

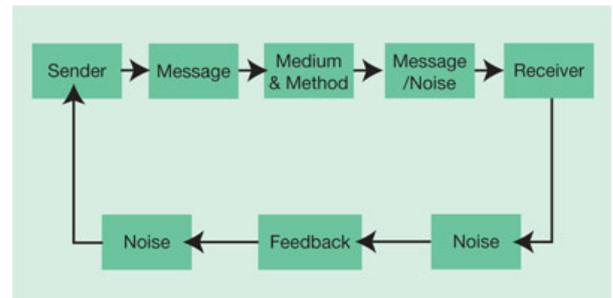


THE TIMES 100

BUSINESS CASE STUDIES

Communication – Enterprise Rent-A-Car

Enterprise Rent-A-Car is the UK's leading car rental company. The company offers daily and weekend car rental for private and business use. Enterprise in the UK is part of a multinational company with 8,200 rental offices in seven countries. Enterprise's philosophy is simple – 'take care of our customers and employees and profits will take care of themselves'. Effective communication is fundamental to every aspect of a business. Enterprise has used a number of communication strategies to ensure its messages are received by a variety of stakeholders. The challenge for Enterprise is to ensure it uses the best methods and channels of communication for each audience. These vary for its operational brand messages and its recruitment messages. The process of communication involves a sender transmitting information in an appropriate form to ensure the message is understood by the receiver. The sender must also consider potential 'noise' or barriers to the communication being received.



Communication can be split into two main forms: verbal and nonverbal communication. Verbal communication involves conveying information using words. It can be either written or oral. Both types of communication can be formal or informal. Non-verbal communication involves transferring information through signals such as facial expressions, body-language and tone of voice.

Internal communication takes place within an organisation, for example, communication between employees. The purpose of internal communication includes: giving information; gathering information; clarifying issues and points; influencing action. Oral communication is a common form of internal communication, for example in a group or one-to-one meeting. Nowadays, electronic communication is growing in importance. This can involve written communication, such as an e-mail, text or tweet, or oral communication via video conferencing. Enterprise uses a variety of communication methods. For example, employees are introduced to the company's values and systems through induction events, company meetings, posters (visual reminders of values), the company website and its intranet system called 'The Hub'.

External communication strategies underpin how a business connects with stakeholders outside of the organisation. These messages influence external stakeholder's opinions about a brand and its products or services. Enterprise's external communication strategies are focused on its customers, potential customers, potential recruits and local communities. Enterprise focuses its messages for customers on its key differentiators. These include its commitment to the customer experience, its extensive branch network and its unique pick-up service. Examples of communication channels for this audience include:

- TV and press adverts to raise awareness of the brand and its services
- marketing e-mails to existing customers giving them details of services and special offers
- point of sale display advertising to promote cross-selling opportunities
- public relations to help raise awareness of the brand and how it is different.

Enterprise's dedicated recruitment website 'Come Alive' promotes Enterprise to potential new recruits. Other communication channels include Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn sites, all showing current employment opportunities. Its graduate recruitment programme involves mainly oral communication. Campus brand managers actively promote Enterprise to staff and students at their university. This is supported by career fairs and written communication strategies such as leaflet and poster distribution which also help create brand awareness.

Evaluating past communication helps a business see where improvements can be made. Enterprise continually monitors the effectiveness of its communication strategies. It uses monthly telephone consumer satisfaction surveys. These allow Enterprise to rank branches based on the percentage of customers who were 'completely satisfied' with their last rental experience. These rankings of locations help to determine the rewards and advancement of employees. It also analyses the impact of press cuttings from mass media coverage to keep up-to-date with how the company brand is perceived and monitors social media activity talking about its brand. These all indicate how feedback enables effective communication to be practiced at Enterprise.



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Questions

1. Describe the steps in the communication process.

2. Explain what is meant by internal communication.

3. Analyse why it is important for businesses like Enterprise to evaluate its communications.

4. Evaluate Enterprise's multi-channel approach to communicating its recruitment messages. Which channels do you think are most effective? Explain your answer.

Task

Scenario: A sole trader is planning to open his first cupcake shop in Brighton. The shop will also have a small cafe. He has 5 staff and only a limited budget to advertise. The opening day is in 4 weeks. Develop a communications plan for the opening day, think about the key stakeholders, the messages that need to be communicated and which communication channels would be most appropriate for each message and audience. You should also outline any potential barriers to the communication and how these barriers could be overcome.

What have you learned?

Create some revision cards of the main learning points from today's session.