

THE SHIFT FROM CONVENTIONAL MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS TO NEW MEDIA IN THE DIGITAL ERA

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Abstract

Changing consumer behavior, which is increasingly digital-centric, is forcing businesses to revamp their communication strategies to remain relevant and competitive. This study aims to analyze the shift in marketing communications from conventional to new media and identify the driving factors and their impact on the effectiveness of message delivery to consumers. The research employed a descriptive qualitative method through literature review and document analysis related to digital marketing trends. Secondary data collection was obtained from scientific journals, books, and the latest digital marketing industry reports. The results indicate that the transition to new media is driven by the advantages of interactivity, cost efficiency, the ability to precisely target audiences (hyper-targeting), and the accountability of real-time data measurement metrics. This strategic shift has implications for changing consumer behavior, leading to more independent, critical, and empowered consumers who base their trust on peer-to-peer reviews. However, marketers also face the challenges of information overload and the risk of an instant reputation crisis, which necessitate the implementation of a cross-channel (omnichannel) media convergence strategy. The shift to new media is not simply a replacement for physical media, but rather an essential transformation in modern business communications that demands the integration of sophisticated digital technology and authentic, transparent human relationships with consumers.

Keywords: Marketing Communications, Conventional Media, New Media, Digital Era, Digital Strategy.

A. INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication technology in the 21st century has triggered a major revolution that has fundamentally changed the fabric of human life. The presence of the internet as a central pillar of the digital era has not only transformed the way individuals interact socially but has also completely overhauled the operational landscape of the business world (Harto et al., 2023). This digital transformation has given rise to a new ecosystem where information flows seamlessly, instantly, and can be accessed by anyone, anytime, and anywhere. As a result, global society is experiencing a shift in communication culture, from one that relied on physical space and limited time to one based on virtual networks (Widyaningrum, 2021).

The global business landscape is one of the sectors most impacted by this digitalization, particularly in the marketing communications sector. Marketing communications, which traditionally served as an information bridge between

producers and consumers, now faces a new, highly dynamic reality (Farahdiba, 2020). The digital era demands a paradigm shift in thinking from industry players to avoid being crushed by the times. Old patterns that relied on one-way communication are now considered inadequate to keep up with the rapid flow of information and the high level of digital literacy of today's modern society (Handani & Choiriyati, 2021).

Before the digital era dominated, conventional marketing communications served as the primary platform for brand expansion strategies. Print media such as newspapers and magazines, along with broadcast media like radio and television, served as the primary channels for disseminating commercial messages (Wardana et al., 2024). At the time, this communication model was highly effective for building mass brand awareness because it could reach a wide audience simultaneously. The main characteristic of conventional media is its one-way (one-to-many) communication, where producers retain full control of the message, while consumers act as passive recipients (Nisrina, 2021).

However, the effectiveness of conventional marketing communications has gradually begun to decline significantly. Conventional media are beginning to face structural limitations, such as very high advertising production costs, limited broadcast duration, and the inability to accurately and instantly measure campaign success (Prayitno, 2021). Furthermore, the rigid and one-way nature of communication often creates an emotional distance between brands and their audiences. Geographical and time barriers also pose major obstacles for traditional media in responding to the rapidly changing dynamics of the global market (Hazizah et al., 2016).

Over time, the emergence of internet-based new media emerged as a solution to the limitations of conventional media. New media, which includes social media, interactive websites, instant messaging applications, and video-sharing platforms, offers completely different characteristics (Prayitno, 2021). The main advantages of new media lie in interactivity, media convergence, and content personalization. These digital channels break the chain of communication by offering two-way and even multi-way (many-to-many) communication models, where consumers can directly respond to, critique, or reshare marketing messages (Hazizah et al., 2016).

This shift in consumer preferences to the digital realm has automatically changed media consumption behavior globally. Contemporary consumers are no longer willing to simply sit through advertising, but rather actively seek information, compare products, and read user reviews before making a purchase decision (Febriani & Tamitiadini, 2018). They desire emotional engagement and a more personalized experience with the brands they choose. This highly digital-centric behavioral shift is forcing businesses to redefine their entire marketing communications strategies to ensure their messages remain relevant (Panuju, 2019).

In addition to changing consumer behavior, this shift to new media is also driven by increasingly stringent business demands for efficiency and effectiveness. Through new media, marketers are equipped with highly sophisticated and accurate data analysis capabilities (big data analytics) (Adnan et al., 2024). They can track audience behavior, measure user engagement levels, and track sales conversions in real time. The highly specific and personalized segmentation capabilities of digital

media enable each marketing budget to be far more targeted compared to traditional mass media advertising (Ananda et al., 2023).

Therefore, this shift from conventional marketing communications to new media is not simply a temporary technological trend, but rather a fundamental transformation that determines the life or death of a business in the modern era. Understanding the dynamics, driving factors, and implications of this shift is crucial for the future development of business communication. Against this backdrop, this in-depth study aims to map how this media transition occurs and how business organizations manage these strategic changes to maintain their existence and competitiveness in the digital age.

B. METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive analytical methods to understand the media transition phenomenon in depth. A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows for contextual exploration of the meanings, perceptions, and social dynamics behind the shift in marketing communication strategies in the digital era (Anggito & Setiawan, 2018). The primary focus of the research is a comparative analysis of the characteristics of conventional and new media, as well as how business organizations adapt to these changes. The researcher acts as the primary instrument in collecting, interpreting, and conceptualizing data scattered throughout the scientific literature without intervening or manipulating the objects under study.

The data in this study are entirely sourced from secondary sources, collected through library research and digital document analysis. The data collection process involved exploring various relevant, reputable literature, including national and international scientific journals, marketing communications textbooks, and recent digital industry research reports. After data collection, content analysis and thematic analysis were applied, where the data were reduced, classified based on media shift themes, and presented in a systematic, descriptive narrative. Data validity testing is carried out through triangulation of data sources by comparing various theories, regulations and previous research results to ensure the validity and objectivity of the conclusions drawn.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Comparative Characteristics and Driving Factors of the Transition from Conventional Media to New Media

Understanding the dynamics of the advertising paradigm shift must begin with a sharp distinction between the structural characteristics of conventional and new media. Conventional media, represented by television, radio, and print, positions business organizations as the sole center of control over information distribution. The adopted communication model is entirely linear and one-to-many, where messages are mass-produced for a heterogeneous audience without any opportunity for recipients to respond directly. This lack of immediate feedback creates a psychological and sociological distance between brands and the public, resulting in marketing communications that tend to feel rigid, formal, and distant.

The structural limitations of conventional media are further exacerbated by high production costs and limited broadcast space. Placing advertisements on

television or the front page of national newspapers requires a substantial budget investment, often only affordable by conglomerate-sized corporations. Operational flexibility is also a fundamental weakness of traditional print and electronic media, where advertising material that has already been printed or scheduled for broadcast cannot be changed suddenly. As a result, businesses struggle to quickly adjust their communication strategies when dynamic market trends change within days.

Geographical constraints and time constraints further exacerbate the weaknesses inherent in conventional marketing media. Physical newspaper and magazine distribution relies heavily on ground and air logistics infrastructure, which automatically limits the reach of marketing information. Television and radio advertisements, on the other hand, are tied to very strict broadcast durations, such as thirty-second slots, severely limiting the delivery of the message. Once the broadcast time ends, the message's reach to the audience is immediately halted, unless the company is willing to pay the prohibitive cost of reproducing the broadcast.

The most crucial weakness of conventional media lies in its inability to provide accurate and real-time metrics for measuring campaign success. Companies investing billions of rupiah in billboards along major roads can never know for certain how many people actually saw the advertisements. Traditional media effectiveness measurements have relied solely on sampling estimates or periodic surveys from third-party rating agencies. This lack of data accountability often makes it difficult for marketers to evaluate the return on investment (ROI) of their budgets.

The advent of the digital era, ushering in a new internet-based media ecosystem, has shattered all the structural limitations of the old media. The most revolutionary characteristic of new media is the adoption of a highly democratic two-way, even multi-way (many-to-many) communication model. Digital channels such as social media, web portals, and instant messaging applications provide comment columns, like features, and share buttons that are accessible to audiences at any time. This interactivity radically shifts the consumer's position from being a passive recipient of messages to an active dialogue partner on an equal footing with the brand owner.

This high level of interactivity has given rise to a new advantage in the form of unprecedented micro-personalization of marketing content. Through new media, a company no longer needs to mass-distribute the same message to millions of people from diverse backgrounds. Instead, digital technology allows marketers to break down their messages into a variety of content tailored specifically to individual interests. This personalization makes the marketing communications approach far more human and relevant, as the content received by each consumer feels tailored to their individual needs.

This personalization advantage is possible thanks to the integration of new media with big data analytics technology. Every user activity, click, search, and interaction in cyberspace leaves a valuable digital footprint for marketers. This consumer behavior data is then automatically processed by digital platform algorithms to deeply map audience demographics, shopping preferences, and psychographics. This analytical information provides businesses with a new tool for formulating highly accurate communication messages and minimizing speculative guesswork in campaign planning.

The operational cost efficiency offered by new media is a powerful economic driver for businesses making the media transition. Advertising on digital platforms like Instagram, TikTok, or Google Ads does not require the minimum initial capital of millions of rupiah as is the case with conventional media. With very minimal capital, micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) now have the same opportunity to reach a broad market in the digital space. This budgeting flexibility allows companies to fully control their daily spending and immediately stop advertising campaigns if performance is deemed unsatisfactory.

In addition to cost efficiency, new media also offers hyper-targeting capabilities, a distinct advantage over conventional mass media. Through a digital advertising dashboard, marketers can customize their ads to appear only on the device screens of users who meet very specific criteria, such as men aged 25-30, living in a specific city and interested in a healthy lifestyle. This highly precise targeting ensures that every dollar of the marketing budget is used to reach potential consumers, thereby reducing wasted advertising dollars.

Global reach, without geographical or temporal boundaries (ubiquity), is the next vertical driver accelerating the adoption of new media in the modern business landscape. Digital marketing content uploaded to the internet can be instantly accessed by millions of people across the globe within seconds. The barriers of space and time that previously bound conventional media have completely collapsed under the 24-hour operation of the internet. This internet presence enables local companies to expand their market share internationally with far greater efficiency and cost.

Accountability for real-time data measurement is a key factor that makes new media far superior in terms of business performance management. Through digital analytics dashboards, marketers can instantly see how many users viewed ads, clicked on links, and even made purchases within a given minute. This data transparency empowers company management to make data-driven strategic decisions very quickly. If a digital ad performs poorly within the first few hours, the creative team can immediately revise the visuals or ad copy without having to wait for the campaign to conclude.

This shift in media preferences from conventional to digital is ultimately driven by the changing demographics of global consumers, now dominated by digital natives. Today's younger generation has a strong tendency to spend a greater portion of their daily time staring at screens rather than watching television or reading print media. This shift in media consumption culture is forcing the advertising industry to follow the direction of their audience's attention. Companies that stubbornly refuse to adapt to this digital reality will automatically lose relevance and visibility in the eyes of the future market.

2. Implications of Shifting Marketing Communication Strategies on Consumer Behavior in the Digital Era

The shift in marketing communication strategies from conventional media to new media has profound sociological and psychological implications for global consumer behavior. The advent of digital technology has disrupted the linear model of purchasing decision-making traditionally embraced by traditional marketing theory. Consumers are no longer merely the passive end-points of a message

distribution chain, but have transformed into empowered, independent information agents. Unlimited access to information in cyberspace has undermined the monopoly on product truth previously held by companies, creating a new, far more transparent and competitive market landscape.

The most fundamental implication of this media transition is seen in the changing ways consumers consume and filter marketing information entering their personal space. In the conventional media era, consumers tended to accept television or print advertisements with resignation due to the limited choice of information channels. However, in the new media era, consumers have complete control over what they see, hear, and read through their devices. Contemporary consumers can consciously bypass digital advertising, block marketing accounts they deem intrusive, and even choose to interact only with brands whose values align with their personal principles.

This shift in information control has sparked a strong culture of self-research among digital natives before engaging in transactional actions. Consumers no longer readily trust one-sided claims or sweet promises conveyed through formal corporate advertising jargon. When a brand launches a marketing campaign in new media, consumers' spontaneous response is to cross-check across various digital platforms. They will seek comparative information, read technical specifications on the official website, and even examine the company's digital track record to ensure the validity of the quality offered.

In this self-verification process, modern consumers place the highest level of trust in user-generated content. Product reviews on e-commerce platforms, unboxing videos on YouTube, and testimonial threads on social media are now far more influential than giant billboards in downtown areas. The psychological implication of this phenomenon is a shift in the basis of trust, from one based on institutional authority to one based on peer-to-peer trust. Consumers feel much safer and more validated when purchasing products based on the real experiences of strangers online, who are perceived as having no ulterior commercial interests.

This phenomenon is further fueled by the influence of influencer marketing, which is radically changing the landscape of digital consumer preferences. Today's consumers tend to build parasocial emotional bonds with the content creators or digital opinion leaders they follow daily. When a content creator recommends a product in a casual, natural style, consumers perceive it less as an advertisement and more as genuine advice from a friend. Consequently, purchasing decisions are often made less based on the product's functional needs and more on the desire to identify with the digital figure's lifestyle.

In addition to changing the basis of trust, the shift to new media has also given rise to new expectations regarding the speed of response and the level of service provided by brands. The instantaneous nature of cyberspace has shaped the psychology of impatient consumers, who demand instant gratification. Consumers expect every question, complaint, or interaction they submit on a brand's social media accounts to be responded to within minutes, even seconds. A business organization's inability to respond quickly in the digital realm is immediately perceived as poor customer service, which can trigger consumers to switch to a competitor in an instant.

This demand for speed goes hand in hand with consumers' desire for highly personalized experiences. Digital-age consumers reject being treated as a uniform, anonymous mass, as was the approach of the conventional media era. They expect brands to understand their unique preferences, remember their purchase history, and provide contextually relevant product recommendations. The strategic implication is that marketing communications must be able to transform mass messages into greetings and offers that feel highly intimate, as if the brand is speaking exclusively to a single individual.

Furthermore, the use of new media has transformed the consumer purchasing journey, from a linear pattern to an omnichannel one. Modern consumers often begin their shopping journey by viewing a product on social media, continuing research through a search engine, viewing a physical demonstration in an offline store, and finally making a payment transaction through a mobile app. This behavior, which jumps between media, requires marketing communications messages to remain consistent and integrated across all consumer touchpoints. Failure to maintain message continuity across any one channel will create brand identity confusion, damaging the consumer shopping experience.

However, this massive adoption of new media has not escaped negative psychological impacts on consumers, one of which is the emergence of information overload. Every day, consumers are bombarded with thousands of pieces of marketing content, app notifications, and discount offers vying for their attention on limited screen space. This incredibly dense digital noise has resulted in a drastic decline in consumer attention spans year after year. Consumers have become highly selective and tend to ignore messages that fail to capture their emotional interest within the first three seconds, creating an increasingly challenging creative challenge for advertising campaign designers.

This easily bored audience psychological state has also given rise to the fear of missing out (FOMO) syndrome among younger consumers. Fast-paced new media constantly showcases lifestyle trends, new essential products, and the consumption activities of virtual peer groups. Digital marketing communications often cleverly exploit this psychological vulnerability by creating narratives of pseudo-scarcity, such as limited-time flash sales or special-edition products. As a result, consumer behavior has shifted to become more impulsive, with purchases made to alleviate social anxiety and maintain their relevance in the digital environment.

Another striking sociological implication is the emergence of a prosumer culture, in which the boundaries between producer and consumer have completely blurred. Through new media, consumers not only purchase and use products but also actively produce content related to them. They voluntarily create video reviews, upload aesthetic product photos to their personal accounts, or participate in digital petitions to urge changes in company policies. This active behavior demonstrates that digital consumers want to have a real stake and contribution in shaping the narrative and reputation of the brands they consume in the public sphere.

This shift has also heightened consumer sensitivity to the ethics, transparency, and social responsibility of companies. In the digital age, a small mistake or internal corporate scandal that could previously have been covered up can now be exposed and spread globally within hours through the phenomenon of virality. New-age

consumers are using their digital power to demand high moral accountability from brand owners. They are not hesitant to launch mass digital boycotts of companies deemed to be damaging the environment, violating workers' rights, or engaging in marketing communications deemed offensive and non-inclusive.

On the other hand, the ease of transaction access offered by the integration of new media with digital payment systems has transformed the architecture of the consumer shopping space. The physical boundaries between entertainment and shopping spaces have now completely disappeared with the emergence of the social commerce phenomenon. Consumers can enjoy short video entertainment content and immediately purchase the products featured in the video without having to leave their social media apps. This ecosystem's convenience reduces psychological barriers to shopping, ultimately driving increased consumption frequency and a shift in shopping patterns from planned to highly spontaneous.

Although consumer behavior has shifted massively toward digital, in-depth analysis shows that the root of the basic human need for genuine emotional connection remains unchanged. Consumers in the digital age are not merely seeking sophisticated visual technology, but rather authenticity from a brand. They long for honest, human, and non-manipulative marketing interactions amidst a sea of digital content filled with artificial filters. Brands that are able to showcase genuine humanity and empathy in their digital communications will succeed in winning solid long-term consumer loyalty.

D. CONCLUSION

The shift in marketing communications from conventional media to new media in the digital era represents a structural transformation that fundamentally alters the relationship between business organizations and consumers. The unidirectional, rigid, expensive, and difficult-to-measure characteristics of conventional media have been replaced by a digital ecosystem that prioritizes interactivity, budget flexibility, and accurate real-time data analysis. This media transition has significant implications for consumer behavior, which is transforming from passive message recipients to independent, critical, and empowered information agents (empowered consumers). Modern consumers demand instant and personalized communication, shift their trust base to peer-to-peer reviews, and actively participate in shaping a brand's reputation through prosumer culture. Facing this dynamic, the future of marketing communications no longer rests on the total elimination of legacy media, but rather on convergence strategies and a seamless omnichannel approach. Business success in the modern era is no longer determined by the massive distribution of marketing messages, but rather by a brand's ability to leverage sophisticated digital technology to build honest, transparent, and human emotional connections with consumers.

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