning

In this model the emphasis is on the use and influence of technology. The converging marketplace made up of both traditional and electronic commerce demands that marketers re-think their marketing communication planning approaches. Schultz proposes the 5 Rs methodology and the use of a new Sense-Adapt-Respond model with a focus on delivery first and message second.

In an indirect manner, this model encompasses most of the basic principles of IMC. However, this approach will require major changes in organisational structure, the type of people employed and most of all, changes in how success is measured.

A graphic illustration of the essence of the thinking behind this planning approach will foster a better understanding thereof, and make it more user-friendly to marketers that are unfamiliar with the theoretical underpinnings of IMC.

- Lin's revised integrated communication model (ICM)

Lin presents a model for applying and assessing integrated communication in organisations. It is called the Integrated Communication Model (ICM), and it provides a framework to review, operationalise and evaluate the process and effectiveness of integrated communication.

The purpose of ICM is to help organisations set effective communications through a new and comprehensive business model. The business environment is growing more complex, and ICM can help organisations identify the main issues of ICM in such a complex environment. Moreover, management approaches can be reviewed through ICM, and the best choice between current practices and modified practices could be made. The revised ICM model tackles the three neglected issues of IC. The model is also able to challenge the deficiencies and poor choice of methods for awareness integration, unified image, database integration, customer-based integration, stakeholder-based integration, and evaluation integration.

This revised ICM can deal with these issues because it uses the critical systemic approach of total systems intervention (TSI) as suggested by Flood (1995), which looks systemically at the organisational needs and selects the most appropriate methodologies, including the three questioning loops of triple loop learning (Flood

& Romm 1996) and evaluation methodologies (Gregory 1996). This overcomes the identified deficiencies of current IC models, which are neither critical nor systemic in approach.

The ICM is different from other models because a systemic approach of IC is presented. Different management approaches could be reviewed, chosen and reflected within a comprehensive way through ICM. The benefits of using ICM are: 1) all four dimensions of organisations are fully taken into account; 2) strengths and weakness of management approaches can be identified through ICM and the best choice can be made; and 3) managers can think about what they are doing from a systemic perspective. This model offers a different view of IC and incorporates the important aspect of a holistic business approach.

- Framework for structuring integrated communication in South Africa

Although this model is developed within a South African context, the main critique against Ehlers' model (2002) is the fact that it is not formulated from a holistic point of view. Its focus is limited to two integrated communication functions, namely marketing and public relations (focusing specifically on web sites).

- Niemann's conceptual South African model for the implementation of strategic integrated communication

This model developed by Niemann (2005) is one of the more comprehensive models of IC that emerged from the review of IC literature. This model incorporates almost all the drivers of IC discussed in chapter four (see 4.8). The only aspects that are not explicitly reflected in the model are financial accountability, core competencies, data-driven marketing and stakeholder-conscious employees. However, the first three aspects can be seen as intrinsic to the model on the renaissance communicator level. Although stakeholder-conscious employees are not directly included in the model, it can be derived that

on both the organisational integration, as well as the stakeholder integration levels, this aspect would be eminent.

5.4 REMARKS ON AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM CURRENT IMC AND IC MODELS

An evaluation of the above-mentioned models revealed that most models represent a very simplistic view on IMC and IC. However, in each one of the models there are aspects that can be used to inform the formulation of a new model. The table below lists the most important praise and criticism of each reviewed model.

Current IMC and IC models	Highlights of model	Criticism against model
Schultz, Tannenbaum and Lauterborn's IMC planning model (1994)	Data-driven actions and the use of technology are prominent. The real value of the model is the circular Nature, committed to <u>two-way communication</u> and adaptation to stakeholder needs and wants.	This model lacks an internal focus, holistic business approach and the importance of stakeholder-conscious employees
Gayeski and Woodward's model for developing for developing integrated Communication interventions (1996)	Focus of the model is the organisation's involvement in IMC. A <u>holistic approach</u> and <u>stakeholder-conscious employees</u> are thus intrinsic	Apart from the aspects highlighted, none of the other principles are reflected in this model
Evolutionary integrated communication (IC) model (Duncan & Caywood 1996)	The most important aspect of this Model is the fact that it predicts the <u>development stages</u> of an organisation to the stage of complete integration. This model is useful for organisations to evaluate their current integration Status.	Critique that can be brought in against this model is the fact that it advocates a silo approach and does not include the strategic intent of the organisation.
Gronstedt's stakeholder relations model for IC (1996)	The main contribution of this model is the <u>role of the stakeholder</u> in the IC process.	This model does not include important aspects such as the broader context within which IC must be implemented.
Percy's strategic planning process (1997)	The heart of this model is <u>centralised strategic planning</u>	The model does not really reflect anything outside the traditional paradigm of IMC

Duncan and Moriarty's integrated marketing business model for developing brand value (1997)	This model encompasses most of the IC principles identified in this study.	One aspect that is not addressed is stakeholder segmentation. There is also no reference made to the fact that employees are an important segment and should be sensitised to be stakeholder-conscious.
Hunter's model for IC (1997)	This model's contribution rests predominantly on the <u>internal aspects</u> of IC. The organisational structure needed and the position of IC therein is explained.	Because of the predominant internal focus, the external environment in which the organisation functions is not taken into account.
Burnett and Moriarty's IMC model (1998)	<u>Message consistency</u> and <u>contact synergy</u> are emphasised in this model	Does not reflect any other important aspects of IC, like stakeholder-centricity
Belch and Belch IMC planning model (1998)	There is a very strong focus on the <u>communication mix elements</u> in this model.	Integration of IC takes place at a very low level of this model.
Sirgy's systems model for IMC (1998)	Model highlights the important issue of <u>interdependency between the Different variables in IC</u> .	Although the systems model focuses on the interactivity of the elements in the model, it does not reflect most of the IC principles
Moore and Thorson's customer-based approach to IMC (1996)	Supports the <u>systems approach</u> proposed by Sirgy.	Not as comprehensive and rigorous as the Sirgy model.
Doc Ogden's flowchart (1998)	Ogden focuses on the <u>strategic intent</u> as point of departure for an IC approach. He also acknowledges the importance of the correct <u>context</u> in which to implement IC.	The budget allocation at the early stage of the planning indicates that a zero-based planning approach is not followed. The focus on stakeholders and stakeholder segmentation is also not mentioned.
Sevier's integrated marketing model for colleges, universities, and schools (1998)	Sevier acknowledges the important role that the people that need to drive the integration process play.	Except for the prominence that the building of relationships receive, no attention is given to other basic principles of IC.
Schultz and Kitchen's eight step global marketing communication process (2000)	The continuous interaction and <u>learning from marketplace</u> experiences can be seen as this model's main contribution. One of the different features of the IGMC process is the relative late stage that messages are developed. This reflects the basic premise that one have to <u>understand the stakeholders</u> to be able to formulate effective communication.	The main criticism against this model could be the fact that there is no internal focus

Three-dimensional IC model (Gronstedt 2000)	This model focuses on <u>branding and stakeholder orientation</u> as guiding principles of IC.	The shortcoming in this model is the lack of emphasis placed on the communication function and therefore the unidentified source of communication in the three-dimensional integration.
Schultz's 5 R model (2000/2001)	The use and influence of <u>technology</u> is the core of this model. Adaptation to electronic commerce is emphasised.	Most principles of IC are intrinsic to the thinking behind the model, but not spelled out by the author.
Lin's revised ICM model (2000/2001)	This model does not only focus on the application of IC, but also on the <u>assessing</u> thereof. It deals with the deficiencies and poor choice of methods for awareness integration, Unified image, database integration customer-based integration, stakeholder-based integration and evaluation integration because it uses a <u>critical systemic approach</u> to total systems intervention. This is the only model analysed that mentions the role of <u>organisational culture</u> , organisational design, organisational process and organisational politics	Lin's revised model covers most of the IC principles identified earlier. However, it does not address these principles directly, but only implies the presence thereof in the model. That makes this model very academic and not easy to implement in practice
Framework for structuring IC in SA (Ehlers 2002)	<u>Position and role</u> of marketing and public relations in IC is emphasised. The need of an ' <u>integrator</u> ' with a stakeholder focus is also highlighted.	This model does not provide a holistic perspective to the IC process and focuses predominantly on two elements within the approach.
Conceptual SA model for implementation of strategic integrated communication (Niemann 2005)	This is a very comprehensive model. It incorporates most important principles of IC. The appointment of a <u>renaissance communicator</u> is the key pin in the implementation of the IC process.	The renaissance communicator is the pivot on which the success of this model rests. Most of the IC principles are addressed in this model through the renaissance communicator.

Table 5.1 Praise and criticism of current IC models

5.6 THE NEED FOR A MULTI-CULTURAL IC MODEL FOR THE SOUTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT

In conclusion, it can be stated that the praise and criticism columns of table 5.1 highlighted several aspects regarding the IC approach that should be deliberated on in the formulation of an IC model. One of the most prominent shortcomings of existing models, within the context of this study, is the fact that not one of the models mentions the impact that a multi-cultural environment can have on the formulation and implementation of an IC strategy. Although the existing IC implementation models examined, should in theory be practised and applied on a global scale, it can be argued that the South African context calls for unique communication approaches that are derived from international trends, but adapted to the local environment.

Furthermore, and also specifically relating to this study, is the fact that higher education institutions have very distinctive structures that makes it a very testing environment to introduce IC to. This underlines the need and value of this study.

5.7 SUMMARY

This chapter provided an overview of models featured in IMC and IC literature over the past decade or so. In essence it can be said that the models discussed pointed out that IMC brought about a paradigm shift in how marketing communication works. To be effective in the dynamic marketplace today, a new approach will have to be followed.

From the investigation it became apparent that IC is an extremely complex phenomenon and it would be difficult to capture all its facets in one model. That explains the fact that most of the analysed models highlight different dimensions of IC. The main contribution of this chapter is the lessons learned from the

current models. These lessons will be incorporated into the IC model for marketing the UFS.

It is of note that the first South African IC model was developed in 2002. However, this model offers a limited view on IC. The conceptual IC model formulated by Niemann (2005) is more comprehensive and specifically meaningful as it is developed for the South African environment. The rest of the models explored were predominantly developed within the contexts of European and American marketplaces. Niemann-Struwig and Grobler (2007:71) argue that the South African context calls for unique communication approaches based on global communication trends and theories, but practised on the African continent.

CHAPTER 6

TOWARDS THE FORMULATION OF AN IC MODEL FOR MARKETING THE UFS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The culmination of all the exploration, analysis, and evaluations done in the first three stages of this thesis culminated in the development of a concept IC model that can be implemented by the University of the Free State to enhance its marketing efforts.

The findings of this research aim to amplify the body of theory and lead to theory growth. As suggested by Van Schoor (1979), when theory is constructed it might be useful to construct a model to show the cohesion between the concepts of the theory. Van Schoor (1979:35) says a model is a graphic representation of the basic concepts assembled in logical cohesion relevant to a certain subject (integrated communication). However, it should be noted that no model can give a complete picture of integrated communication. As illustrated in chapter five, each model gives a representation of how communication might appear and so each model focuses on differing aspects or contexts.

After constant comparison during the data gathering and analyses in the first three phases of this research, a conceptual integrated communication model that is recommended specifically for marketing the UFS was developed. The researcher defined what was happening in the data, reflecting the constructivist paradigm followed in the study. This chapter provides an overview of the conceptual IC model developed for marketing the University of the Free State.

6.2 RESEARCH GOAL REVIEWED

The research goal for this study as indicated in chapters one and two is:

to develop an integrated communication model for marketing the University of the Free State.

6.3 A CONCEPTUAL INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION MODEL FOR MARKETING THE UFS

In chapter four it became apparent that marketing communication has evolved over the last couple of decades to the current phase of being an integral part of integrated communication. The basic success of the IC strategy to a large extent depends on the integration of all organisational communication interactions between an organisation and its stakeholder groups. Each contact point can potentially add value to the mutual beneficial relationships.

The environment of a higher educational institution is very dynamic and very diverse (see chapter 3). This furthermore accentuates the necessity of the integration of all marketing and communication activities. Because of all the different business units of the University of the Free State (and any other higher educational institution), it makes the centralised decision-making and management process regarding communication and marketing on the one hand, but also the decentralised activation of the plans on the other hand, very important. The following section provides an in-depth discussion of the different phases and steps in the proposed IC model for marketing the UFS. The key role-players in the process and the roles they have to fulfil are also highlighted (see figure 6.1). The position of the model within the organisational structure of the UFS is also indicated.

6.3.1 The 14 step IC model

AN IC MODEL FOR MARKETING THE UFS

The model is developed in three phases. The first phase entails the creation of an environment that is conducive for IC.

Phase A: Organising for IC

Phase A consists of four important steps.

The literature review highlighted the importance of management's support of IC strategies. However, support can only be gained if a level of familiarity with the IC phenomenon is established among the management team. The suggested route to follow in this regard is proposed in step one and two.

Step 1: Designate a champion / Renaissance communicator

1. The executive team of the organisation assigns an individual to take responsibility for the overall planning and implementation of the IC strategy.
2. This champion should be empowered with a clear mandate.

It is very difficult (if not impossible) to integrated communication activities if it is not managed and coordinated from a single desk. Designating an IC champion will serve several functions of which the most important will be to ensure **strategic consistency** and **brand integration** across all contact points between the organisation and its stakeholder groups (both internal and

external). Unity of effort will ultimately be warranted through strategic consistency in all organisational efforts (Niemann 2005:253). Several responsibilities rest with this position. The inclusion of the IC champion is based on Gayeski and Woodward's (1996) idea of the renaissance communicator (also reflected in Niemann's 2005 model).

The renaissance communicator, as described by these authors, implies communication solutions to decisive organisational problems (Niemann 2005:250). This person should be an authority on IC and also understand the business issues that the organisation faces. He/she should be **part of the top management structure** or dominant coalition, as Hunter (1997) calls it. Only then will the IC champion be familiar with the latest relevant business issues and decisions. According to Niemann (2005:251), constant interaction between the IC champion and the executive team is a natural endeavour. This interaction will guarantee that the **executive team's consciousness of the importance of the communication function** is maintained. This should be a deliberate action driven by the IC champion.

The IC champion or renaissance communicator should have the **authority to enforce all aspects of the IC process** (this include managerial communication, organisational communication and marketing communication). To strengthen this individual's hands, documents like a communication policy and procedures, marketing communication policy and procedures, corporate identity manual and brand blue print manuals should be developed and followed to the letter in the implementation of the strategies. Stricter control mechanisms in place will ensure consistency, even when sub-divisions create their "own" informal messages.

Niemann (2005:251-252) adds additional prerequisites that are pivotal in the functioning of the renaissance communicator. Firstly, a **sufficient budget** should be made available to ensure the renaissance communicator's effectiveness. Another aspect that has relevance to finance is the fact that a

zero-based planning approach (Niemann, Crystal & Grobler 2003; Duncan & Moriarty 1996) should be followed in marketing and communication planning. The renaissance communicator should have **knowledge and comprehension of core competencies**, namely to know the organisational brand and core competencies and support them through the IC efforts, understanding how the company functions, and managing stakeholder and brand relationships. It is also the renaissance communicator's responsibility to ensure that all the organisation's major departments (including outside communication agencies) that could affect messages conveyed to the stakeholders must have a means of working collectively in the planning and monitoring of brand relationships (Niemann 2005:254). Duncan and Moriarty (1996) call this **cross-functional planning**. This refers to the brand integration function mentioned earlier in this discussion.

Another, more practical, but important function of the IC champion is to act as integrated communication team leader and delegator. The champion is also responsible for step four, namely to assemble the marketing and communication team.

Step 2: Sell IC to top management

1. Get management buy-in in the IC planning processes by informing/educating them about the basic principles and advantages thereof.
2. Get commitment from top management with regard to prominence, finance, resources, and empowering of the IC champion and marketing and communication teams.
3. Sensitise top management about intercultural competence components that could contribute towards a strong corporate culture.

The involvement and support of the top management team is the first important action in ensuring that the IC strategies will be activated in all

integration levels of the business. Results from the study done by Niemann (2005:250) indicated that there is a pertinent need for the integration of the CEO or exco level of the organisation in organisational communication. The reason for this is that the CEO/top management can be seen as the initiator of the organisational integration in that it serves as the example setter of integration of the mission in all the communication of the organisation. According to Niemann (2005:*ibid*) CEO/top management integration implies that the **mission of the organisation is consistently communicated** to the lower levels of the organisation. Niemann, Crystal and Grobler (2003) opine that the conscious inclusion of the mission in activities (not only internally but also externally) will strengthen the university as a brand and motivate staff. When employees and management share the same core value of productivity and performance, a strong **corporate culture** is developed that enhances effective functioning in a multi-cultural environment. Such a corporate culture (ethos) provides the necessary standard that an employee recognises and is willing to honour, thus becoming the driving force behind the organisation's successful operations. As was mentioned in chapter three (see 3.5.2), the IC champion should take cognisance of **intercultural competence components** and integrate it into all decision-making processes and managerial functions. In section 6.3.3 a list is provided that describes best practice in managerial functions incorporating intercultural communication competence that could enhance a corporate culture sensitive to cultural diversity.

Empowering the integrated communication process begins with the active commitment of the executive management team (Sevier 1998). Constant reminding of communication awareness and importance among top management is thus important. It was indicated earlier that this function is also part of the IC champion's responsibility. Following a **holistic business approach** is thus guaranteed and a solid foundation is established to work from. These first two steps are focused on empowering the process in its totality.

Step 3: Rationalise the integrated communication plan

1. Explain the integrated communication plan to all involved.
2. Promote ownership among internal stakeholders.

After top management approval is obtained, the next step is to present the IC planning procedure to key role-players involved in the implementation of the process (UFS Marketing and Strategic Communication units and faculty marketers). The rationale of the planning approach is presented and discussed in order to get ownership by all involved in activating the plan.

When individuals involved in IC understand the core of the phenomenon, they also realise that the total approach is based on an external focus on the stakeholders' needs. The core marketing and communication team must operate from a **stakeholder-centric** perspective. Faculty champions and other team members must also be empowered to train the rest of the employees to become **stakeholder-conscious employees**.

Step 4: Assemble the marketing and communication team

1. Identify and re-deploy marketing and communication team members.
2. Train and build team members.

Like the IC champion, the appointed marketing and communication team members are responsible to help plan, manage and evaluate the formulated integrated communication strategy. This team will thus assist the champion in ensuring **brand integration** and **strategic consistency** through all contact points with stakeholder groups. However, on a functional level they will have more responsibilities with regard to activation and coordination of the strategy. Horizontal integration implies integration and alignment of business units, functions and regions in terms of systems, processes, procedures and

communication (Niemann 2005:249). To ensure this, the proposed model suggests the appointment of IC champions for each faculty, as well as the QwaQwa and Vista campuses of the UFS.

As stipulated in step two, these marketing and communication team members (specifically the faculty champions) are responsible to educate the staff members in their faculties to become **stakeholder-conscious employees**, and will sensitise staff members about **inter-cultural competence components**. The suggestion of appointing faculty champions was informed by Gronstedt (2000:22) who proposes the establishment of project teams that are devoted to linking knowledge and expertise between departments and units (**cross-functional planning**). Organisations with strong corporate cultures gear decisions and actions to the needs of their stakeholders as they see people as important. **Positive and respectful relationships** among management and employees, and between employees and other stakeholder groups are encouraged.

The faculty IC champion will have a strong internal orientation. He/she will be involved with academic programme development, liaising between the faculty and UFS Marketing / Strategic Communication, training of faculty members regarding integrated communication matters, will focus on post-graduate marketing and communication and be responsible for quality assurance of IC material.

It is suggested that a junior staff member (faculty brand ambassador) should support the faculty IC champion. The responsibilities of this individual will have a more external focus in that this person will represent the faculty and UFS at relevant environmental activities. These individuals should be young and should be able to reflect the student profile and “student life” to attract potential learners to the UFS.

Phase B: The IC planning process

Phase B represents the core of the planning process of the integrated communication strategy and consists of six steps. It is important to note that the IC strategy consists of three sub-strategies that need to be formulated in an IC programme. At the University of the Free State two functions (managerial communication and corporate communication) are the responsibility of the Strategic Communication section, while UFS Marketing drives the marketing communication strategy. This in itself is cause for concern as these two departments should operate from one desk under the supervision of the IC champion (as suggested in phase A). This model recommends that these two sections are brought together in one section with the IC champion heading the section. Without structural change, it would be difficult to implement IC as a holistic business approach, and advance strategic consistency and ultimately create a strong brand position in the marketplace. With no change in the current structure of the marketing and communication functions at the UFS, these functions will continue to be practised as a technical, supportive level rather than a strategic and managerial level where the main contribution of IC lies.

Step 5: Situation analysis

The planning phase of the IC strategy starts with a methodical understanding of the organisation. This process is called the situation analysis. Research to investigate the internal and external environments is conducted. Three areas of analyses are:

- SWOT analysis
- Competitor analysis

- Stakeholder group analysis (essentially needs, perceptions and attitudes)

The research aims to address several aspects of which the two most important probably are to identify stakeholder needs and evaluate brand perceptions. Firstly, research is used to determine what the stakeholders know about the organisation's products/services, and to determine their perceptions and attitude towards the organisation and the products/services it offers. Only then, IC activities can be determined to position the products according to each stakeholder group's needs.

In the situation analysis step, information is gathered to build the platform for one of the fundamental principles of IC namely **stakeholder-centricity**. It is also during the research stage that the multi-cultural dimensions of the stakeholder groups are explored to provide information for strategic decision-making.

Step 6: Strategic decisions

During step six the direction of the marketing and communication strategies is determined. This significant step can be seen as the focal point of the whole planning process. The outcome is the gathering of data that guides the overall planning process. A **holistic, strategic driven business approach** is brought forth from this venture.

The following core decisions are scrutinised and/or taken at this point:

1. The business plan (mission, vision, business goals, etc.);
2. The marketing plan (overall marketing objectives, products, costs, budget, etc.);
3. Positioning strategy;
 - Identify positioning strategy from research; and

- Formulate policies and procedures to integrate brand throughout company and establish strategic consistency.

According to the literature reviewed (see discussion in chapter 3) a company with a strong corporate culture functions effectively in a multi-cultural environment and displays a strong, unifying corporate philosophy and mission. Such an ethos facilitates the generation of commitment to something larger (the mission of the organisation) than interest in oneself. Although it is difficult to create a corporate culture, there are certain guidelines that can be followed to guide the corporate culture of an organisation into a predetermined direction. A discussion of these guidelines follows later in this chapter (see 6.3.3).

Step 7: Identify and prioritise stakeholder groups
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The identification of the prime prospects of an organisation is of the utmost importance. This step ensures the ever important **stakeholder focus**. Two aspects to address in this step are to:

1. Identify all stakeholder groups (internal and external);
2. Prioritise stakeholder groups; and
3. Develop an electronic database for each stakeholder group (as complete as possible).

Due to budget constraints, it is important to prioritise stakeholder groups in order to determine where the majority of the budget should be spent. During the implementation phase, electronic databases should be established. These databases are used to **build and maintain relationships** with individuals. Through this, **purposeful dialogue** can be maintained with the stakeholder groups and relationships are built and managed. Messages are therefore not just sent to stakeholders, but opportunities are also created to

receive messages from them. As mentioned earlier, excellent organisations gear their decisions and actions to the needs of their stakeholder groups.

Step 8: Set integrated communication objectives for each stakeholder group

When planning an IC programme, one should decide what is meant to be accomplished by setting measurable objectives. IC campaign objectives consist of two types:

- Marketing objectives are specific, measurable sales and client relationship goals to be met (e.g. % of market share); and
- Strategic communication objectives are geared toward influencing stakeholder attitudes and behaviour to create an environment accommodating to the use of the organisation's service/product.

IC objectives should make sense in the context of the overall business plan. At this stage in the planning process, the marketing goals and objectives are allocated to different stakeholder groups and the marketing communication goals and objectives are then formulated. This ensures that ***cross-functional planning*** takes place in the organisation and that the business goal is extended to all business units. Without going into theoretical detail about goals and objectives, a practical example of such a marketing objective would be to link new enrolment numbers to specific faculties/programmes.

Step 9: Formulate the integrated communication mix

After the strategic decisions have been made, stakeholder groups were identified, and objectives were set, the techniques that will help reach each one of the objectives are identified. This process is also used to determine the integrated communication budget. It is called the objective-and-task budget allocation (or zero-based planning strategy) and is often used in IC. The cost of completing all the IC tasks becomes the IC budget.

At this stage four basic principles of IC are prominent, namely ***message consistency, contact synergy, the generation of purposeful dialogue*** and ***financial responsibility***.

Aspects to keep in mind during step nine are:

- The integrated communication mix should be linked to the marketing and communication objectives;
- The integrated communication mix should use stakeholder groups as point of departure;
- Existing contact points between the UFS and stakeholder groups should be identified;
- Additional/alternative contact points should be anticipated;
- Contact points should be used to engage with the stakeholder groups; and
- The use of new technology/new media options should be included in the integrated communication mix to relate with the profile of the primary stakeholder group (youth market).

Two concepts that flow from this step are the basic communication theme (message strategy) and the creative concept. Based upon the objectives set for each stakeholder group and the integrated communication techniques chosen, the budget is allocated.

The integrated communication mix consists of mainly two different types of techniques, namely the marketing communication techniques and the corporate communication techniques. The six main marketing communication techniques are advertising, public relations, direct marketing, sales promotions, sponsorships and personal selling. Examples of corporate communication techniques are internal newsletters, media liaison activities, special events, corporate publications, etc.

The challenge is to put together the optimal mix of IC techniques. The strengths and weaknesses of each technique should be considered to identify the best possible mix of techniques to communicate the UFS messages. At the beginning of step nine, an analysis of marketing and communication agencies should be done to determine their **core competencies** and to choose the best one in each category to supplement internal competencies. In an IC approach, the IC champion affords him/herself the luxury of using the best service providers for each specialised field in the communication mix. It is then the IC champion's responsibility to integrate all activities. It is argued that an excellent organisation **stay focused on what it does best** and avoids radical diversification. The same applies to the use of resources. Employees and services providers should be engaged according to their strengths.

Each appointed / listed agency (identified based on core competencies) is issued with a corporate identity and brand blue print manual. This is an important precaution taken by the IC champion to ensure **strategic consistency, content synergy** and to ensure **brand integration** at each contact point. At this point, first drafts of all the necessary marketing and communication material are developed by the agencies.

Step 10: Draft to top management

Step ten provides the first evaluation opportunity in the planning process. The IC champion and the marketing and communication team now present the IC strategy draft to top management for comment. Because top management is part of the initial planning process (Phase A, and steps six and seven in Phase B), they are in a favourable position to give valuable input with regard to the **strategic consistency** and **brand integration** of the strategy. At this stage it is important to confirm that a strong, **unifying corporate philosophy** and mission is demonstrated. A strong corporate culture creates a distinction

between one organisation and another, and projects an **organisation's uniqueness**.

If the judging panel is satisfied, the planning process proceeds to step 11. Alternatively, the IC champion and marketing and communication team have to repeat steps eight and nine.

Step 11: Implement the internal IC programme
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As the employees of any company are the most valued stakeholder group in any IC strategy, the internal IC plan is implemented before any external activities are activated. The IC champion should ensure that close cooperation exists between the marketing and communication team.

The most important function of the internal IC plan is to market the **corporate mission** to the internal stakeholder groups. It is important for the internal integrated communication strategy to communicate to employees strategic issues regarding the organisation. This will help drive the **strategic intent** of the organisation. Apart from this, the internal IC plan should also aim to cultivate **stakeholder-conscious employees** and **integrate the brand** into all internal stakeholder activities.

Actions during step 11 are:

- Write the internal integrated communication action plan (ICAP);
- Produce the marketing and communication material;
- Activate the planned internal program; and
- Manage and coordinate the internal ICAPs.

It is important to keep employees informed, and also to encourage them to take risks in the development of new ideas.

Step 12: Implement the rest of the IC programme

After the successful introduction of the internal strategy, the implementation of the rest of the IC programme follows:

- Write the external ICAPs;
- Produce the marketing and communication material;
- Activate the planned external programme;
- Manage and coordinate the external ICAPs.

An important aspect during this step is to ensure that the electronic databases of all stakeholder groups are managed and updated regularly. In IC these **databases** are one of the most valuable assets of the organisation. It is during this phase of the strategy that **relationship management** and stakeholder engagement become very prominent.

Phase C: Debriefing and re-organising for the next planning cycle

Step 13: Evaluate the IC programme

Assessing IC results can be complex; however, research can help determine the effectiveness of IC programmes. If results are not as expected, the strategy followed must be adjusted. However, isolating the effect of communication is difficult because so many forces can influence an organisation's communication performance. One should build response mechanisms into marketing and communication activities, such as web sites that provide demographic data about visitors. Because of the more interactive, database-driven approach that will be followed in this model,

evaluation will be more focused, and can be conducted on a continuous base.

IC should also be evaluated annually by an IC audit. This entails a comprehensive assessment of the entire organisation's communication with stakeholders to determine whether they:

- are appropriate and meaningful to the stakeholder groups;
- convey messages that are consistent with the set objectives; and
- are properly integrated.

The audit helps pinpoint individual communication, and communication areas that need improvement.

Aspects to pay attention to include:

- Set evaluation channels in place for IC champion and marketing and communication teams to monitor all communication contact points (check message consistency).
- Designate an institutional brand ambassador to monitor brand execution in all media. Devises should be put in place to empower this individual to enforce the correct use of brand parameters.
- Formulate a report template available for annual feedback by IC champion, faculty champions and marketing and communication teams.
- Re-asses objectives and outcomes.
- Identify areas to focus on during next situation analysis.

The entire evaluation process has one objective in mind and that is to determine if the marketing and communication objectives were reached, and the budget well spent. This step highlights the importance of **financial accountability** as one of the prime principles of IC.

Step 14: Reflect, modify and re-activate

Building brand equity is the aim of a successful IC strategy. One year's strategy does not stand in isolation, but should contribute towards the next year's success and add to the equity of the brand. The stronger the bond with the stakeholders, the stronger the brand equity will be. This translates into repeat business (for example positive word-of-mouth to family and friends; sending your children to study at UFS if you studied there), more profitable relationships with the all stakeholders (e.g. supporting Alumni activities, donating money to UFS) and ultimately **sustainable success**.

In this, the last step of the model, the IC champion and his/her team need to reflect on all the decisions made and activities implemented. Where necessary, modify and adjust activities and then activate the new strategy. This last step in the model provides information for the first step of the next planning cycle.

In figure 6.1 a graphic illustration is provided to demonstrate the 14 step conceptual IC model that is suggested for marketing the UFS.

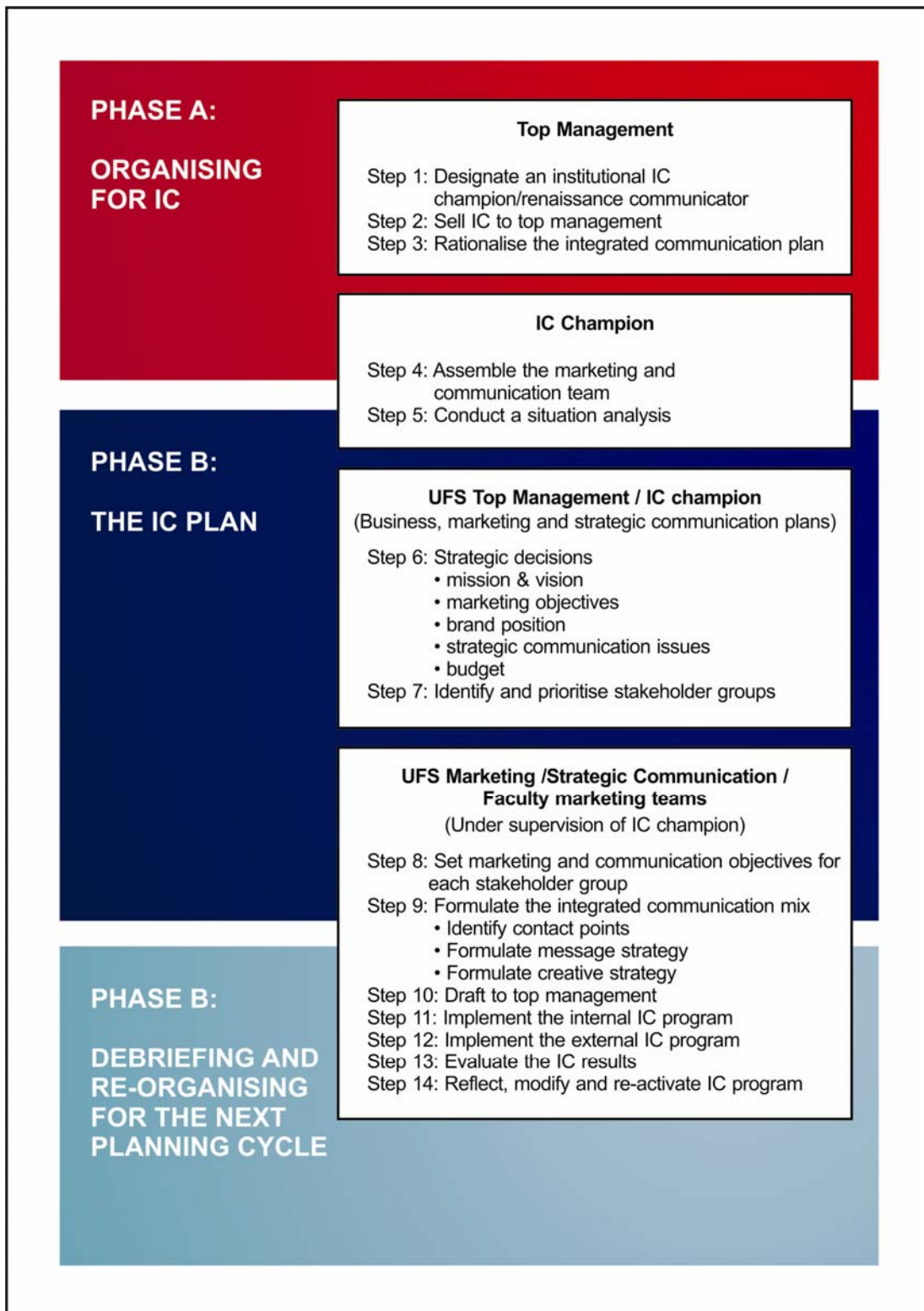


Figure 6.1: Conceptual 14 step IC model for marketing the UFS

The model discussed above provides a logical approach that leads the planner through the various steps involved in developing a successful integrated communication programme. It is not, however, a template that can be used as a fill-in-the-blanks tool. Instead, it is a thinking process, a format and structure designed to lead to logical outcomes and successful programmes.

If the proposed model is used in contexts other than the UFS, organisations may need to expand some of the steps or delete some of the activities. Much depends on the specific organisation and the current contextual circumstances for which the integrated communication programme is being planned.

The next two graphic illustrations (figures 6.2 and 6.3) depict the recommended manner in which the 14 steps related to the IC plan discussed above should be implemented in the University of the Free State's organisational structure. The application is described on two levels, namely the institutional (brand) driven and the faculty (product) driven activation of the model. In the next section, these two figures will be discussed.

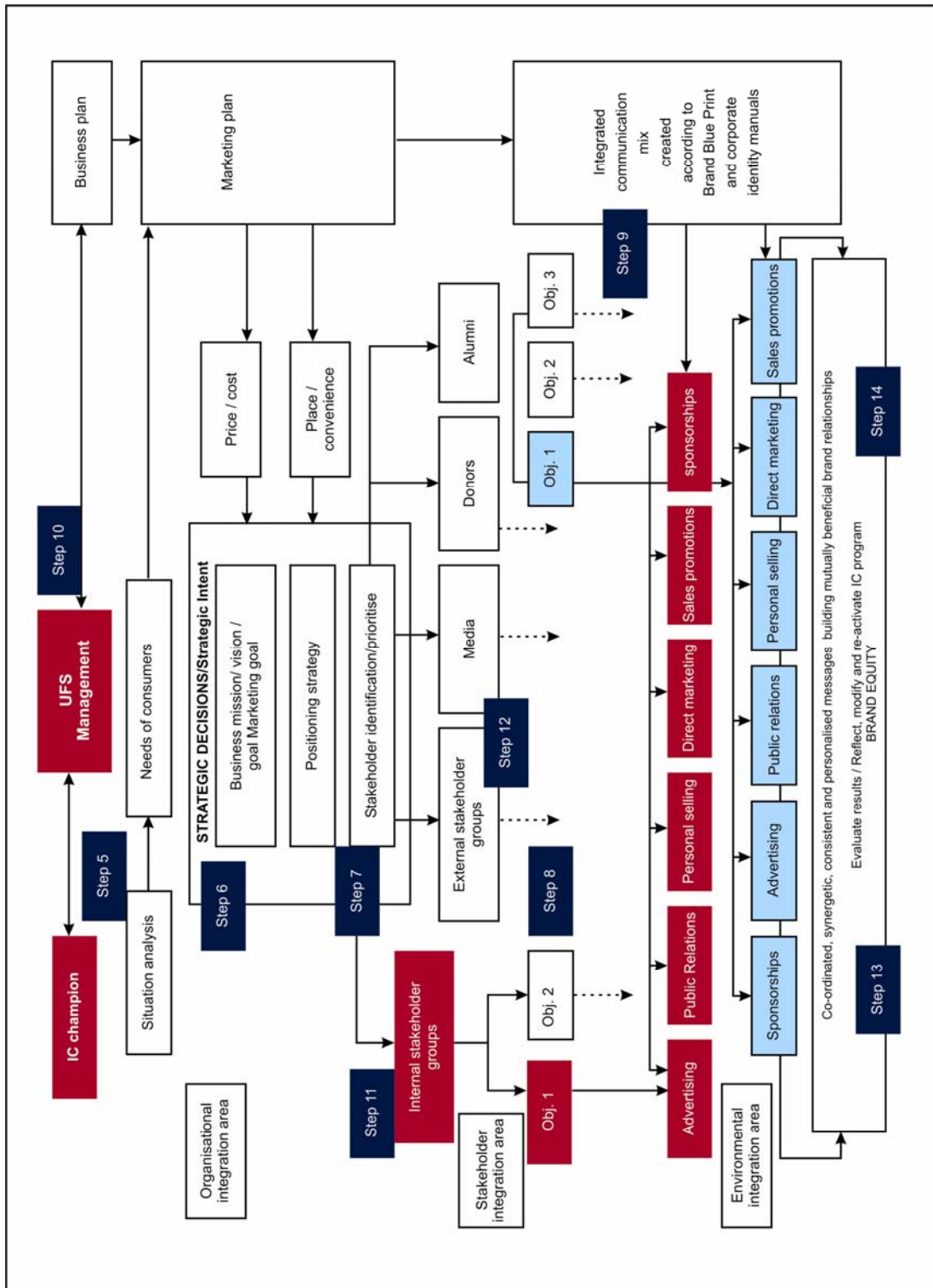


Figure 6.2: IC model: University of the Free State (Institutional / brand-driven)

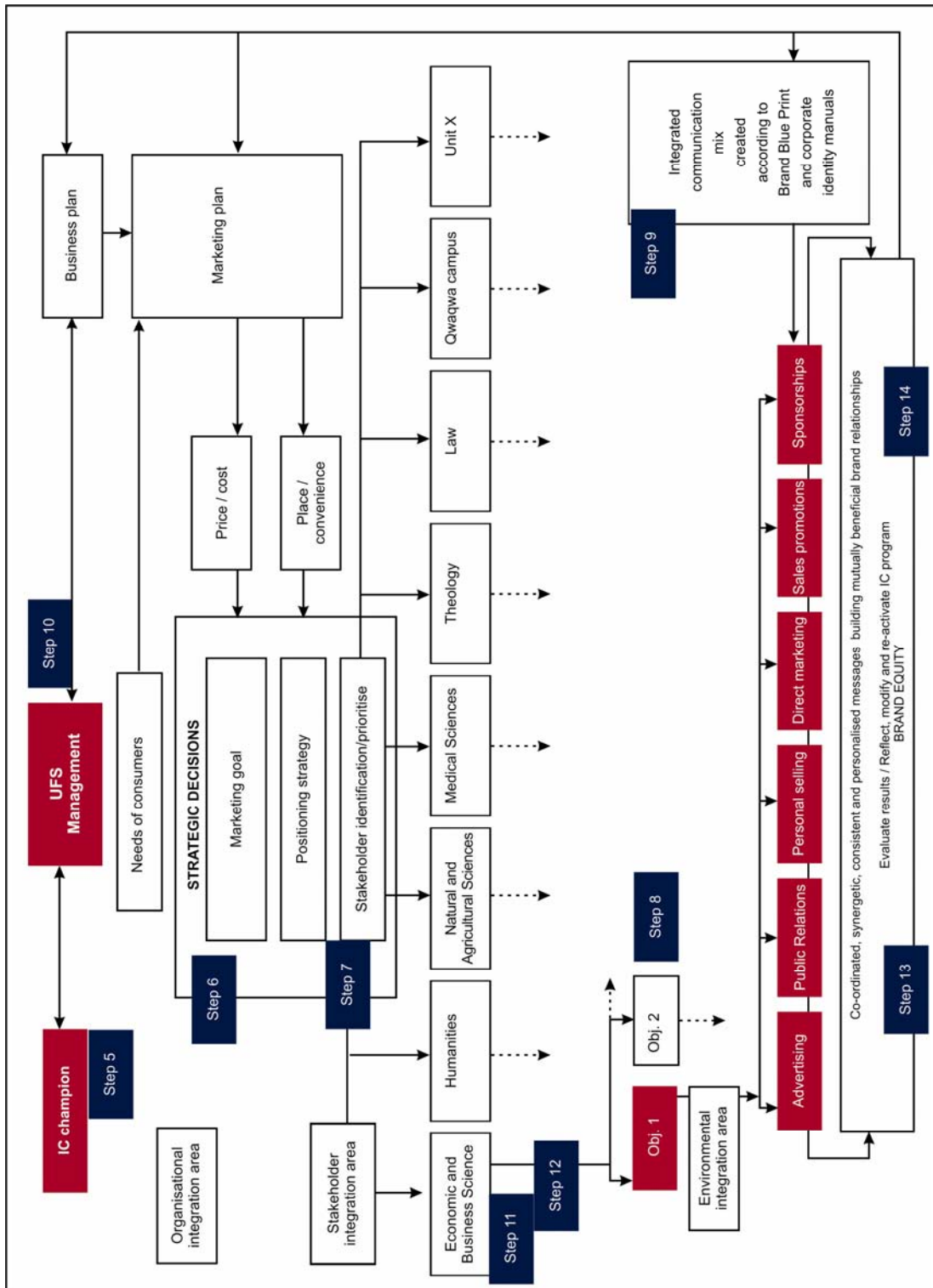


Figure 6.3: IC model: University of the Free State
(Faculty / product-driven)

As indicated in figures 6.2 and 6.3 the application of IC at institutional and faculty level takes place in three main areas, namely at the organisation integration area, the stakeholder integration area and at the environmental integration area. Steps five, six, seven, ten and eleven fall within the organisation integration area. Integration should firstly be achieved internally in the organisation before integration can take place in terms of stakeholders and the environment. The organisational integration aspect of this model is based on horizontal and vertical integration as proposed by Gronstedt's three-dimensional approach to integrated communication (2000) and Niemann's conceptual model of integrated communication in South Africa (2005). Since South African organisations rarely integrate communication on horizontal and vertical levels, but mostly on an external level (Niemann 2005:249) this aspect should be emphasised.

Firstly, horizontal integration involves integration and alignment across business unit, functions and regions in terms of systems, processes, procedures and communication. This is especially important in the UFS context when the communication integration of the three campuses have to be addressed. Secondly, vertical integration integrates communication between people working in different business units (for example different faculties). According to Niemann (2005:*ibid*) vertical integration empowers the people who are closest to the stakeholders and organisational operations, to communicate more openly, frequently, and effectively with managers.

The other important aspect with regard to the organisational integration area relates to the role of the CEO/top management, and that of the IC champion. This issue was addressed in-depth in the discussion of the 14 step IC model (see 6.2.4.1). Figures 6.4 and 6.5 demonstrate the way in which the organisational management structure of the UFS will have to be adapted to accommodate the proposed IC model. In chapter three the current organisational management structure were illustrated (see 3.1 and 3.2).

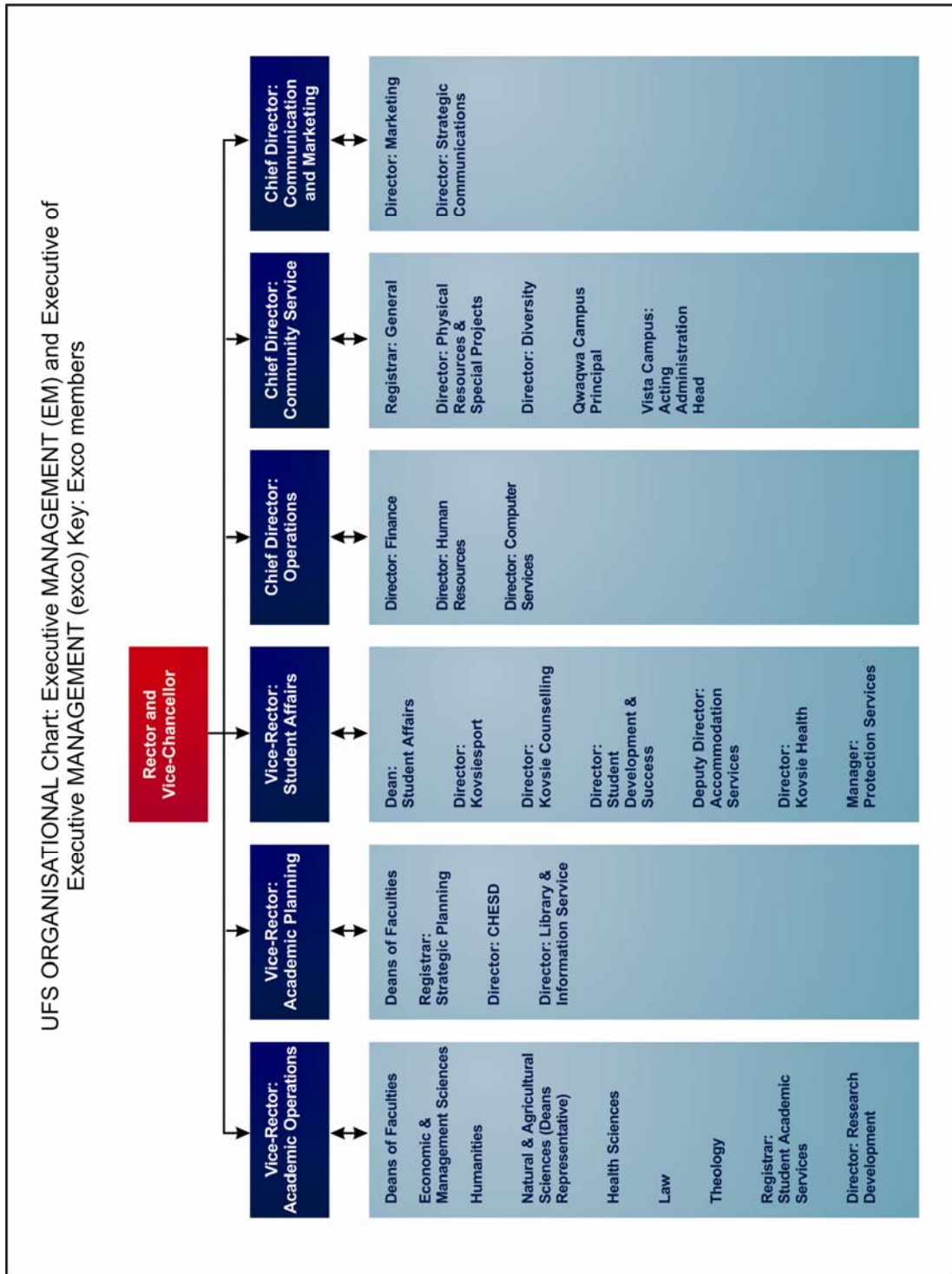
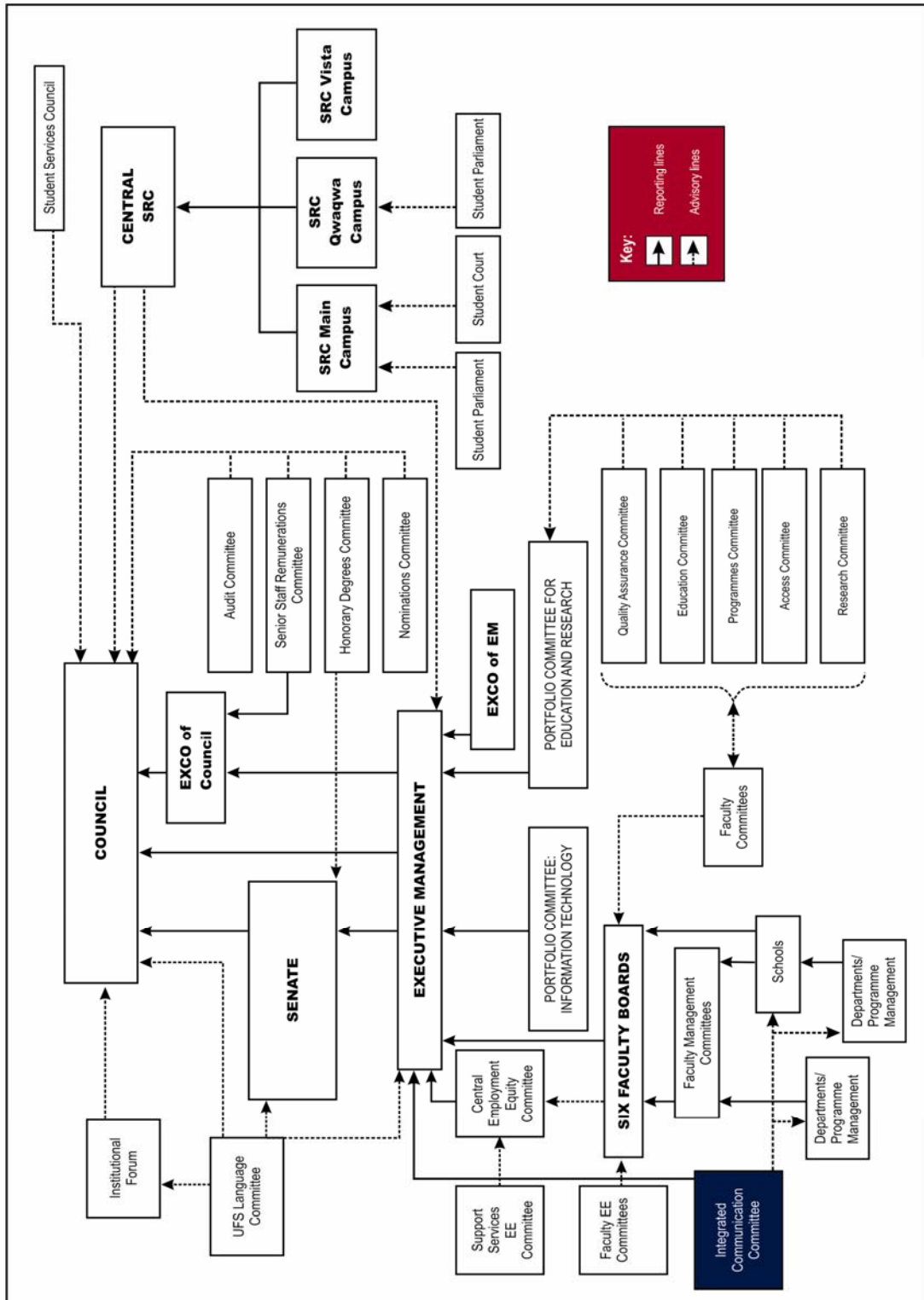


Figure 6.4: Proposed UFS organisational chart: Executive management



**Figure 6.5: Proposed UFS organisational chart:
Governance and management structure**

Steps eight, nine and twelve take place in the stakeholder integration area. By focusing on stakeholders, the model recognises that organisation's function in a stakeholder century. According to Niemann (2005) this implies that the organisation has a broader view in terms of the environment, taking into consideration all the stakeholders that have a vested interest in the success of the organisation, and not only the customers/clients. In line with Niemann's (2005) model, the proposed model recognises two distinct levels of integration of stakeholders, namely *interactivity integration* and *brand contact point* integration. Interactivity integration is based on purposeful, personalised dialogue. Brand contact points integration suggests all situations in which stakeholders have the opportunity to be exposed to a brand message.

Steps 13 and 14 impute in the environmental integration area. The systems perspective within which the proposed model is developed, and more specifically the fact that the organisation functions within an open system, are reflected in this integration area. The account on the South African higher education environment presented in chapter three indicated the dynamics of the environment in which South African organisations have to function. An aspect emphasised by Niemann (2005) is that organisations should be learning organisations. Interaction between the organisation, its stakeholders and the environment, in order to manage integrated communication effectively, is essential to build strong brand relationships.

The position of the steps (figure 6.1) in relation to the organisation chart (institutional and faculty) is indicated. Colour codes are used to illustrate the implementation of the strategy for different business units and stakeholder groups.

Although the previous discussion touched on some of the basic principles of IC identified and discussed in chapter four, the following section will provide a complete exposition of all the principles and the position thereof in the model.

6.3.2 Application of the IC principles in the suggested model

In chapter four, a review of the literature exposed several basic principles of IC (see a summary of these principles in 6.2.1.2). It is argued that these principles are the drivers of IC implementation, therefore the inclusion of them in the proposed model is not negotiable. In the table below (table 6.1), an indication is given of the position of the principles in the 14 step model illustrated in figure 6.1.

	Basic principles of IC	Position in model
1	Holistic business approach	Step 1 / Step 2 / Step 6
2	Relationship management	Step 7 / Step 12
3	Brand integration	Step 1 / Step 4 / Step 9 / Step 10 / Step 11
4	Stakeholder centrality	Step 3 / Step 5
5	Strategic consistency	Step 1 / Step 4 / Step 6 / Step 9 / Step 10 / Step 11
6	Stakeholder focus	Step 7
7	Sustainable success	Step 14
8	Corporate mission	Step 2 / Step 11
9	Stakeholder-conscious employees	Step 4 / Step 11
10	Message consistency	Step 9
11	Contact synergy	Step 9
12	Purposive dialogue	Step 7 / Step 9
13	Financial accountability	Step 9 / Step 13
14	Cross-functional planning	Step 1 / Step 4 / Step 8
15	Core competencies	Step 1 / Step 9
16	Database management	Step 12 / Step 14

Table 6.1: The position of IC principles in the 14 step model

The table clearly illustrates that several of the IC principles are more dominant in the model than others. Nevertheless, the number of steps in which a certain principle appears does not necessarily indicate the intensity of the application thereof. The next discussion highlights the integration of intercultural competence components (discussed in chapter three) with the IC principles discussed above.

6.3.3 Integrating intercultural competence components into IC

The criteria that companies can use to integrate their marketing communication activities were illustrated in chapter four (see figure 4.2). In category one, the corporate focus category, business processes (Schultz & Barnes 1999) and organisational growth (Wiscombe 2005) are the mainstay. It houses the core decision-making and strategic processes (Kitchen 2005; Hutton & Mulhern 2002) of a company and essentially entails strategic company planning. The principles identified by Mulder (2007) and Duncan and Moriarty (1998) namely holistic business approach, relationship management, brand integration, customer-centricity, strategic consistency, stakeholder focus, and sustainable success should be embedded into the strategic planning processes. Furthermore, a corporate culture that is sensitive to cultural diversity should be nurtured. In other words, the corporate culture must mainstream cultural diversity as part of the overall strategic mission (Sae 2005:282).

The following list provides a description of best practice in managerial functions incorporating intercultural communication competence that could contribute towards a corporate culture that is sensitive to cultural diversity. As was mentioned in steps two and four of the discussion on the proposed model (see 6.3.1), these factors should be embedded with the IC champion, as well as the faculty champions and the rest of the marketing and

communication teams who, in their own way, should convey this information to the rest of the internal stakeholder group members. These factors are:

- To capitalise on cultural diversity in the workplace;
- Acknowledge and institutionalise cultural diversity as part of the organisation's mainstream processes;
- Actively elicit contributions from the cultural diverse workforce for developing, implementing and evaluating organisational planning processes;
- Adjust organisational planning processes to accommodate cultural and linguistic characteristics of the culturally diverse workforce;
- Consult widely with the culturally diverse workforce on all aspects of the proposed organisational change so that employees are able to participate in and take ownership of the issues;
- Have knowledge of cross-cultural dimensions; and
- Institute formal processes for feedback from employees on effects of the change.

Category two refers to the institutional processes present in an organisation. These processes are driven by managerial functions listed by Sae (2005) (see discussion in 3.5.2). The basic principles of IC present at this level include marketing the corporate mission, fostering stakeholder-conscious employees, ensuring message consistency and contact synergy, generating purposeful dialogue, and being financially accountable. These principles should steer all the management functions performed at this level. The next directory provides a description of best practice in managerial functions incorporating intercultural communication competence in the second category:

- Commission market research to identify culturally diverse stakeholders, and adapt marketing strategies, including delivery of marketing messages to better suit the marketing segments;

- Have a sound knowledge of cross-cultural issues and principles so that culturally responsive products and services can be developed to meet market demands;
- Have a good knowledge of cross-cultural issues and principles so that culturally sensitive employees can be developed;
- Develop a formal policy for stakeholder contact and service-based on data from market research;
- Institute stakeholder service training for employees, especially in cross-cultural communication;
- Institute formal processes to evaluate stakeholder service on a regular basis;
- Take care to establish and foster elements of trust and open communication with employees on a personal basis; and
- Be sensitive and adaptable to the cultural and linguistic needs of multi-cultural employees when communicating with them

The infrastructure category as indicated in the model by Mulder (2007) stays in tact as the corporate culture elements incorporated into category one will submerge this category. The outcomes of categories one, two and three come together in the brand relationships established through effective intercultural communication.

6.3.4 Addressing the barriers to IC implementation in the model

If the barriers to the implementation of IC that most organisations generally experience are not addressed in the proposed model, the possibility that this model will not be utilised is not excluded. In chapter four, these barriers were discussed. Table 6.2 provides a summary to indicate how the suggested model will address the barriers highlighted.

Barriers to implementation of IC	Addressed in proposed model
Organisational structures	Although the structure of the organisation will not easily change, the introduction of the IC champion team that will be part of the dominant coalition should help toward the integration of the marketing and communication functions throughout the organisation. Structural changes specifically with regard to the marketing and communication sections of the UFS are put forward.
Low standing of communication functions	As the IC champion will be part of the executive committee of the organisation, the importance of integrated communication functions will be more prominent in the organisation.
Decentralised decision-making	This barrier will be addressed by both the functions of the IC champion, as well as all the policies and guidelines that will be put in place to assist the IC team in performing their duties.
Communication specialisation fields	Integration necessitates a broad view of the customer/client, The organisation and the environment in which the organisation functions. In cultivating stakeholder-conscious employees, this barrier will to a certain extent be addressed.
Culture of the organisation	It is suggested that the organisation should be a learning organisation to be able to succeed in the competitive marketplace. It can be deduced that this could consequently address the culture of the organisation. It is also important to take note of the fact that the majority of corporate culture components and IC principles show significant resemblance. It could therefore be assumed that the implementation of IC would simultaneously contribute towards the building of a strong culture at the UFS.
Stifled creativity	This barrier is not relevant in the context of this model, as it is a barrier identified from an agency's point of view and not from an organisational viewpoint.
Lack of IC know-how	At several points in the model reference is made to the fact that IC education must be provided. It is also assumed that the appointed IC champion would have knowledge and comprehension of the essence of integrated communication.
Structure of communication industry	As is the case with stifled creativity, this issue is more relevant from an agency's perspective. However, the appointment of an IC champion will cancel this issue as barrier because it is seen as good practice by the IC champion to rather select different specialist agencies that is the best in a given communication function, rather than to appoint one agency who have to provide in all the communication needs of the organisation. It is the IC champion's responsibility to make sure that all the different agencies' products are integrated and strategically focused.

Financial emphasis by management	This barrier suggests that management pay more attention to financial considerations than stakeholder needs. Operating in a stakeholder century, this barrier is directly addressed in several steps of the model as a function of the IC champion and the marketing and communication team.
Short-term planning	This issues is explicitly addressed by indicating that the total integrated communication process should be driven by the strategic intent of the organisation.
Integrity problems	Although it would be difficult to address this issue directly, it is assumed that a better understanding of the integrated communication approach, and the policies and guidelines that Will be put in place, would limit unethical behaviour.
Technological barriers	This barrier is directly addressed in the proposed model through The suggestion that a database of all stakeholder groups are formulated, maintained and managed. The numerous mentions of relationship building, relationship management, etc. all indirectly refer to the use of technology. The use of new media options is also part of the model as it has to have relevance to its primary stakeholder group, namely the youth.

Table 6.2: Barriers to IC implementation addressed in the proposed model

6.3.5 Incorporating lessons learned from other models into the suggested new model

After an extensive analysis of existing IMC and IC models (discussed in chapter five), it is essential to indicate how critique on these models was addressed in the model proposed in this study.

Lessons from other models	Addressed in proposed model
A holistic perspective should be followed in formulating the model	From the onset systems thinking and a systems perspective were Used to conceptualise this model. The organisational integration component of the model entails horizontal and vertical integration. Horizontal integration involves alignment of communication processes across business units and departments. The appointment of the IC champion in phase A (Step 1) of the proposed model, as well as the marketing and communication teams and faculty champions and brand ambassadors (Step 4) address this issue. Through vertical integration all employees of the organisation are sanctioned to manage brand contact points.

<p>Stakeholder-conscious employees</p>	<p>In phase A - organising for IC - the foundation is established for the implementation of the basic principles of IC of which stakeholder-consciousness is one. Special attention is paid to this aspect in step 4 where the IC teams are commissioned to educate the internal stakeholder groups regarding the aspects of being stakeholder-conscious.</p>
<p>Communication should form basis of the organisation</p>	<p>To address the position of communication in the organisation, the IC champion should have continuous interaction with top management and form part of the dominant coalition. This should be established in steps 1-3 of Phase A. These steps entail the appointment of an IC champion, the selling of IC to top management and the rationalising of the integrated communication plan.</p>
<p>There should be interaction between the organisation and the environment</p>	<p>Environmental interaction is addressed in the environmental integration area of the model. This component of the model suggests that the organisation functions in an open system. These systems include the political, social and economic environments related to the organisation.</p>
<p>Message consistency and contact synergy should be embedded in the model to establish a focused brand</p>	<p>This issue is directly addressed in Step 9 of the proposed model. Certain supportive instruments are put in place during this step to ensure that the brand is integrated at every contact point between the stakeholders and organisation through consistent messages and the consequent development of contact synergy. An institutional brand ambassador is also suggested.</p>
<p>A stakeholder focus should be employed</p>	<p>A stakeholder focus is invigorated in two steps (steps 5 & 6). Phase B (The IC Planning phase) commence with these steps (situation analysis and taking strategic decisions). In step 5 the stakeholders are researched to identify needs, wants, perceptions, attitudes, etc. The results of the research is used to make strategic decisions like the brand position, objectives, etc. During steps 11 and 12 (the implementation of the internal and external IC strategies) these aspects culminate in more tangible facets. Another important aspect of a stakeholder focus is the fact that every segment that has a direct or indirect impact on the functioning of the organisation is considered a stakeholder of the organisation. A third important consideration in this regard is the fact that the employees of the organisation should also be considered an important stakeholder group.</p>
<p>Relationship management should be enhanced by the use of technology</p>	<p>Due to the importance ascribed to the use of technology in IC, Step 7 directly addresses this issue. In Step 7 - the identification and prioritising of the stakeholder groups - conclude with the developing of electronic databases of each stakeholder group. The incorporation of new media options into the integrated communication mix can also be seen as a deliberate effort to make use of technology.</p>
<p>IC should be implemented from a position of authority</p>	<p>Because it is argued that IC can only be implemented successfully when driven from a position of authority, it is suggested in the model that the IC champion should be positioned as part of the management team of the organisation to be better informed regarding strategic decisions impacting on, and made by the management team of the organisation.</p>

<p>The strategic intent of the organisation should be the point of departure for implementing IC</p>	<p>The model is driven by a long-term strategic plan, also referred to as Strategic intent. The strategic decisions start off with the revisiting of the organisation's mission/vision. It is argued that the organisational mission should drive all the communication and organisational objectives and activities. Step 6 within the organisational integration area (the beginning of Phase B) reflects this aspect.</p>
<p>There should be interdependence between the components of the model</p>	<p>As the model is formulated within a systems thinking perspective, the interdependence of the components are inherently implied in the model.</p>
<p>Integrated communication goals should be aligned with the organisational goals</p>	<p>In step 6 the organisational mission and goals are determined/revisited. In step 8 the integrated communication goals are derived from the strategic decisions made and directly linked to specific stakeholder groups.</p>
<p>A renaissance communicator should be appointed to drive the IC process</p>	<p>To emphasise the importance of a renaissance communicator, the appointment of this person is the first step in Phase A of the proposed model. As so many issues and principles of the model are directly linked to the renaissance communicator (called IC champion), it is evident that the success of the IC model is to a large extent dependent On this aspect.</p>
<p>Multicultural composition of the stakeholder groups should be recognised</p>	<p>At the core of IC is the fact that a more segmented, individualised approach should be followed towards communication and marketing. A sensitivity towards the multicultural composition of the stakeholder groups is thus integrated into the whole process.</p>

Table 6.3: Incorporating lessons learned from other models into the suggested new model

Through the inclusion of table 6.3, it is contended that cognisance was taken of shortcomings of existing IC models and, where possible a deliberate effort was made to address the criticism against these mentioned models in the formulation of the new model.

6.4 SUMMARY

In this chapter a description of the conceptual integrated communication model for marketing the UFS was provided. This model was discussed in three phases, namely i) Phase 1 – organising for IC, ii) Phase 2 – the IC

plan, and iii) Phase 3 – debriefing and re-organising for the next planning cycle. The 14 steps of the IC model were identified and discussed in detail.

The primary focus of the model evolves around three important aspects, namely the fact that an environment accommodating to IC must first be created, a stakeholder focus should at all times be prominent and the creation of a strong corporate culture through integrating intercultural competence components into the process should be at the centre of the whole process. The important role-players in the different steps were highlighted and then the model was applied to the UFS context. Finally, the barriers to IC implementation were addressed and lessons learned from other IC models were incorporated into the formulated model.

In the next chapter an overview will be provided of the results of focus group discussions, personal interviews and electronic questionnaires that were conducted to explore the viability of implementing the conceptual IC model (suggested in this chapter) at the UFS.

CHAPTER 7

EXPLORING THE VIABILITY OF IMPLEMENTING AN INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION MODEL AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter two elaborated on the meta-theory of the empirical research methodology of this study. Using the meta-theory of the empirical research methodology (phase 4), the focus of the current chapter is on the application of the last phase in this study, namely on the data of the focus group discussions and personal interviews.

As indicated in chapter one, the Mitroff model for problem solving in systems thinking is used as basis for this research process. As mentioned in chapter one (see 1.4.2) the scope of this thesis only covers the first two circles of the model. In this chapter, the second circle of the model (Conceptual model) and fourth research phase of this study will be addressed.

The University of the Free State (UFS) is currently exploring the viability of implementing an **Integrated Communication (IC)** model to increase marketing effectiveness and consistency. Integrated communication (IC) is an effective way to manage all interaction between an organisation and its stakeholders, and as a result develop a brand in the stakeholders' minds because of the interactions they have with that company. Organisations can no longer rely on a single campaign to build and sustain its brand and be effective and profitable. The premise of IC is that synergy is achieved when all brand contacts work in concert. (See a detailed exposition on integrated communication in chapter one and four).

From the first three phases of this study an IC model evolved, earmarked for implementation at the University of the Free State. To address the third primary, and final secondary research question (see 2.2), focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and open-ended e-mail questionnaires were done to identify challenges and opportunities specific to the UFS marketing and communication environment, and explore the viability of implementing an IC model (discussed in chapter six) at the UFS. An independent research specialist was used to determine the feasibility of the proposed model.

This chapter contains an executive summary on the findings of the fourth and final stage of this study. A full exposition of the findings can be read in Appendix C.

7.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The **primary research objective** of phase four was to determine the viability of the proposed IC model for marketing the UFS. To address this objective, one had to bear in mind the challenges and problems currently experienced in the UFS marketing and communication environment and possible opportunities specific to the UFS marketing and communication environment.

The results of this phase of the study will be used to adapt the preliminary model discussed in chapter six, and to propose an integrated communication model for marketing the UFS.

7.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

7.3.1 Research approach

Due to the explorative nature of this study (discussed in chapter two), a **qualitative approach** was deemed most appropriate. Furthermore a qualitative approach allows:

- A naturalistic approach, that is, its goal is to understand behaviour in a natural setting from the perspective of the research participants. In other words a qualitative approach is ideal for understanding the meanings people give to their experiences within the social and cultural context within which they live.

“Qualitative data, with their emphasis on people’s ‘lived experience’, are fundamentally well suited for locating the meanings people place on the events, processes and structures of their lives: their ‘perceptions, assumptions, pre-judgements, presuppositions’ and for connecting these meanings to the social world around them” (Miles & Huberman 1994: 10).

- Insight in motivations and behaviour as the researcher can probe deeply into the thoughts and feelings of participants. An analogy can be used of a music critic, whereby in order to understand the topic of investigation a baseline understanding of the complexity is needed:

“In judging the quality of a piece of music, the critic can’t reasonably begin with an analysis of notes, themes, time, key, and so on... Rather, she must undergo total physical immersion in the music itself: listening, feeling, responding to, being in it. It is only then that she is able to apprehend meaning and can begin to make distinctions and analyse the components with a better sense of how they relate to the whole” (Engel, in Lesley University 2005: 3).

- Flexibility to pursue issues, reasons, behaviours and concerns that are “discovered” during the inquiry; and

- The generation of ideas which is imperative when following a grounded theory approach, where the main aim of this study is to develop an integrated communication model.

7.3.2 Methods of data collection

As mentioned earlier, data was collected in the form of focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and open-ended e-mail questionnaires. With all these methods the same semi-structured discussion guide was used. The general flow of the discussion started from a broad perspective and was increasingly narrowed down to specific focus areas (See Appendix A for discussion guide and Appendix B for e-mail questionnaire.) The structure of the questions was open-ended to ensure that responses were flexible and encouraged participants to reply at length.

“Because qualitative researchers depend on the field to help them ask questions, it is not a good idea to enter the field with questions that are too specific... A narrow focus from the beginning may well limit what and how we see” (Ely, Anzyl, Friedman, Garner & McCormack Steinmetz 1991: 56).

The structure proposed by the discussion guide ensured that:

- The questions were put in context for the participants;
- Each interview, focus group or e-mail questionnaire was conducted in a similar fashion. By using a general format the researcher is able to make comparisons between the responses of the various groups, therefore making the results more reliable;
- The moderator stayed on track and on time; and
- The moderator prevented the discussion from moving away from the research topic to be studied.

For the purposes of this study **focus groups** comprising of no more than eight participants per group were deemed the most suitable because the

dynamic characteristic of smaller groups ensured that sufficient stimulation was provided; but also the ability to probe deeply into the thoughts and feelings of the participants (whereas larger groups tend to lack depth). The focus groups lasted approximately two hours each.

By nature **in-depth interviews** are more information-intensive per participant and allowed the researcher to probe deeply into participants' motivations. Interviews were conducted with individuals in management positions, as it was felt that employees would not communicate freely when they are in the same focus group as their manager. The interviews lasted approximately one hour each.

Due to the unavailability of some of the key role players earmarked for this study, **open-ended e-mail questionnaires** were used as an additional resort. The questions were open-ended to allow participants to motivate their answers in their own words. The e-mail questionnaires did however lack some depth as probing was not possible.

The following precautions were taken to ensure the **validity** of the research results:

- Participants were assured of anonymity to ensure that they speak their minds freely;
- All the groups and interviews were conducted by a facilitator that is experienced in moderation techniques;
- The researcher/facilitator continuously reflected on what participants meant during discussions;
- The focus groups/interviews were conducted in participants' language of choice to ensure more freedom of expression; and
- All the groups and interviews were audio-recorded and fully transcribed for analysis. By analysing verbatim transcripts researcher bias is minimised.

7.3.3 Target market and sample realisation

The target market aimed to include individuals that are involved with the marketing and communication of the UFS. In the past few months the UFS experienced a turbulent phase of racial tension on campus, largely as a result of a new hostel integration policy that was announced in 2007. It was decided to explore that dimension in the research, and to include one focus group from representatives of UFS residences. For that reason the following key role players were targeted for this study:

- UFS Marketing (including deputy directors as well as practitioners in advertising; public relations; sponsorships; personal selling; direct marketing and sales; and promotions);
- The Strategic Communication department;
- Faculty representatives (including programme directors; programme administrators and brand ambassadors); and
- Residence managers and primarii.

A non-random purposive sampling framework was used, i.e. participants that played a key role in the marketing and communication of the UFS were targeted for this study.

The sample consisted of:

- Three focus groups (representing UFS Marketing practitioners; Faculty representatives, UFS residence managers and primarii);
- Three interviews (representing UFS Marketing's director and deputy directors); and
- Four responses to the open-ended e-mail questionnaire (representing UFS Strategic Communication).

7.3.4 Data analysis

Grounded theory was employed to analyse the data. The steps followed in grounded theory analysis are summarised as follows (Kinach 2001; Hueser 1999):

- Step 1:** Read the data in general to have a feel for the data (i.e. what is going on?)
- Step 2:** Read the data to derive a thick description of the case from the data
- Step 3:** Read the data so as to develop the categories (i.e. comparing incidents applicable to each category)
- Step 4:** Read the data in order to organise the themes into some broader concepts (i.e. integrating categories and their properties as well as determining relationships that exist between categories). Step four entailed a content analysis where statements that shared the same underlying meaning or idea were grouped together. Verbatim statements from the participants were used (where appropriate) to illustrate and explicate the main themes. The interview, focus group and e-mail questionnaire data were integrated as the same themes emerged in all. Differences in opinions were indicated where applicable. The results of step four is presented in this report.
- Step 5:** Delimiting and writing the theory. The results of step 5 are discussed in Chapter 8 of this thesis and include the integration of the findings of phase four with that of the previous three phases.

7.4 RESEARCH RESULTS

In the following section an executive summary of the research findings is presented.

7.4.1 Section 1: Problems and challenges experienced with communication and marketing at the UFS

7.4.1.1 The split between Strategic Communication and UFS Marketing: The impact of decentralisation on UFS Marketing

▪ **Viewpoint of Strategic Communication:** The split between Strategic Communication and UFS Marketing did not impact negatively on Strategic Communication as this unit had a direct reporting line to top management and both the departments operated in specialised fields of communication with different target markets. By being differentiated departments with different focus areas, more emphasis could be placed on providing specialised services. However, more communication and collaboration between the two departments would be ideal, especially in times of crises.

▪ **Viewpoint of UFS Marketing:** The decentralisation of UFS Marketing had a far-reaching impact on how marketing was conducted at the UFS. The split between UFS Marketing and Strategic Communication, as well as the decentralisation of marketing activities, had the following negative impacts:

(1) **UFS Marketing lacked decision-making power** (i.e. employees at UFS Marketing felt marginalised as the split resulted in: no direct contact with the UFS' executive team, hence marketing was not strategically aligned with management; a lack of decision-making power and authority; the diminished importance of marketing at the UFS; and a lack of acknowledgment of marketing and PR skills)

(2) ***UFS Marketing has no direct communication with Strategic Communication*** (i.e. marketers deemed it highly important to be up-to-date with current affairs of the university. Marketers were not well-informed on the university's stance on current affairs, new policies, or the strategic direction for marketing. Conversely, the lack of direct communication between the two departments resulted in Strategic Communication not remaining in touch with the UFS customers' needs, especially with regard to the market demands of prospective students. This resulted in the development of strategies that were out of touch with customers' needs. In addition, there seemed to be role confusion as to the respective responsibilities of UFS Marketing and Strategic Communication)

(3) ***Marketing activities are uncoordinated*** (i.e. the decentralisation of UFS Marketing gave rise to the lack of coordinated marketing activities which further gave rise to the deterioration of the UFS brand, as not all stakeholders promoted the same brand values and image. These separate "islands of communication" (i.e. the faculties, UFS Marketing, Strategic Communication and residency managers) have grown and moved further apart, often resulting in fragmented, redundant, or even contradictory communication programmes and messages. This can lead to information overload, a loss of credibility, and wasted resources)

7.4.1.2 The impact of the UFS' organisational structure: General

- The different departments at the UFS seemed to operate within institutional silos. Several examples were mentioned where the UFS' organisational structure did not foster streamlined communication, resulting in inconsistent messages and different objectives proposed by different departments. Even more concerning was that communication within the same departments was also lacking. Insufficient contact with colleagues – together with the lack of strategic focus – resulted in the duplication of work,

role ambiguity, unclear role definitions, and overall confusion. Communication from top management to middle management and from middle management to operational levels was also lacking.

7.4.1.3 The impact of the UFS Marketing's current structure

- UFS Marketing reported via line managers to the Chief Director: Operations. This structure was not ideal to promote marketing as:
 - there were too many structures and bureaucratic procedures; UFS Marketing was too far removed from top management and hence lacked decision-making (and influencing) power;
 - the representatives of UFS Marketing at top management level were not marketing specialists, resulting in the lack of understanding of the importance of marketing;
 - the decentralisation of marketing resulted in uncoordinated marketing activities; and
 - within the UFS Marketing department, roles and functions were not well structured, resulting in work being duplicated.

7.4.1.4 The split between faculties and marketing: Brand- vs product-driven marketing

- There was limited direct contact between faculties and UFS Marketing and both seemed to operate predominantly on their own. This scenario often resulted in marketing activities that were not well coordinated, and at times duplicated, as both these role players focused on both brand- and product-driven marketing.
- One of the main problems encountered by faculties was to find spokespersons that were up-to-date on all the programmes within a faculty. General marketers on the other hand were not trusted with programme-

specific information. Brand ambassadors have been appointed recently. By appointing brand ambassadors this problem might also be addressed. However, the concept of brand ambassadors was a new initiative and the efficacy of these appointments still needed to be established, and the roles and functions of brand ambassadors needed clarification. Brand ambassadors seemed to duplicate some of the functions of marketers.

- Several faculties lacked marketing expertise. In essence, Programme Directors (which were quite often lecturers) were not marketers and several lacked marketing expertise. Furthermore, lecturers' main focus was on lecturing, whereas marketing was only perceived to be an "added, over-and-above task".

- Even though the Marketing Advisory Committee played an important role in advising faculty representatives, more attention was needed to critically evaluate and audit the various faculties' marketing activities. It seemed that faculties and UFS Marketing were merely following the same process of submitting marketing plans, marketing budgets and how the money would be spent. The critical evaluation of these activities was not in place. Moreover, the Marketing Advisory Committee was not taken seriously and had a limited impact on how marketing was conducted at the UFS.

7.4.1.5. The impact of transformation on communication and marketing

- The UFS is currently in the process of transformation. This has set in motion a split between those that want to maintain the "old" culture of the UFS as a *traditional Afrikaans university* versus those that believe in the development of a new, more integrative culture. In essence, the split has given rise to a division between black and white students and employees, which fundamentally translate to a lack of a shared organisational culture and an integrated UFS brand.

7.4.1.6 The lack of an integrated UFS brand

An integrated UFS brand was lacking due to:

- The impact of **transformation**, where the university seemed to be split in two which is also based on racial differences and political orientation.
- **Marketers** were typically utilised to **match the demographics** of specific target markets, e.g. black marketers visited black schools; white marketers visited white schools. The risk in this type of marketing is that different marketers provide different brand messages to potential students and the public at large.
- **Stakeholders functioned in silos** and different stakeholders supported different messages about the UFS brand. To make matters worse, different stakeholders functioned autonomously and in silos and did not communicate with each other.
- **A brand is more than just a logo.** Both UFS Marketing and faculty representatives tended to focus on the “corporate identity” of the UFS brand in terms of brand image factors only (e.g. consistent letterheads, the use of logos, layout of advertisements, etc.). The UFS brand is much more than just the logo, website design, the choice of corporate colours, etc. The UFS brand is about what students, potential students and employees feel about the organisation. It is the essence of the university, the message and feeling it emanates, both literally and implied.
- **Marketers lacked marketing training.** New appointments in marketing (and communication) should receive induction training that

focuses on the UFS brand as well as their roles and functions within the university. Marketing and brand training was lacking. Even within the UFS Marketing department employees seemingly lacked marketing expertise. This might have impacted negatively as some marketers might have lacked the competence to market an integrated UFS brand.

- The **QwaQwa campus was treated as a separate brand**. The marketing of the two campuses were separate and different messages and brand images were communicated.

7.4.1.7 The lack of strategic direction

- Most participants agreed that strategic direction at the UFS was lacking. In addition, strategic decisions were not always followed up and ended up being a “pen-and-paper exercise”. It seemed that higher management did not agree on policies and procedures, and different managers provided different messages and guidelines. Without strategic direction, employees felt that they were communicating in circles without moving the organisation forward.

- Furthermore, strategic direction in marketing was lacking, more specifically with regards to: UFS Marketing’s general vision and strategic focus; a uniform brand message to all stakeholders that is aligned to the university’s strategic direction; the type of students marketers should target; and a strategic plan to address the possible decreasing numbers of students.

7.4.1.8 The lack of trustworthy leadership at the UFS

- It seemed that there was a general lack of trust in management (middle and higher management). This was mainly ascribed to management’s: general lack of transparency and perceived “hidden agendas”; lack of transparency on racial issues and a culture of “keeping quiet”; poor crisis

management of the Reitz incidence; haphazard decision-making; and the provision of incongruent messages. The lack of trust in the UFS' leadership resulted in employees withdrawing from communication processes and exhibiting uncooperative attitudes.

7.4.1.9 The perceived marginalisation of employees

- Several participants were frustrated because they felt that their hard work and efforts were not acknowledged. Employees were asked to attend several meetings and to provide input in decision-making, policy documents, etc. Their inputs were however merely ignored and never acknowledged. This led to a certain degree of “learned helplessness” where employees started to withdraw from communication processes because no matter what they did, it had no impact. Moreover, top management was perceived to be autocratic, which further prevented lower levels from participating in open dialogue.

- By not being listened (or even communicated) to, several stakeholders mentioned that they felt marginalised and that their role in marketing the UFS brand was not acknowledged.

7.4.1.10 Performance appraisals and the need for feedback

- There was a definite need for various stakeholders (i.e. UFS marketers, residency managers and primarii) to **receive feedback from managers** (line managers and higher management) on their inputs. Feedback systems seemed to be limited at the UFS.

- In addition, several marketers felt that their **performance appraisals** were unfair. This was mainly ascribed to the difficulty of measuring and auditing marketing inputs. Marketers felt pigeonholed into the narrow role of being “information clerks” with no scope for personal development, promotion or

even objectives to work towards. This resulted in marketers losing trust in the UFS brand and looking for greener pastures.

7.4.1.11 The lack of a customer-centric focus

- A definite concern was raised that the UFS was losing market interest. This was mainly ascribed to other universities' offering more attractive services/solutions and a decrease in learners with matric exemption.
- A strong perception existed that the UFS' customers' (current and prospective students) needs were not taken into account. This seemed especially true with regard to the residency integration policy, where a certain segment of students preferred to stay in culture-specific residences, whereas another segment preferred integrated residences.
- In addition, several participants accentuated that students' choice of university revolved mainly around student life and non-academic activities. With the transformation of the UFS, several of these non-academic activities were changing or were discontinued.

7.4.1.12 The impact of new technologies

- The rapidly merging and emerging technologies (e.g. Facebook, SMSs, etc) were not used to full potential to optimise communication and marketing at the UFS.
- It was of great concern that the current central database was not used optimally. A new on-line database was being developed, whereas the current database was never utilised to its full potential. There was however a need for a more user-friendly and reliable database as some of the current databases were not streamlined, well-managed or well-maintained.

7.4.1.13 The impact of limited resources

- Each faculty received limited marketing budgets. At times this resulted in poor quality marketing material as well as restrictions placed on the amount of marketing that could be carried out. Within faculties more lenient budgets were needed for post-graduate programmes. The focus was more on marketing undergraduate programmes.

- Residences did not receive any marketing budget, even though they were actively involved in marketing the UFS. If equipment or funds were needed, the onus was on residency managers and students to raise funds.

7.5.1.14 Unique challenges experienced by Strategic Communication

- Challenges that the Strategic Communication department faced were to continuously attempt to control information overload, and difficulty was experienced to satisfy employees' needs. On the one hand some employees requested more advertising; on the other hand other employees blamed Strategic Communication for information overload. Another major challenge was that even though information was readily available, there was no guarantee that employees read newsletters or accessed the UFS website/intranet.

7.4.2 Section 2: Evaluation of the proposed IC model

PHASE A: ORGANISING FOR IC

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Step 1: | Sell IC to top management |
| Step 2: | Rationalise the integrated communication plan |

- The buy-in of top management is crucial for the success of IC at the UFS. The majority of participants agreed that the integration of communication could not be accomplished by middle managers or from those on lower

levels – it must come from the top and it cannot just be a memorandum or directive. There must be a commitment from top management to integrate and to remove the barriers which prevent integration. A few participants were concerned that top management would not want to take ownership of marketing and communication problems experienced within the university.

Step 3: Designate an institutional IC champion
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- The appointment of an IC champion will ensure:
 - (1) That the UFS brand is more integrated (even though not all stakeholders might like the new brand image);
 - (2) Communication will be more streamlined and direct (and not 'watered down');
 - (3) Reporting lines will be streamlined, resulting in faster and more informed decision-making;
 - (4) UFS Marketing will be more empowered and better represented on executive level;
 - (5) The IC champion will provide feedback to key stakeholders;
 - (6) More collaboration between key stakeholders and improved coordination of marketing endeavours. Improved coordination between product-driven and brand-driven marketing activities will ensure less duplication, clearer role and job descriptions, and more collaboration between UFS Marketing and faculty representatives. More collaboration between UFS Marketing and Strategic Communication will also imply strategic consistency and brand integration as both departments report to the IC champion.

- The IC champion should fulfil the following criteria: be a communication and marketing expert and strategist; takes UFS Marketing's interests to heart; and has authority and autonomous decision-making power.
- Even though the idea of an IC champion appealed, concerns were raised about the management of communication to lower levels, where in large organisations – such as the UFS – communication typically tends to “water down” as it is filtered down to lower levels. Concerns were also raised that the IC champion will be a political appointment, rather than a communication and marketing expert.
- Some also believed that resistance from Strategic Communication could be expected as this department was currently functioning autonomously and reported directly to the rector. From Strategic Communication's perspective, the two departments (UFS Marketing and Strategic Communication) should remain autonomous as both are separate, specialist fields. Closer collaboration might however be ideal in crisis situations. In the long term however, Marketing and Strategic Communication will remain differentiated, specialised fields with separate focus areas and target markets. A further concern from Strategic Communication was that having an IC champion will complicate the reporting structure, because this department's reporting line was directly to top management.
- Similarly, resistance from lower levels (for example some marketers, faculty directors or programme managers) could be expected as they were used to taking their own initiative with regard to marketing activities, whereas this model implies the endorsement of clear marketing and communication guidelines and direction. In other words the appointment of an IC champion may be a risk in terms of a loss of individual power and control over one's destiny.

- A few participants from Strategic Communication were of the opinion that the rector is currently fulfilling the role of IC champion. From a UFS Marketing perspective the rector was not expected to be an IC champion, i.e. the rector should set the strategy, whereas the IC champion would translate strategy into communication and marketing objectives.

Step 4: Assemble the marketing team

- A single designated IC champion was perceived to be more effective than a Marketing Advisory (or similar) Committee.
- Most stakeholders accentuated the importance of having faculty champions that are marketing and communication experts. The appointment of faculty champions will ensure:
 - (1) More successful and professional marketing of programmes, as marketing experts are employed;
 - (2) Better control and management of faculties' marketing activities hence a higher likelihood to drive an integrated UFS brand;
 - (3) More informed stakeholders as one of the faculty champions' main objectives should be to disseminate information to all role players;
 - (4) Better control and management of marketing budgets;
 - (5) More focus on the importance of marketing within faculties;
 - (6) A higher likelihood for inter-departmental cooperation, collaboration and the alignment of business units; and

(7) A more streamlined report structure, hence improved communication and faster turnaround times.

- A foreseen risk was to motivate the creation of more posts due to the university's limited resources.
- The different roles and role expectations of the marketing team should be clearly defined. This is especially true for the faculty champions, brand ambassadors and UFS Marketing as each of these stakeholders could easily duplicate each others' roles. If marketing specialists were appointed in faculties, the role of brand ambassadors might become obsolete.
- The ideal would be to coordinate the marketing activities of UFS Marketing, together with faculty representatives (brand ambassadors) and possible publications from Strategic Communications. The coordination of marketing activities will not only improve inter-departmental communication, but also be more cost-effective and have a stronger impact when marketing the UFS brand.
- A concern was also raised that the appointments of faculty champions might be more focussed on appointing BEE candidates, rather than communication experts.

PHASE B: THE IC PLAN

Step 5: Conduct a situation analysis
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- The main aim of the situation analysis is to get buy-in from all key role players. It is anticipated that buy-in from all stakeholders will be difficult as not all stakeholders support the UFS' executive team's objectives.

- Furthermore, quite a few participants felt that their inputs were never acknowledged, even though they had closer contact and understood the needs of the UFS' customers – its students and prospective students. By not receiving acknowledgement for their viewpoints, withdrawal rather than cooperation with top management's strategic decisions could be expected.

- A few participants felt that, even though they were key stakeholders in marketing the UFS brand, they did not want to be involved in the situational analysis or provide any input. This could be ascribed to "learned helplessness", where employees felt that their viewpoints were never acknowledged as top management would remain autocratic. For these individuals merely receiving "brochures" that summarise the UFS' mission, vision and strategies were sufficient.

- Consideration should be given with the situational analysis to acknowledge all stakeholders' input. Even if certain inputs would not be used in strategic decisions, feedback should be given to all involved.

Step 6: Strategic decisions

- Clear mission and vision statements are crucial at the UFS. The majority of participants mentioned that the lack of an integrated UFS brand and the lack of strategic consistency gave rise to different messages being communicated. Several participants felt that they did not have any marketing vision or objectives.

- The development of clear marketing objectives will further enhance marketers' performance management systems, as marketers will have clear objectives that they will be measured against.

Step 7: Identify and prioritise stakeholder groups

The identification of the prime prospects of an organisation is of utmost importance. This step ensures the ever important **stakeholder focus**. Two aspects to address in this step are to:

1. Identify all stakeholder groups (internal and external)
2. Prioritise stakeholder groups
3. Develop an electronic database for each stakeholder group (as far as possible)

Due to budget constrains, it is important to prioritise stakeholder groups in order to determine where the majority of the budget should be spent. During the implementation phase manageable electronic databases should be established. These databases are used to **build and maintain relationships** with individuals. Through this **purposeful dialogue** can be maintained with the stakeholder groups and relationships are build and managed. As mentioned earlier excellent organisations gear their decisions and actions to the needs of their stakeholder groups.

Steps 8 – 12: Implementation of integrated marketing and strategic communication plans

- From UFS Marketing's viewpoint the implementation of the Integrated Marketing Communication plan seemed logical and acceptable. From Strategic Communication's viewpoint, the IC model appeared to be mainly targeted at marketing, and Strategic Communication did not appear as a key stakeholder. More attention should be given to the specific roles, expectations and advantages that the implementation of this model will have on the Strategic Communication department.

***PHASE C: DEBRIEFING AND REORGANISING FOR THE NEXT
PLANNING CYCLE***

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| Step 13: | Evaluate the IMC results to add to IC audit |
| Step 14: | Reflect, modify and re-activate IMC programme |

- It seemed that participants that represented UFS Marketing were especially excited about the evaluation of IMC results and to modify and reactivate the IMC programme. As indicated earlier, the evaluation will improve both performance appraisal and feedback systems.

7.5 OVERVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Most stakeholders (i.e. UFS Marketing, faculty representatives, residency managers and primarii) were positive about the implementation of the IC model at the UFS and deemed the model viable. The implementation of this model will address a number of concerns and provide a solution to some of the problems experienced with communication and marketing at the UFS.

Table 7.1 provides an overview of the main areas of concern that implementation of the IC model will address, as well as recommendations for improvement (where applicable).

7.6 SUMMARY

In this chapter the viability of implementing an integrated communication model for marketing the University of the Free State was explored. Focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and open-ended e-mail questionnaires were used to determine the challenges, problems and opportunities specific to the UFS marketing and communication environment. The acceptability and relevance of the theoretical underpinnings of integrated communication were also explored amongst the respondents.

Several concerns and problems were identified by the respondents, and the ability of the IC model to address the concerns was highlighted. Stakeholders that could benefit from the model were mentioned and possible risks and recommendations regarding the implementation of the IC model were made.

This study concludes with chapter eight that provides a summary of the four phases that were conducted in this research. Conclusive remarks regarding the meta-analytical, conceptual, normative and theoretical research questions are presented. The limitations and reliability of this study are provided, and directions for future research are offered.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CRITICAL REFLECTION

8.1 INTRODUCTION

In this, the final chapter, the conclusions and recommendations of the study, based on the goal and objectives, and more specifically the research questions put forward, will be addressed. After constant comparison during the data gathering and analyses in all four phases of this research, an integrated communication model was recommended for marketing the UFS. This model emerged from the data, the shared experiences of the researcher, the participants and the researcher's relationship with the participants. The researcher defined what was happening in the data, reflecting the constructivist paradigm followed in the study.

This chapter provides the conclusion of this study. Concluding remarks will be made on the primary research objectives. The value of the study will be highlighted and the researcher will reiterate the reliability of the study and the limitations experienced. To conclude, suggestions for future research will be made.

8.2 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The discussion that follows is the focal point of this research report. It summarises some of the main moments of this thesis, and also comments on the theoretical research question and goal of the study. Each one of the research questions will be dealt with individually and conclusions and recommendations on each will be put forward.

8.2.1 The context in which integrated communication is practised (meta-analytical research question)

8.2.1.1 The higher education environment

In chapter three it was stated that the higher education environment has changed significantly over the past couple of years. It was highlighted that universities have become similar to big businesses and will have to be run like big businesses to stay competitive in future. The term “corporate university” was coined to describe this phenomenon. A corporate university supposes business-like management, which in turn demands effective marketing and communication strategies. The UFS has accepted this new identity of corporate university in many ways. It is now also time to embrace it from a marketing communication, and specifically an integrated communication perspective.

8.2.1.2 UFS: marketing status quo

Through examining the marketing and communication related material of the UFS, and personal experience gained from being part of the marketing advisory committee of the UFS, it became apparent that the UFS to a great extent still follows the traditional approach to marketing. After closer examination, it became apparent that the restructuring of the UFS to adapt to the changing environment might have been successful in several areas, but to a large extent it contributed to the fact that the UFS does not have a single position in the market place, and for this reason it does not have a strong brand. Furthermore, the marketing function was to a large degree decentralised to faculties and programmes without any brand blue print or strategic guidelines for the people involved with the marketing activities to follow, or overarching strategy within which they had to function. As a result there were almost as many messages conveyed as there were programmes marketed.

The restructuring that took place led to the separation of the marketing and communication functions at the UFS. It was alarming to learn from the research results that the individuals working in the Strategic Communication section felt that they did not work with the same brand or the same stakeholders as the UFS Marketing section. Although the two sections' communication objectives and strategic angles might differ, they have to communicate the same brand truths and values to the stakeholder groups. A meticulous effort will have to be made to address this issue. Some of the basic principles of IC that was highlighted in chapter four, (i.e. strategic / message consistency, contact synergy, stakeholder-conscious employees and a holistic business approach) emphasised the importance of a single, supportive and supplementary brand message conveyed at all contact points between an organisation and its stakeholders. When the two specialist communication sections of an organisation do not comply with this, the business is in trouble.

The issues mentioned above lie at the heart of the model that evolved from this research. It is recommended that the management team contemplates the proposed IC model for marketing the UFS and move towards an integrated approach to communicate with the stakeholder groups. This approach will be even more essential after the negative publicity the UFS received because of several integration and racism related issues that manifested on campus recently.

8.2.1.3 Inter-cultural competence indicators

In chapter three the factors that impact on inter-cultural communication effectiveness in an organisation, were described. It was explained that cultural differences manifest in an organisation in two ways, namely on an individual level, and on an organisational level. The organisational level indicators have specific relevance to this study. Organisational culture is also known as corporate culture.

A number of corporate culture components that reflect an organisation with a strong corporate culture were identified (see 3.5.1). In table 8.1 a comparison between IC principles and corporate culture components are presented. It is of note that the majority of corporate culture components and IC principles show significant resemblance.

	Basic principles of IC	Corporate culture components
1	Holistic business approach (Strategic driven)	Employees and managers share the same core value of productivity and performance
		Organisation culture provides the necessary standard that an employee recognises and is willing to honour (ethos)
		Organisational culture (ethos) as the driving force behind the successful operations of the organisation
		Organisational culture facilitates the generation of commitment to something larger than interest in Oneself
2	Relationship management	Encourage positive and respectful relationships among management and employees, and between employees and other stakeholder groups.
3	Brand integration	A strong corporate culture creates a distinction between one organisation and another, and projects the organisation's uniqueness
4	Customer-centricity	A close relationship with the customer is essential
5	Strategic consistency	Exhibit both unity of purpose and the diversity necessary for innovation
6	Stakeholder focus and segmentation	Excellent organisations gear decisions and actions to the needs of customers, people are seen as important.
7	Sustainable success	
8	Corporate mission	Demonstrate a strong, unifying corporate philosophy and mission
9	Stakeholder-conscious employees	
10	Message consistency	
11	Contact synergy	A strong corporate culture creates a distinction between one organisation and another, and projects the organisation's uniqueness
12	Purposive dialogue	
13	Financial accountability	
14	Cross-functional planning	Avoid complex structures and divisions of labour
15	Core competencies	Stay focused on what they do best and avoid radical diversification
16	Database management	Excellent organisations react quickly and do not spend excess time planning and analysing
17		Encourage employees to take risks in the development of new ideas

Table 8.1: Comparison between IC principles and corporate culture components

The above-mentioned corporate culture components have been incorporated into the suggested conceptual model discussed in chapter six. It is argued in chapter three (see table 3.7) that these components are automatically addressed and taken into consideration when integrated communication is practised in a multi-cultural environment.

8.2.2 The theoretical underpinnings of IC (conceptual research question)

When the theoretical underpinnings of IC were explored two prominent aspects that featured were the definition of IC and the basic theoretical principles thereof.

8.2.2.1 An operational definition of IC

From the literature review and other research methods applied in phases one to three, it became apparent that to date there have been several authors who defined IMC and IC, but no definition found reflected the phenomenon in its totality. A need for an operational definition of IC emerged. The conceptual research done in stage two of phase two resulted in the following definition that also informed the direction of this study.

The following definition of IC is recommended:

IC is a dynamic, holistic approach to marketing and communication activities, entrenched in all strategic levels of an organisation. It manages and fuses every point of contact between the organisation and its stakeholders and supports an integrated branding strategy to build positive lifetime relationships through data-driven techniques, by stakeholder-conscious employees ultimately giving an organisation a competitive advantage and building brand equity.

8.2.2.2 Fundamental principles of IC

Several authors on IC thrashed out the phenomenon and made huge scientific contributions towards the body of knowledge on the phenomenon. However, the researcher identified a need to structure this knowledge and present a list of concepts that could be used to explain the essence of IC. Some attempts to structure this knowledge has been made (Smith & Taylor's 10 golden rules of IMC (2002), the ten drivers of IMC by Duncan and Moriarty (1997)), but an analysis of existing definitions of IMC and IC revealed that these attempts did not cover the theoretical depth of the phenomenon. The concepts, which emerged from the analysis of existing definitions of IMC and IC, were:

- Holistic business approach;
- Focused branding;
- Stakeholder-centric;
- Stakeholder-conscious employees;
- Contact synergy;
- Strategic / message consistency;
- Use of technology;
- Financial accountability;
- Market segmentation; and
- Sustainable success.

Recommendations regarding the use of the above-mentioned concepts, in combination with Duncan and Moriarty's "drivers of IMC" model, were depicted in figure 4.2 (chapter 4) and is called the "The Elaborated IC driver model" (Mulder 2007). These concepts are regarded as the basic principles of IC and where interweaved in the new conceptual IC model suggested for use by the University of the Free State. A summary of the elaborated IC principles and the level in the organisation that it manifests in, are:

The first category - corporate focus:

- (1) *holistic business approach*
- (2) *relationship management*
- (3) *brand integration*
- (4) *stakeholder-centricity*
- (5) *the maintenance of strategic consistency*
- (6) *stakeholder focus, and*
- (7) *sustainable success.*

The second category - institutional processes:

- (1) *marketing the corporate mission*
- (2) *stakeholder-conscious employees*
- (3) *message consistency*
- (4) *contact synergy*
- (5) *generation of purposeful dialogue, and*
- (6) *financial accountability.*

The third category – infrastructure:

- (1) *cross-functional planning*
- (2) *the development of core competencies*
- (3) *database management; and*
- (4) *the use of an integrated agency.*

8.2.3 The ideal manner to conduct integrated communication (normative research question)

8.2.3.1 Conclusive remarks on current IC models examined

In chapter five various IMC and IC models were evaluated and commented on to clarify the issue of implementing IC effectively. All these models made a significant contribution to the body of knowledge on IC, and all of them informed a better understanding of IC. However, only one of the models, the

conceptual South African model for the implementation of strategic integrated communication formulated by Niemann (2005), offered a comprehensive approach to IC and wide-ranging inclusion of most of the basic principles thereof.

Based on the scrutinising of the different models, several aspects were identified that should be kept in mind when an integrated communication model for a multi-cultural higher education institution is being developed. These aspects are:

- The true nature of integrated communication can only be reflected when the model is developed from a **holistic perspective** (Gayeski & Woodward 1996; Lin 2000/2001; Niemann 2005);
- When IC is a company-wide endeavour, it implies that all employees should be **stakeholder-conscious**. This underlines the importance of the internal aspects of IC implementation (Gayeski & Woodward 1996; Hunter 1997);
- **Communication** should not function in isolation. It should not be considered as one aspect of an organisation, but rather as the **underlying basis of the organisation self** (Duncan & Moriarty 1997; Sirgy 1998; Gronstedt 2000);
- There should be constant interaction between the organisation and the environment so that **learning and adjustments** can take place where necessary (Duncan & Moriarty 1997; Schultz & Kitchen 2000; Niemann 2005);
- **Message consistency** and **contact synergy** should be imbedded in the model. These two aspects can be seen as the foundation of effective **branding** (Burnett & Moriarty 1998; Gronstedt 2000);
- **All stakeholders** should be included in the model and mutual beneficial relationships should be encouraged between the organisation and the stakeholders (Gronstedt 1996 & 2000; Schultz & Kitchen 2000; Niemann 2005);

- Relationships can only be effectively built and managed by means of the **use of technology** and interactive stakeholder-driven communication (Schultz 2000/2001);
- IC should be implemented and monitored from a **position of authority** (on a strategic level) in the organisation (Hunter 1997; Niemann 2005);
- The **strategic intent** of the organisation should be the point of departure for implementing IC (Percy 1997; Duncan & Moriarty 1997; Ogden 1998; Niemann 2005);
- The model itself should reflect **interdependence and relationships** between the components included in the model (Sirgy 1998);
- Communication **objectives should be aligned** with the organisational goal (Niemann 2005);
- A **renaissance communicator / IC champion** should be appointed to drive the IC process and add value to the communication function in the organisation (Gayeski & Woodward 1996; Hunter 1997; Sevier 1998; Niemann 2005);
- Not only the application of IC is important, but also the **assessing** thereof (Lin 2000/2001); and
- Ultimately, within a South African context, the **multi-cultural nature** of the stakeholders (internal and external) should receive prominence.

8.2.3.2 Conclusive remarks on UFS-specific challenges in adopting the proposed model

Most stakeholders were positive about the implementation of the IC model at the UFS and deemed the model viable. The implementation of this model will address a number of concerns and provide a solution to some of the problems currently experienced with communication and marketing at the UFS. In chapter six (see table 6.1) an overview was provided of the main areas of concern that the implementation of the proposed IC model will address, as well as recommendations for improvement. To summarise these

findings, the following changes are recommended regarding structure, processes and conduct at the UFS:

- **Structural changes** are recommended with regard to the position of marketing and communication.
 - The IC champion should be part of the UFS executive team with **decision-making power** and authority that goes with the position (see figure 6.4).
 - The Marketing and Strategic Communication sections should merge to form an **Institutional Communication section** that house marketing communication (student recruitment, branding, internal marketing, events management); corporate communication (relationship managers - government, investors, media, alumni), corporate media (publications – internal and external, new media) and managerial communication (employee communication, crisis communication, government relations). This section reports directly to the IC champion.
 - **Faculty champions** should be appointed and brand ambassadors should be appointed to assist them. They report to the IC champion.

- It is recommended that the following **processes** should be put in place:
 - The appointment of an IC champion that is an **expert in the field** of integrated communication.
 - The implementation of the **14 steps** of the proposed IC model.
 - Constant interaction between the UFS and its environment should be promoted so that **learning and adjustments** can take place where necessary.

- A deliberate effort to **cultivate a strong corporate culture** among current students and employees of the UFS (see 3.4.7).
 - An **internal marketing strategy** to support the external strategy should enjoy priority (see step 11).
 - The successful implementation of the model presupposes the **development of databases** for each stakeholder group concomitant with the use of new technologies.
 - **Policies and guidelines** should be put in place to integrate the UFS brand and ensure strategic direction and consistency.
 - **Feedback mechanisms** should be put in place to evaluate the model on a continuous basis.
 - A **yearly audit** should be conducted (step 13-14 of the model).
 - A **performance appraisal** system for marketers and communicators should be formulated, accompanied by incentives if targets were met/exceeded.
- The following **conduct changes** are recommended:
- The UFS management should acknowledge the important role of communication and marketing, and approach it in a **holistic manner** at the UFS (see 4.8.1).
 - **Inter-cultural communication competence** indicators should be incorporated into all managerial functions (see 3.5.1 – 3.5.2, and 6.3.3).
 - All employees should demonstrate **sensitivity** towards the importance of cultural awareness during communication interactions.
 - A **stakeholder-centric focus** among UFS employees should be promoted (see 4.8.3).
 - Advance a **“sense of belonging”** and pride among current students and employees for them to buy into the UFS brand and convey an integrated brand (see 4.8.2).

8.2.4 Conclusive comments on the conceptual integrated communication model for marketing the UFS (theoretical and primary research question)

The proposed model recognises that the organisation (UFS) functions within an open system and is influenced by several factors in its environment. Consequently, the UFS will have to continuously position and reposition itself according to information input from its environment. This will provide a competitive advantage that can be used in building long-term mutual beneficial relationships with stakeholder members that will culminate in *brand equity* for the UFS.

The model also appreciates the fact that the stakeholder profile of universities have changed and that a greater *sensitivity towards inter-cultural* marketing and communication is required if the UFS wants to stay competitive in the marketplace. Emphasis is thus placed on the stakeholder century within which organisations currently have to operate.

Resources and the organisational structure of the UFS will have to be adapted to accommodate the proposed model. However, the implementation of the proposed model could contribute towards more accountable spending on integrated communication activities that could *improve the return on the marketing investment* by the UFS.

It was evident that the IC model did not address employees from the Strategic Communication (SC) division's needs. Strategic Communication had a direct reporting line to top management, hence SC practitioners were empowered, and decision-making was centralised. It is understandable that Strategic Communication resisted the concept of centralisation and the idea of reporting to an institutional IC champion. The SC division was functioning autonomously and reported directly to the rector. For some, the rector was

even perceived as the institutional champion. However, it was made clear from the onset that an IC model for *marketing* the UFS will be formulated in this study. As was discussed in chapter four (see 4.5), the viewpoint taken in this study is that integrated organisational communication comprises marketing communication, corporate communication and managerial communication. In the previous discussion (chapter four) these areas were described as interrelated, sometimes overlapping, often inseparable and frequently converging. However, they are still specialist areas in their own right. The proposed IC model creates the context within which these areas can reach its full potential.

Figure 8.1 illustrates the adapted 14 step model for marketing the UFS and the position thereof in the proposed UFS Institutional Communication section.

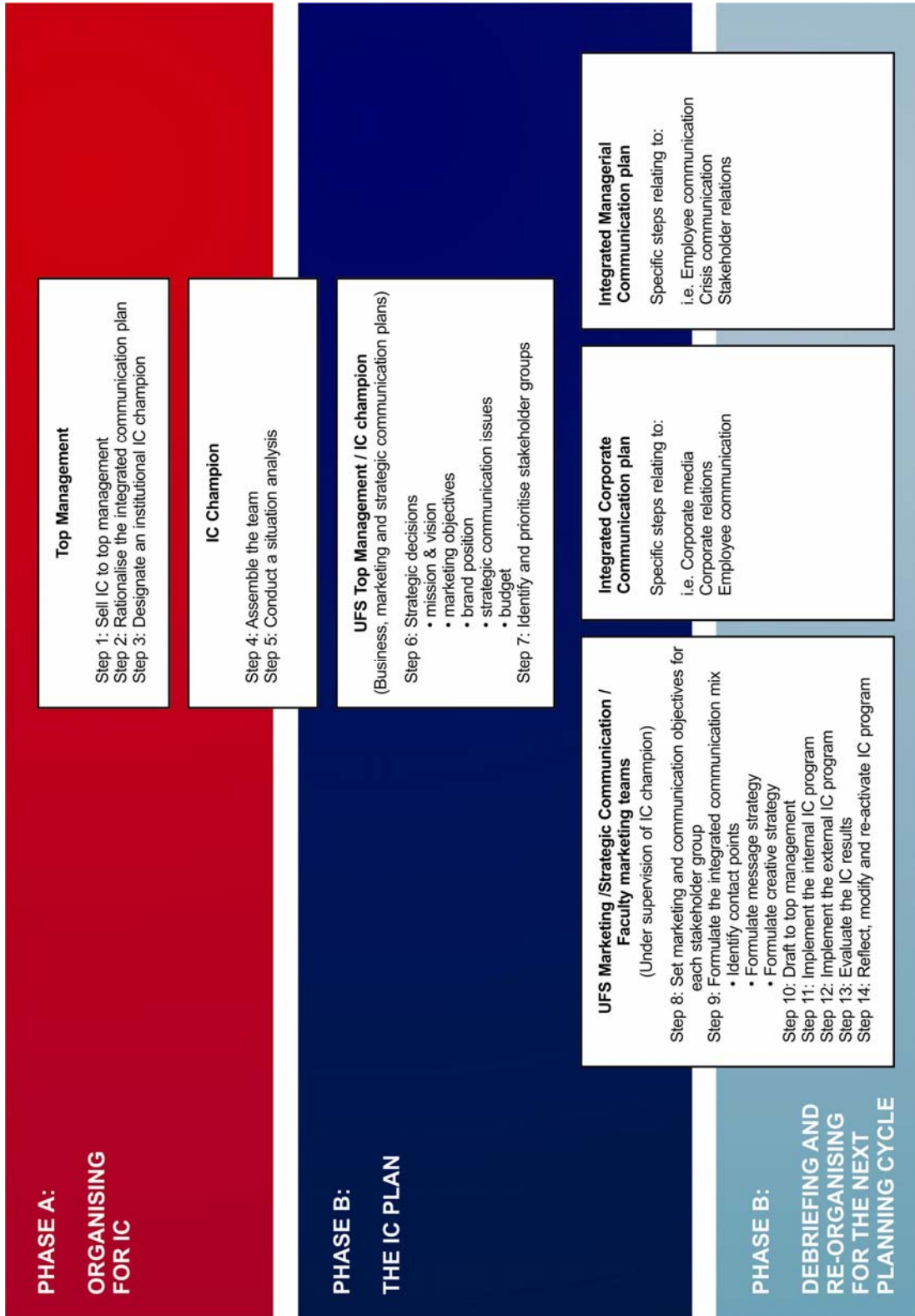


Figure 8.1: Application of 14 step IC model in Institutional Communication context

8.3 THE VALUE OF THE RESEARCH

Apart from the goal at the onset of this research, namely to formulate an integrated communication model for marketing the UFS, several other contributions advanced from the study. Firstly, the exploration of the essence of IC directed the development of a new operational definition of the concept.

During the second phase of the study a model was also developed to summarise the fundamental principles of IC. Although the 10 drivers-model of Duncan and Moriarty (1997) is well documented and often quoted in IC literature, the conceptual analysis of IMC and IC definitions indicated that this model does not include all the fundamental principles of IC. An Elaborated Drivers model was thus presented during this phase of this research.

This study also contributes towards the body of knowledge on integrated communication in a multi-cultural environment. It is argued that an organisation should accentuate strong corporate culture components and integrate them with the IC principles. A comparison between IC principles and corporate culture components revealed that the majority of corporate culture components and IC principles show significant resemblance. It is therefore argued that, by implementing IC, an organisation also works towards creating a strong corporate culture. Inter-cultural communication competence indicators and corporate culture components were identified that can contribute to establish an environment of sensitivity towards the importance of cultural awareness during communication interactions.

The main contribution of this study is the posited integrated communication model for marketing the UFS. This study also offers practical guidelines for marketing and communication professionals employed by the UFS who are responsible for marketing the institution in an integrated manner.

Finally, the theoretical underpinnings of IC that emerged from the data in this study can inform the academic curriculum of the B.A. (Communication Science): Corporate and Marketing Communication qualification that will be presented by the UFS as from 2009.

8.4 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE STUDY

Validity is concerned with the soundness and effectiveness of the measuring instrument in research. In other words, does the instrument measure what it is supposed to measure and how comprehensively and accurately does it measure it (Leedy 1997:32). Reliability refers in general to the extent to which independent administration of the same instrument (or highly similar instruments) consistently yields the same (or similar) results under comparable conditions.

In this study two fields of validity were addressed (De Vos 2002:168):

□ Internal validity

Internal validity is the freedom from bias in forming conclusions in view of the data. It seeks to ascertain that the changes in the dependent variables are the result of the influence of the independent variable, rather than of the way the research was designed. Procedures suggested by Liu (1996:11) and Brink (1993:36) for verifying the internal validity of the research were followed in this study. The procedures included:

- Triangulation – multiple data collection methods were used
- Informant verification – each participant was given a copy of the data analysis
- Explicitly clarifying the researcher's bias – i.e. the researcher being part of the UFS marketing advisory committee and of the opinion that essentially traditional approaches to marketing are being followed by the UFS.

□ External validity

This type of validity is concerned with the generalisability of the conclusions reached through observation of a sample to the universe; or, more simply stated, can the conclusions drawn from a sample be generalised to other cases?

The procedures for verifying the external validity of this research as pointed out by Liu (1996:11) were employed. The procedures included:

- A thick, rich description was used in describing the data in all four phases.
- Multiple methods of collecting the data were used.
- Multiple methods of data analysis were used.
- An objective research consultant was used to conduct part of phase four of this study.
- A review by an external expert was conducted.
- The researcher's peers reviewed and verified the data.

According to Brink (1993) the use of triangulation served to strengthen the study design. In this study, three types of triangulation, namely data triangulation, researcher triangulation and methodological triangulation were used. Patton (1990:187) describes data triangulation as the use of a variety of data sources in a study. Methodological triangulation on the other hand involves the use of multiple methods to study a single problem. In this study four phases were used to increase the reliability of the research. By carefully conducting the research using multiple methods (focus group discussions, personal interviews, electronic questionnaires, conceptual research, historiography and literature reviews), combined with the judicious use of library materials, the researcher will provide validity and reliability to the theory that develops from the research. Through involving another objective

researcher to facilitate the focus group discussions and personal interviews, researcher triangulation was also employed.

All research is ultimately tested by certain criteria that must be built into the research design. The following standards were integrated into the planning stage of this study:

- Universality: The research design was described in such detail that it can be carried out by any competent person other than the researcher.
- Replication: The research is repeatable. Any other competent researcher will be able to take the problem and, by collecting data under the same circumstances and within the identical parameters, achieve results comparable to those of this study.
- Control: The research in this study was conducted within an area sealed off by given parametric limitations
- Measurement: Although measurement in humanities and the social science can never be as precise and as accurate as in the natural and physical sciences, the matter of measurement in humanities rely on comparative judgment (arranging factors in a hierarchy of importance) scaling, scoring (correct vs. incorrect responses to a given set of questions), and similar procedures (Leedy 1997: 98-99). Comparative judgement was employed in this study.

8.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following inherent and particular limitations were identified for this study:

- Most of the respondents from the sample of UFS individuals responsible for marketing and communication functions (that took part in the focus group discussions and personal interviews), did not have

knowledge regarding integrated communication and could not make a meaningful contribution to some areas of the discussions.

- The South African literature on IC is very limited. The majority of the data collected for the literature review was thus obtained from international sources, reflecting international examples. Although this can be considered as a limitation, it can be argued that the theoretical foundation of IC would be the same, but that the difference would lie in the application thereof thus emphasising the necessity of this research.
- This study was based on the Mitroff model for problem-solving. As only the first two phases of this model were applied to the study, it could be seen as a limitation. However, it was said from the onset that a conceptual model will be formulated and proposed.

8.6 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- It is recommended that the proposed model be implemented by the UFS to test its overall workability in the given circumstance.
- Other higher education institutions could test the proposed model to determine its general applicability in the higher education environment.
- Research could be conducted to test the relevance of an adapted version of the proposed model in multi-cultural contexts other than higher education institutions.
- As this study offers a comprehensive account of the essence of IC, it could serve as point of departure to develop assessment criteria that can be applied by organisations to evaluate their own level of integration.

- In the developed model a knowledgeable IC champion plays a crucial role in the successful implementation of the model. Research could be carried out to determine if universities, universities of technology or other private sector educational institutions offer qualifications that can equip individuals with the necessary skills to perform as IC champions.
- As indicated in 8.2.4 this study only addressed the marketing communication component of integrated communication. As corporate communication and managerial communication are considered to be the other two equally important components in the model, there is a definite need to explore those areas of this model.

8.7 FINAL COMMENT

The significance of the proposed model is five-fold. Firstly, the context within which the model can be implemented was explored and the unique characteristics of the environment were noted. Important corporate culture components were documented. Secondly, the conceptual foundation of IC was established and these concepts became the basic principles that were used as the mainstay of the new model. The corporate culture components were then compared with the IC principles and integrated into the model. Thirdly, important lessons learned from the analysis of existing models provided a range of aspects that were taken into account with the formulation of the proposed conceptual model. Fourthly, the barriers to implementing IC that became eminent through the literature review were addressed. Finally, the model was explored through focus group discussions, personal interviews and electronic questionnaires to determine the UFS-specific barriers that might emerge. Thereafter a conscious effort was made to incorporate these issues pertaining to the UFS environment into the model.

It can be concluded that the UFS will benefit from becoming more stakeholder-orientated and paying more attention to establish an integrated communication environment from which it can launch its marketing activities. Educating all internal stakeholder groups on IC principles is seen as an essential part of IC success or failure and is incorporated into the model. Organisational structural changes are proposed to create an environment more accommodating to the implementation of IC.

Finally, as this study progressed it became exceedingly more obvious that to ignore cultural differences can cause the failure of IC programmes. In Communication Science it is common knowledge that intended meaning conveyed is often determined in the mind of the receiver. Therefore, marketers and communicators must understand the cultural framework of the stakeholders of their businesses. Not doing so is courting failure.

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Opsomming

Die hoër onderwys omgewing in Suid-Afrika het verander. In die transformering van die hoër onderwys sektor is markte gevorm wat bygedra het tot die “korporatisering” van universiteite. Korporatiewe universiteite word gekenmerk as instellings wat ‘n besigheidsmodel volg binne die onderwys landskap. Die Universiteit van die Vrystaat (UVS) het hierdie nuwe identiteit as korporatiewe universiteit op baie vlakke aanvaar. Dit is nou ook die tyd om die bemarkingskommunikasie, en meer spesifiek geïntegreerde kommunikasie (GK), persektief aan te neem.

Die doel van hierdie studie was om ‘n geïntegreerde kommunikasiemodel vir die bemarking van die UVS te ontwikkel. Ten einde hierdie doel te realiseer is onder meer die bemarkingsverwante strukture en prosesse aan die UVS ondersoek. Die geïntegreerde benadering tot bemarking en kommunikasie is geïdentifiseer as “benchmark” vir die UVS en het gedien as onderbou vir die konseptualisering van ‘n geïntegreerde model. Die konsep model is onderwerp aan evaluering deur belangrike rolspelers aan die UVS.

Ander kritiese kwessies wat ondersoek is, was die hoër onderwys omgewing en die multikulturele aard daarvan; die aard en omvang van GK; en bestaande modelle van GK wat omskryf en krities geëvalueer is.

‘n Kwalitatiewe navorsingsbenadering is gevolg en die studie is verdeel in vier fases. Begronde teorie is aangewend as oorkoepelende navorsingstrategie in al vier die fases, terwyl ander navorsingstrategieë geïmplementeer is tydens van die fases om data in te samel en te analiseer.

Die primêre bydrae van hierdie studie is ‘n konseptuele GK model vir die bemarking van die UVS. ‘n Aantal aspekte geïdentifiseer tydens die ontleding van bestaande GK en geïntegreerde bemarkingskommunikasie (GBK) modelle,

is geïnkorporeer in die GK model wat vir die bemarking van die UVS ontwikkel is. Voorts is die basiese beginsels van GK wat geïdentifiseer is tydens 'n uitgebreide literatuurstudie, in die voorgestelde UVS model vervleg.

Die studie bevestig dat kulturele sensitiwiteit noodsaaklik is vir 'n organisasie wat met sukses in die diverse Suid-Afrikaanse omgewing wil funksioneer. Die faktore wat op interkulturele kommunikasie effektiwiteit impak, is beskryf. Daar is verduidelik dat kultuur binne 'n organisasie op twee vlakke manifesteer, naamlik op 'n individuele vlak, en op 'n organisatoriese vlak. Die organisatoriese vlak beskrywers is relevant tot hierdie studie. Organisasiekultuur staan ook bekend as korporatiewe kultuur. 'n Aantal korporatiewe kultuur komponente, wat 'n organisasie met 'n sterk kultuur reflekteer, is geïdentifiseer. Dit blyk dat die meerderheid korporatiewe kultuur komponente en GK beginsels 'n beduidende ooreenkoms toon. Dit word dus gestel dat die implementering van 'n GK model in 'n multikulturele omgewing 'n sterk korporatiewe kultuur behoort te vestig.

Die beoordeling van die konseptuele GK model deur UVS rolspelers het gedui dat die meerderheid van die respondente positief was oor die model en van mening is dat die model 'n aantal bemarkingsverwante bekommernisse sal aanspreek. Die model bied ook oplossings vir 'n aantal probleme wat tans ondervind word met kommunikasie en bemarking aan die UVS.

Daar is onder meer aanbeveel dat 'n aantal strukturele verandering met betrekking tot die posisie van bemarking en kommunikasie aan die UVS gemaak word. Prosesse wat in plek behoort te wees is uitgelig en 'n aantal veranderinge in terme van optrede met betrekking tot bemarking aan die UVS, is geadviseer. Die toepassing van die konseptuele GK model binne die aanbevole Institusionele Kommunikasie-afdeling is geïllustreer.

SLEUTELTERME:

Geïntegreerde kommunikasie, geïntegreerde bemarkingskommunikasie, hoër onderwys, bemarking, multi-kulturele, geïntegreerde kommunikasiemodel

Summary

The higher education environment in South Africa has changed much in the past decade. In transforming the higher education sector, markets were created that lead to the corporatisation of universities. Corporate universities are predominantly characterised as institutions that follow a business model within the educational landscape. The University of the Free State (UFS) has accepted this new identity of corporate university in many ways. It is now also time to embrace it from a marketing communication, and specifically an integrated communication (IC), perspective.

The goal of this study was to develop an integrated communication model for marketing the UFS. In realising this goal, the marketing-related structures and processes at the UFS were explored among other matters. The integrated approach to marketing and communication was dealt with as benchmark for the UFS and this approach directed a conceptual IC model for marketing the UFS. The conceptual model was subject to scrutiny by critical role-players at the UFS.

Other critical issues explored were the higher education environment and its multi-cultural nature; the nature and scope of IC; and existing models of IC which were described and critically evaluated.

A qualitative research approach was followed and the study was divided into four phases. Grounded theory was employed as overarching research strategy for all four phases, while other research strategies to gather and analyse data were implemented during some of the phases.

The main contribution of this study was a conceptual IC model formulated for marketing the UFS. Based on the scrutinising of several IMC and IC models, a number of aspects were identified that was kept in mind when the IC model for

marketing the UFS was developed. Furthermore, the basic principles of IC identified after an extensive investigation into the relevant literature, were interweaved in the conceptual IC model suggested for use by the UFS.

The study confirmed that cultural sensitivity is a necessity if an organisation wants to be successful in the diverse South African environment. The factors that impact on inter-cultural communication effectiveness in organisations were described. It was explained that cultural differences manifest in an organisation in two ways, namely on an individual level, and on an organisational level. The organisational level indicators have specific relevance to this study. Organisational culture is also known as corporate culture. A number of corporate culture components that reflect an organisation with a strong culture were identified and it was noted that the majority of corporate culture components and integrated communication principles show significant resemblance. It is thus argued that the implementation of an IC model in a multi-cultural environment can foster a strong corporate culture.

The scrutinising of the conceptual IC model by UFS role-players indicated that the majority of the respondents were positive about the model and were of the opinion that the model would address a number of marketing-related concerns and would provide a solution to some of the problems currently experienced with communication and marketing at the UFS.

It was recommended inter alia that a number of structural changes with regard to the position of marketing and communication at the UFS be made. Processes that should be put in place were highlighted, and several conduct changes were advised. The application of the conceptual IC model within the suggested Institutional Communication section was illustrated.

KEY WORDS:

Integrated communication, integrated marketing communication, higher education, marketing, multi-cultural, integrated communication model

Appendix A

Discussion guide

APPENDIX A : DISCUSSION GUIDE

1. Please introduce yourself and describe what your role and function is at the university.
2. How would you describe the typical problems and challenges with regards to communication and marketing at the UFS that you personally encounter?

Probe the influence ____ on marketing and communication:

- 2.1 The split between Strategic Communication and UFS Marketing?
 - 2.2 The UFS organisational structure
 - 2.3 The university as part of the business sphere
 - 2.4 New technologies
 - 2.5 Availability of resources
3. To what extent do you think the UFS brand is integrated, in other words do all stakeholders share the same vision of what the UFS brand is all about? Please motivate your answer.
 4. EVALUATION OF THE PROPOSED MODEL
 - 4.1 What is your view on having a central integrated communication champion at top management level to whom both Strategic Communication and UFS Marketing report to?
 - 4.2 What is your view on the centralisation of communication at UFS?
 - 4.3 What would you say are the specific strengths of this model? In other words, why would it work?
 - 4.4 What would you say are the specific weaknesses of this model and where do you foresee problems? What would you recommend differently?
 5. Are there any projects or endeavours that you are currently busy with or aware with that would add value to the proposed integrated communication model?
 6. Any last comments?

[End discussion]

Appendix B

E-mail questionnaire

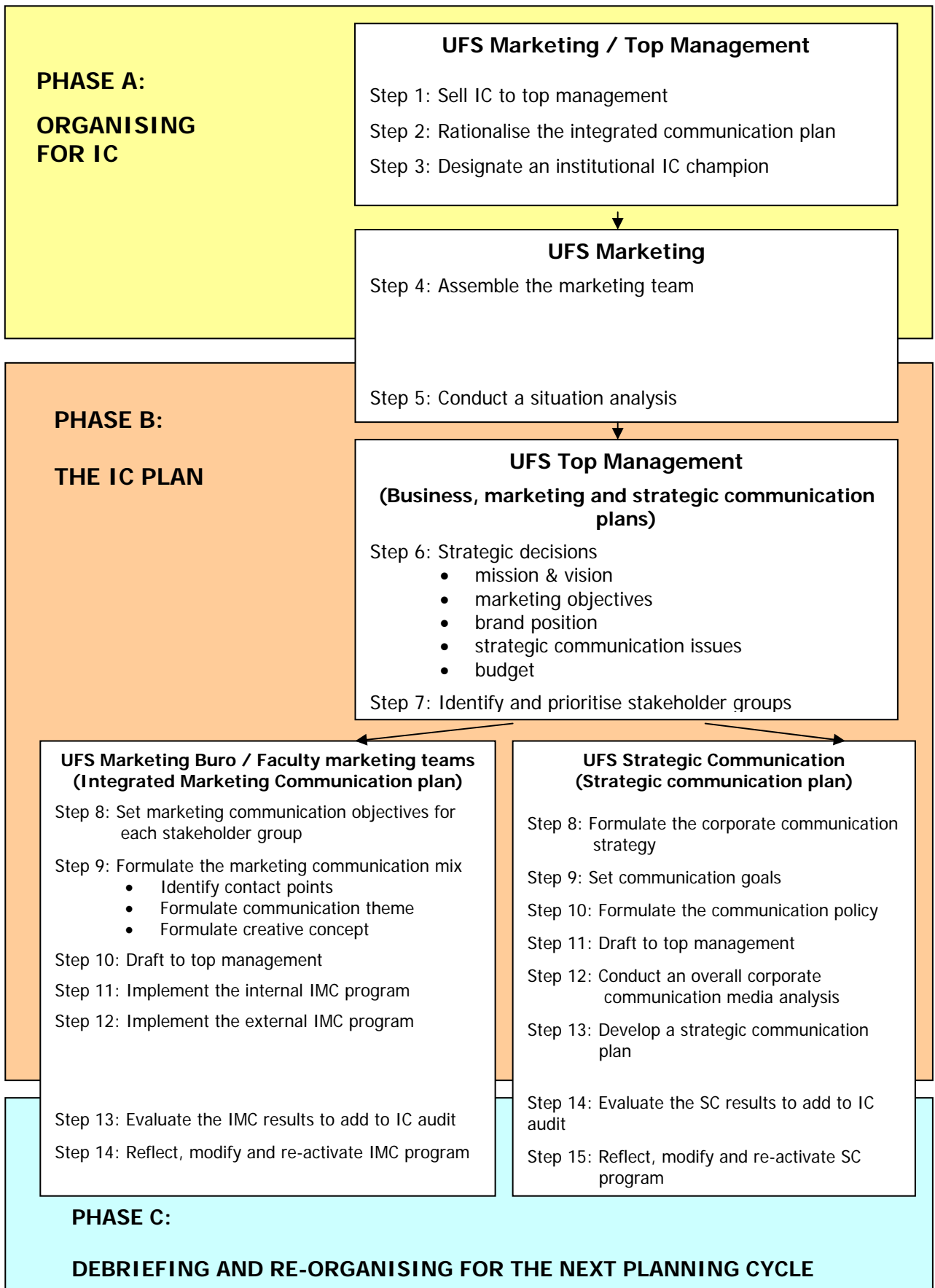


Figure 7.1: Conceptual 14 step IC model for marketing the UFS
 (Phases, steps and UFS key role-players)

Figure 7.2: IC MODEL: UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE (INSTITUTIONAL DRIVEN)

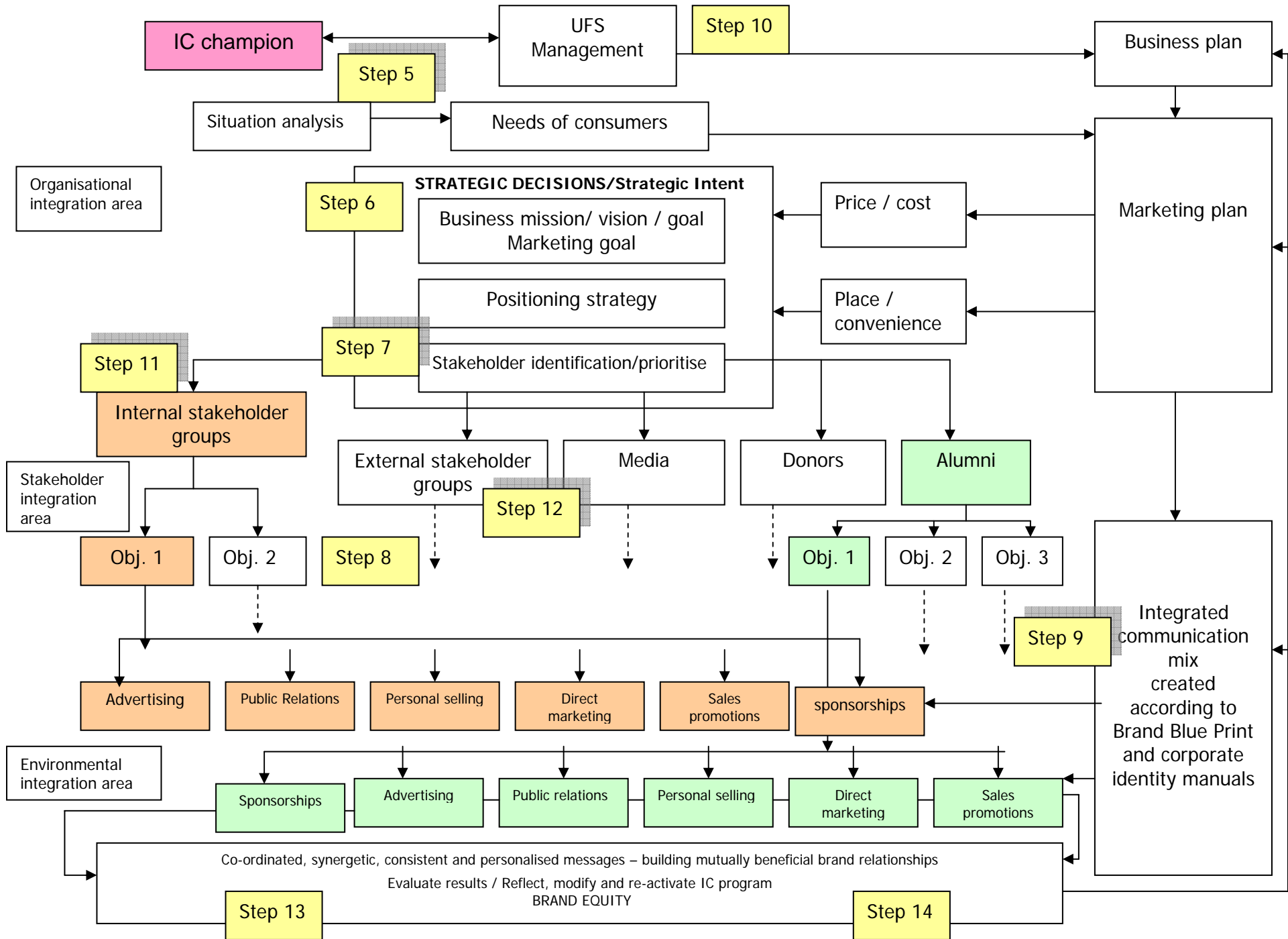
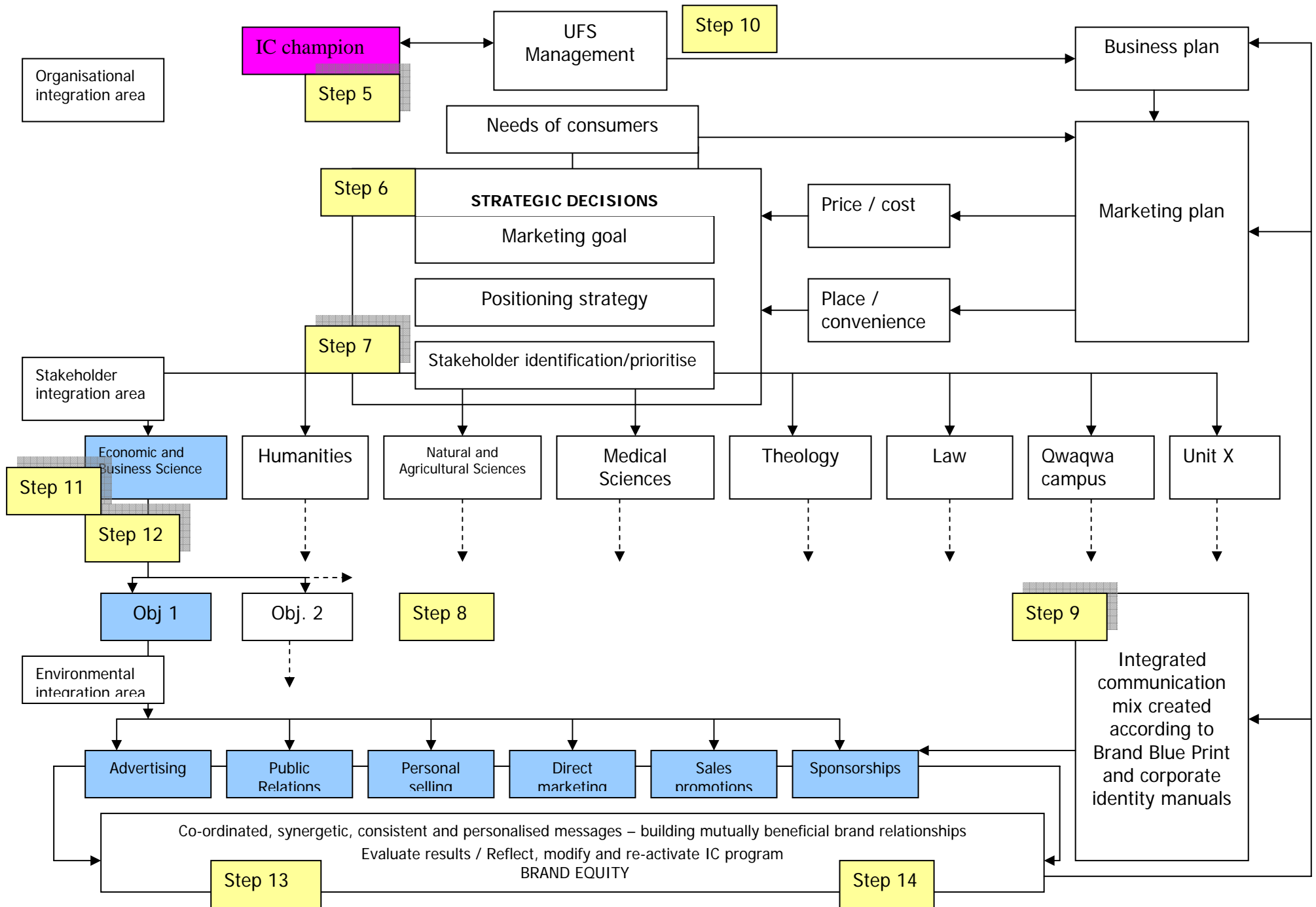


Figure 7.3: IC MODEL: UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE (FACULTY DRIVEN)



DESCRIPTION OF THE MODEL: THE 14 STEP INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION (IC) MODEL

AN IC MODEL FOR MARKETING THE UFS

The model is developed in three phases. The first phase entails the creation of an environment that is conducive for IC.

Phase A: Organising for IC

Phase A consists of four important steps.

The literature review highlighted the importance of management support of IC strategies. However, support can only be gained if a level of familiarity with the IC phenomenon is established among the management team. The suggested route to follow in this regard is proposed in step 1 and 2.

Step 1: Designate a champion / Renaissance communicator

1. The executive team of the organisation assigns an individual to take responsibility for the overall planning and implementation of the IC strategy.
2. This champion should be empowered with a clear mandate.

It is very difficult (if not impossible) to integrated communication activities if it is not managed and coordinated from a single desk. Designating an IC champion will serve several functions of which the most important will be to ensure **strategic consistency** and **brand integration** across all contact points between the organisation and its stakeholder groups (both internal and external). Unity of effort will ultimately be warranted through strategic consistency in all organisational efforts (Niemann 2005:253). Several responsibilities rests with this position. The inclusion of the IC champion is based on Gayeski and Woodward's (1996) idea of the renaissance communicator (also reflected in Niemann's 2005 model).

The renaissance communicator, as described by these authors, implies communication solutions to decisive organisational problems (Niemann 2005:250). This person should be an authority on IC and also understand the business issues that the organisation faces. He/she should be **part of the top management structure** or dominant coalition, as Hunter (1997) calls it. Only then will the IC champion be familiar with the latest relevant business issues and decisions. According to Niemann (2005:251), constant interaction between the IC champion and the executive team is a natural endeavour. This interaction will guarantee that the **executive team's consciousness of the importance of the communication function** is maintained. This should be a deliberate action driven by the IC champion.

The IC champion or renaissance communicator should have the **authority to enforce all aspects of the IC process** (this include managerial communication, organisational communication and marketing communication). To strengthen this individual's hands, documents like a communication policy, marketing communication policy, corporate identity manual and brand blue print manuals should be developed and followed to the letter in the implementation of the strategies. Niemann (2005:251-252) adds additional prerequisites that are pivotal in the functioning of the renaissance communicator. Firstly, a **sufficient budget** should be made available to ensure the renaissance communicator's effectiveness. Another aspect that has relevance to finance is the fact that a **zero based planning approach** (Duncan & Moriarty 1996) should be followed in marketing and communication planning. The renaissance communicator should have **knowledge and comprehension of core competencies** on three levels, namely to know the organisational brand and core competencies and support them through the IC efforts, understanding how the company

functions, and managing stakeholder and brand relationships. It is also the renaissance communicator's responsibility to ensure that all the organisation's major departments (including outside communication agencies) that could affect the stakeholders must have a means of working collectively in the planning and monitoring of brand relationships (Niemann 2005:254). Duncan and Moriarty (1996) refer to this as **cross-functional planning**. This refers to the brand integration function mentioned earlier in this discussion.

Another, more practical, but important function of the IC champion is to act as integrated communication team leader and delegator. The champion is also responsible for step 4, namely to assemble the marketing and communication team.

Step 2: Sell IC to top management

1. Get management buy-in in the IC planning processes by informing/educating them about the basic principles and advantages thereof.
2. Get commitment from top management with regard to prominence, finance, resources, and empowering of the IC champion and marketing and communication teams.

The involvement and support of the top management team is the first important action in ensuring that the IC strategies will be activated in all integration levels of the business. Results from the study done by Niemann (2005:250) indicated that there is a pertinent need for the integration of the CEO or exco level of the organisation in organisational communication. The reason for this is that the CEO/top management can be seen as the initiator of the organisational integration in that it serves as the example setter of integration of the mission in all the communication of the organisation. According to Niemann (2005:250) CEO/top management integration implies that the **mission of the organisation is consistently communicated** to the lower levels of the organisation. When employees and management share the same core value of productivity and performance, a strong **corporate culture** is developed that enhance effective functioning in a multi-cultural environment. Such a corporate culture (**ethos**) provides the necessary standard that an employee recognises and is willing to honour. Thus becoming the driving force behind the organisation's successful operations.

Empowering the integrated communication process begins with the active commitment of the executive management team (Sevier 1998). Constant reminding of communication awareness and importance among top management is thus important. It was indicated earlier that this function is also part of the IC champion's responsibility.

Following a **holistic business approach** is thus guaranteed and a solid foundation is established to work from. This second step is focused on empowering the process in its totality.

Step 3: Rationalise the integrated communication plan

1. Explain the integrated communication plan to all involved
2. Promote ownership among internal stakeholders

After top management approval is obtained, the next step is to present the IC planning procedure to key role-players involved in the implementation of the process (UFS Marketing and Strategic Communication units and faculty marketers). The rationale of the planning approach is presented and discussed in order to get ownership by all involved in activating the plan.

When individuals involved in IC understand the core of the phenomenon, they also realise that the total approach is based on an external focus on the stakeholders' needs. The core marketing and communication team must operate from a **stakeholder-centric** perspective. Faculty champions and other team members must also be empowered to train the rest of the employees to become *stakeholder-conscious employees*.

Step 4: Assemble the marketing and communication team

1. Identify marketing and communication team members
2. Train and build team members

Like the IC champion, the appointed marketing and communication team members are responsible to help plan, manage and evaluate the formulated integrated communication strategy. This team will thus assist the champion in ensuring **brand integration** and **strategic consistency** through all contact points with stakeholder groups. However, on a functional level they will have more responsibilities with regard to activation and coordination of the strategy. Horizontal integration implies integration and alignment of business units, functions and regions in terms of systems, process, procedures and communication (Niemann 2005:249). To ensure this the proposed model suggests the appointment of IC champions for each faculty and the other two campuses of the UFS.

As stipulated in step 2, these marketing and communication team members (specifically the faculty champions) are responsible to educate the staff members in their faculties to become **stakeholder-conscious employees**. The suggestion of appointing faculty champions was informed by Gronstedt (2000:22) who proposes the establishment of project teams that are devoted to linking knowledge and expertise between departments and units (**cross-functional planning**). Organisations with strong corporate cultures gear decisions and actions to the needs of their stakeholders as they see people as important. **Positive and respectful relationships** among management and employees, and between employees and other stakeholder groups are encouraged,

The *faculty IC champion* will have a strong internal orientation. They will be involved with academic program development, liaising between the faculty and UFS marketing / Strategic Communication, training of faculty members regarding integrated communication matters, will focus on post-graduate marketing and communication and be responsible for quality assurance of IC material. It is suggested that a junior staff member (*faculty brand ambassador*) should support the faculty IC champion. The responsibilities of this individual will have a more external focus in that this person will represent the faculty and UFS at relevant environmental activities. These individuals should be young and should be able to reflect the student profile to attract potential learners to the UFS.

Phase B: The IC planning process

Phase B represent the core of the planning process of the integrated communication strategy and consist of six steps. It is important to note that the IC strategy consists of three sub-strategies that need to be formulated in an IC program. At the University of the Free State two functions (managerial communication and corporate communication) is the responsibility of the Strategic Communication section, while UFS Marketing drives the marketing communication strategy. This in itself is cause for concern as these two departments should operate from one desk under the supervision of the IC champion (as suggested in phase A).

Step 5: Situation Analysis

The planning phase of the IC strategy starts with a methodical understanding of the organisation. This process is called the situation analysis. Research to investigate the internal and external environments is conducted. Three areas of analysis are:

- SWOT analysis
- Competitor analysis
- Stakeholder group analysis (essentially needs, perceptions and attitudes)

The research aims to address several aspects of which the two most important probably to identify stakeholder needs and evaluate brand perceptions. Firstly, research is used to determine what the stakeholders know about the organisations' products/services, and to determine their perceptions and attitude towards the organisation and the products/services it offers. Only then, IC activities can be determined to position the products according to each stakeholder group's needs.

In the situation analysis step, information is gathered to build the platform for one of the fundamental principles of IC namely **stakeholder-centricity**. It is also during the research stage that the multi-cultural dimensions of the stakeholder groups are explored to provide information for strategic decision-making.

Step 6: Strategic decisions

During step 6 the direction of the marketing and communication strategies are determined. This significant step can be seen as the focal point of the whole planning process. The outcome is the gathering of data that guide the overall planning process. A **holistic, strategic driven business approach** is borne from this venture.

The following core decisions are scrutinised and/or taken at this point:

1. The business plan (mission, vision, business goals, etc.)
2. The marketing plan (overall marketing objectives, products, costs, budget, etc.)
3. Positioning strategy
 - Identify positioning strategy from research
 - Formulate brand blueprint manual (to *integrate brand* throughout company and establish *strategic consistency*)

A company with a strong corporate culture, functioning effectively in a multi-cultural environment display a strong, unifying corporate philosophy and mission. Such an ethos facilitates the generation of commitment to something larger (the mission of the organisation) than interest in one's self.

Step 7: Identify and prioritise stakeholder groups

The identification of the prime prospects of an organisation is of utmost importance. This step ensures the ever important **stakeholder focus**. Two aspects to address in this step are to:

1. Identify all stakeholder groups (internal and external)
2. Prioritise stakeholder groups
3. Develop an electronic database for each stakeholder group (as far as possible)

Due to budget constrains, it is important to prioritise stakeholder groups in order to determine where the majority of the budget should be spent. During the implementation phase manageable electronic databases should be established. These databases are used to **build and maintain relationships** with individuals. Through this **purposeful dialogue** can be maintained with the stakeholder groups and relationships are build and managed. As mentioned earlier excellent organisations gear their decisions and actions to the needs of their stakeholder groups.

Step 8: Set integrated communication objectives for each stakeholder group

When planning an IC program, one should decide what is meant to be accomplished by setting measurable objectives. IC campaign objectives come in two types:

- marketing objectives are specific, measurable sales and client relationship goals to be met (e.g. % of market share)

- strategic communication objectives are geared toward influencing stakeholder attitudes and behavior to create an environment accommodating to make use of the organisation's service/product

IC objectives should make sense in the context of the overall business plans. At this stage in the planning process, the marketing goals and objectives are allocated to different stakeholder groups and the marketing and communication goals and objectives are then formulated. This ensures that **cross-functional planning** takes place in the organisation and that the business goal is extended to all business units. Complex structures and division of labour should be avoided.

Without going into theoretical detail about goals and objectives, a practical example of such a marketing objective would be to link new enrolment numbers to specific faculties/programs.

Step 9: Formulate the integrated communication mix
--

After the strategic decisions have been made, stakeholder groups identified and objectives set, the techniques that will help reach each one of the objectives are identified. This process is also used to determine the integrated communication budget. It is called the objective-and-task budget allocation (or zero-budget) and is often used in IC. The cost of completing all the IC tasks becomes the IC budget.

At this stage four basic principles of IC are prominent, namely **message consistency, contact synergy, the generation of purposeful dialogue** and **financial responsibility**.

Aspects to keep in mind during step 9 are:

- the integrated communication mix should be linked to the marketing and communication objectives
- the integrated communication mix should use stakeholder groups as point of departure
- existing contact points between the UFS and stakeholder groups should be identified
- additional/alternative contact points should be anticipated
- the use of new technology/new media options should be included in the integrated communication mix to relate with the profile of the primary stakeholder group (youth market)

Two concepts that flow from this step are the basic communication theme (message strategy) and the creative concept. Based upon the objectives set for each stakeholder group and the integrated communication techniques chosen, the budget is allocated.

The integrated communication mix consists of mainly two different types of techniques, namely the marketing communication techniques and the corporate communication techniques. The six main marketing communication techniques are advertising, public relations, direct marketing, sales promotions, sponsorships and personal selling. Examples of corporate communication techniques are internal newsletters, media liaison activities, special events, corporate publications, etc.

The challenge is to put together the optimal mix of IC techniques. At the beginning of step 9 an analysis of all marketing and communication agencies should be done to determine their **core competencies** and to choose the best one in each category to supplement internal competencies. In an IC approach the IC champion affords him/herself the luxury of using the best service providers for each specialised field in the communication mix. It is then the IC champion's responsibility to integrate all activities. It is argued that an excellent organisation **stay focused on what they do best** and avoid radical diversification. The same apply to the use of resources. Employees and services providers should be engaged according to their strengths.

Each appointed / listed agency (identified based on core competencies) is issued with a corporate identity and brand blue print manual. This is an important precaution taken by the IC champion to ensure **strategic consistency, content synergy** and to ensure **brand integration** at each contact

point. At this point first drafts of all the needed marketing and communication material are developed by the agencies.

A strong corporate culture creates a distinction between one organisation and another, and projects an **organisation's uniqueness**.

Step 10: Draft to top management

Step 10 provides the first evaluation opportunity in the planning process. The IC champion and the marketing and communication team now present the IC strategy draft to the top management for comment. Because top management is part of the initial planning process (Phase A, and steps 6 & 7 in Phase B), they are in a favourable position to give valuable input with regard to the **strategic consistency** and **brand integration** of the strategy. At this stage it is important to confirm that a strong, **unifying corporate philosophy** and mission is demonstrated.

If the judging panel is satisfied, the planning process proceeds to step 11. Otherwise the IC champion and marketing and communication team have to revert to steps 8 and 9.

Step 11: Implement the internal IC program

As the employees of any company are the most valued stakeholder group in any IC strategy, the internal IC plan is implemented before any external activities are activated. The IC champion should ensure that close corporation exist between the marketing and communication team.

The most important function of the internal IC plan is to market the **corporate mission** to the internal stakeholder groups. It is important for the internal integrated communication strategy to communicate to employees about strategic issues regarding the organisation. This will help drive the **strategic intent** of the organisation. Apart from this, the internal IC plan should also aim to cultivate **stakeholder-conscious employees** and **integrate the brand** into all internal stakeholder activities.

Actions during step 11 are:

- Write the internal integrated communication action plan (ICAP)
- Produce the marketing and communication material
- Activate the planned internal program
- Manage and coordinate the ICAP's

It is important to keep employees informed, and also to encourage them to take risks in development of new ideas.

Step 12: Implement the rest of the IC program

After the successful introduction of the internal strategy, the implementation of the rest of the IC program follows.

- Write the external ICAP's
- Produce the marketing and communication material
- Activate the planned external program
- Manage and coordinate the ICAP's

An important aspect during this step is to ensure that the electronic databases of all stakeholder groups are managed and updated regularly. In IC these **databases** are one of the most valuable asset of the organisation. It is during this phase of the strategy that **relationship management** becomes very prominent.

Phase C: Debriefing and re-organising for the next planning cycle

Step 13: Evaluate the IC program

Assessing IC results can be complex, however research can help determine the effectiveness of IC programs. If results are not as expected, the strategy followed must be adjusted. However, isolating the effect of communications is difficult because so many forces can influence an organisations' communication performance. One should build response mechanisms into marketing and communication activities, such as web sites that provide demographic data about visitors. Because of the more interactive, database driven approach that will be followed in this model, evaluation will be more focused and can be conducted on a continuous base.

IC should also be evaluated annually by an IC audit. This entails a comprehensive assessment of the entire organisation's communication with stakeholders, to determine whether they:

- are appropriate and meaningful to the stakeholder groups
- convey messages that are consistent with the set objectives
- are properly integrated

The audit helps pinpoint individual communication and communication areas that need improvement.

Aspects to pay attention to:

- Set evaluation channels in place for IC champion and marketing and communication teams to monitor all communication contact points (check message consistency)
- Designate an institutional brand ambassador to monitor brand execution in all media. Devises should be put in place to empower this individual to enforce the correct use of brand parameters.
- Formulate a report template available for annual feedback by IC champion, faculty champions and marketing and communication teams
- Re-asses objectives and outcomes
- Identify areas to focus on during next situation analysis

The entire evaluation process has one objective in mind and that is to determine if the marketing and communication objectives were reached and the budget well spent. This step highlights the importance of **financial accountability** as one of the prime principles of IC.

Step 14: Reflect, modify and re-activate

Building brand equity is the aim of a successful IC strategy. One years' strategy does not stand in isolation, but should contribute towards the next years' success and add to the equity of the brand. The stronger the bond with the stakeholders, the stronger the brand equity will be. This translates into repeat business (for example positive word-of-mouth to family and friends; sending your children to study at UFS if you studied there), more profitable relationships with the all stakeholders (e.g. supporting Alumni activities, donating money to UFS) and ultimately **sustainable success**.

In this, the last step of the model, the IC champion and his/her team need to reflect on all the decisions made and activities implemented. Where necessary modify and adjust activities and then activate the new strategy. This last step in the model provides information for the first step of the next planning cycle.

In figure 7.1 a graphic illustration is provided to demonstrate the 14 step IC model that is suggested for marketing the UFS.

The model discussed in figure 7.1 provides a logical approach that leads the planner through the various steps involved in developing a successful integrated communication program. It is not,

however, a template that can be used as a fill-in-the-blanks tool. Instead, it is a thinking process, a format and structure designed to lead to logical outcomes and successful programs.

If the proposed model is used in contexts other than the UFS, organisations may need to expand some of the steps or delete some of the activities. Much depends on the specific organisation in its current contextual circumstances for which the integrated communication program is being planned.

The next two graphic illustrations (figures 7.2 & 7.3) depict the recommended manner in which the 14 steps related to the IC plan discussed above should be implemented in the University of the Free State's organisational structure. The application is described on two levels, namely the institutional driven and the faculty driven activation of the model. In the next section, these two figures will be discussed.

As indicated in figures 7.2 and 7.3 the application of IC at institutional and faculty level takes place in three main areas, namely at organisation integration area, stakeholder integration area and at the environmental integration. Steps 5, 6, 7, 10 and 11 fall within the organisation integration area. Integration should firstly be achieved internally in the organisation before integration can take place in terms of stakeholders and the environment. The organisational integration aspect of this model is based on horizontal and vertical integration as proposed by Gronstedt's three-dimensional approach to integrated communication (2000) and Niemann's conceptual model of integrated communication in South Africa (2005). Since South African organisations rarely integrated communication on horizontal and vertical levels, but mostly on an external level (Niemann 2005:249) this aspect should be emphasised.

Firstly, horizontal integration involves integration and alignment across business unit, functions and regions in terms of systems, process, procedures and communication. This is especially important in the UFS context when the communication integration of the three campuses have to be addressed. Secondly, vertical integration integrate communication between people working in different business units (for example different faculties). According to Niemann (2005:249) vertical integration empowers the people who are closest to the customers and organisation operations to communicate more openly, frequently and effectively with managers.

The other important aspect with regard to the organisational integration area relate to the role of the CEO/top management, and that of the IC champion. This issue was addressed in-dept in the discussion of the 14 step IC model (see 7.2.4.1).

Steps 8, 9 and 12 take place in the stakeholder integration area. By focusing on stakeholders, the model recognises that organisations function in a stakeholder century. According to Niemann (2005) this implies that the organisation has a broader view in terms of the environment, taking into consideration all the stakeholders that have a vested interest in the success of the organisation, and not only the customers/clients. In line with Niemann's (2005) model, the proposed model recognise two distinct levels of integration of stakeholder, namely *interactivity integration* and *brand contact point* integration. Interactivity integration is based on purposeful, personalised dialogue. Brand contact points integration suggest all situations in which stakeholders have the opportunity to be exposed to a brand message.

Steps 13 and 14 impute in the environmental integration area. The systems perspective within which the proposed model is developed, and more specifically the fact that the organisation function within an open system, are reflected in this integration area. The account on the South African higher education environment presented in chapter 3 indicated the dynamics of the environment in which South African organisations have to function. An aspect stressed by Niemann (2005) is that organisations should be learning organisations. Interaction between the organisation, its stakeholders and the environment in order to manage integrated communication effectively is essential to build strong brand relationships.

The position of the steps (figure 7.1) in relation to the organisation chart (institutional and faculty) are indicated. Colour codes are used to illustrate the implementation of the strategy for different business units and stakeholder groups.