

The Home Depot's Integrated Marketing Communications Plan

Writing Assignment 6

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Executive Summary

The Home Depot is a home improvement retailer that has operations in the United States and a few international markets. Founded in 1978 in Atlanta, Georgia, this company prides itself on competitive pricing and stellar customer service. Since its creation, The Home Depot has dominated as a retailer in the home improvement industry. During the economic crisis of 2008, it was able to shift gears to match the needs of the consumers. This strategy helped the company to prevail during the crisis and will help the company in the long run. This Integrated Marketing Communications plan (IMC plan) for the Home Depot aims to help transition its strategy to match the mindset of its future consumer base. This plan addresses the issue and offers proactive solutions.

The Home Depot currently has three primary target markets. This IMC plan reveals a new market segment for the company to tap into. The Crafty Millennial market segment is comprised of men and women, ages 18 to 30-years old, who may rent or own a home. The Crafty Millennial is also price sensitive but has a strong desire for personalization. Research suggest that the Crafty Millennials will make up a large portion of the market of homeowners. The main objective of this plan is to target the Crafty Millennial before or while they transition into Home Depot's current target market. This plan also aims to increase online sales revenue, increase brand awareness and market share.

A thorough review of the company's background, current target market, and a SWOT analysis suggested this would be a viable market segment to target. This will create brand loyalty at an earlier stage. This plan outlines the various elements that will be utilized in order to achieve successful implementation. This strategic outline includes marketing, creative, direct marketing, social media and the methods to evaluate the success of the campaign.

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
BACKGROUND INFORMATION	5
PRODUCTS AND SERVICES	7
ECONOMIC ANALYSIS	7
MARKETING AND PROMOTIONAL ANALYSIS	10
TARGET AUDIENCE	11
SWOT ANALYSIS	14
CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES	14
MARKETING OBJECTIVES	14
Marketing Strategies	15
MEDIA ADVERTISING PLAN	15
Media Objectives	15
Media Strategies	16
MEDIA TACTICS	16
FLOW CHART	18
DIRECT MARKETING PLAN	19
DIRECT MARKETING OBJECTIVES	19
DIRECT MARKETING STRATEGIES	19
DIRECT MARKETING TACTICS	19
PUBLIC RELATIONS PLAN	20
PUBLIC RELATIONS OBJECTIVES	20
PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGIES.	21
PUBLIC RELATIONS TACTICS	21

SOCIAL MEDIA PLAN	21
SOCIAL MEDIA OBJECTIVE	21
SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGIES	21
SOCIAL MEDIA TACTICS	22
INTEGRATED CREATIVE STRATEGY STATEMENT & CREATIVE BRIEF	23
INTEGRATED CREATIVE STRATEGY STATEMENT	23
CREATIVE BRIEF	24
MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION PLAN	25
Pre-Testing	25
CAMPAIGN IN-PROGRESS	25
Post-Testing	26
CONCLUSION	26
APPENDICES	27
REFERENCES	31

The Home Depot's Integrated Marketing Communications Plan

Background Information

In 1978, four men had the vision of creating a store that would cater to the needs of the do-it-yourselfer (DIYers). On June 22, 1979 the first two Home Depot stores were opened in Atlanta, Georgia (Home Depot, n.d.). In the early stages of development, the founders recognized a problem in the industry and knew what steps needed to be taken in order to dominate the market. Customers' needs would be the forefront of their strategy (The Home Depot, Inc. - Company Profile, Information, Business Description, History, Background Information on The Home Depot, Inc., n.d.). The founders were able to recognize a key factor about their target market that their predecessors failed to realize. Do-it-yourselfers accounted for 60 percent of sales volume, but those same DIYers did not have the technical skill or knowledge to successfully complete certain projects (The Home Depot, Inc. - Company Profile, Information, Business Description, History, Background Information on The Home Depot, Inc., n.d.). The Home Depot would soon be the solution to the problem in this industry.

In order to ensure that the customer's needs would be fulfilled, the founders knew superior service started with well-trained associates. "From the start, associates were able to offer the best customer service in the industry, guiding customers through projects such as laying tile, changing a fill valve or handling a power tool. Not only did store associates undergo rigorous product knowledge training, but they also began offering clinics so customers could learn how to do it themselves. The Home Depot revolutionized the home improvement industry by bringing the know-how and the tools to the consumer and by saving them money" (Home Depot, n.d.). Home Depot went beyond having well-trained staff by offering in-store instructional workshops. Local contractors would be brought in as teachers in some cases (The

Home Depot, Inc. - Company Profile, Information, Business Description, History, Background Information on The Home Depot, Inc., n.d.). The Home Depot realized that in order to be known for exceptional service, they would have to provide more than their competitors would. Excellent customer service went beyond having a friendly and knowledgeable sales associate, but to providing knowledge and skills to the customer as well.

The Home Depot's mission statement embodies the principles that the company was founded upon. "The Home Depot is in the home improvement business and our goal is to provide the highest level of service, the broadest selection of products and the most competitive prices" (Home Depot, n.d.). The Home Depot also has eight core values to ensure that associates are working towards the company's mission on a daily basis:

- 1. Taking care of people
- 2. Giving back to our communities
- 3. Doing the right thing
- 4. Excellent customer service
- 5. Creating shareholder value
- 6. Building strong relationships
- 7. Entrepreneurial spirit
- 8. Respect for all people (Home Depot, n.d.).

Ensuring that the core values and the mission statement is at the center of all activities, creates a company culture that is working towards a common goal. All associates know the direction the company is striving towards and the standard has been set. The Home Depot is able to establish a sense of continuity by ensuring the mission statement is at the forefront of all operations, including promotions.

Products and Services

The Home Depot is a big-box retailer of tools, hardware, and appliances; catering to any home improvement needs. Home Depot currently has thousands of locations throughout the United States, United States territories, Canada, China, and Mexico (Home Depot, n.d.). Its has not only exceeded national boundaries, but also traditional brick-and mortar stores. The stores carry a wide selection of items, but it is impossible to carry every item in store. Each store is stocked with merchandise that is matched with the specific market needs of that area (Home Depot, n.d.). The website allows Home Depot to offer the full range of products possible, including products that can be special ordered (Business Analysis of Home Depot, 2015).

While maintaining such a high volume of inventory, Home Depot also seeks to keep cost low for the consumer. "The Home Depot is working to offer its products at the lowest price possible without the need for rebates or reward programs. This will allow its customers to get low prices immediately instead of having to wait for a rebate. This caters to its new focus on 'More saving. More doing' (Business Analysis of Home Depot, 2015). Beyond promotions and rebates, Home Depot will even offer a low price guarantee (Home Depot, n.d.). This strategy ensures that it is in line with or surpassing its competition in pricing.

Economic Analysis

Home Depot became a publicly traded company on the NASDAQ in 1981. By 1984, it was traded on the New York Stock Exchange (Home Depot, n.d.). By 1993, Home Depot continued expansion. Other stores began to saturate the home remodeling superstore market as well (The Home Depot, Inc. - Company Profile, Information, Business Description, History, Background Information on The Home Depot, Inc., n.d.). Home Depot's main competitors are Lowes, Ace Hardware, and any local or regional hardware store. Other competitors include

stores such as Bed Bath and Beyond and Ikea, that serve to provide items for home improvement.

Home Depot had to reposition itself in order to maintain a strong hold on the market. In the beginning stages of The Home Depot, the company positioned itself using a differentiation strategy. Priding itself on stellar customer service and offering a wide selection of products. As more competitors entered the marketplace, there was a need to change the business model in order to maintain a lead. The Home Depot then switched to a cost-leadership strategy, which allowed The Home Depot to lower cost while improving performance. This strategy also allowed The Home Depot to charge a lower price to attract more customers (DeFoe, 2013). These business model strategies have allowed The Home Depot to maintain a leg-up over it's competitors.

As of 2015, The Home Depot has dominated the home improvement industry, accounting for 60% of all revenues (Newstex, 2015).

"The U.S. is an important market for Home Depot since approximately 97% of its stores span across the country. While the U.S. economy is expected to continue doing well, with GDP projected to grow at about 3% and unemployment remaining below 6%, higher activity in the housing market could stir home improvement spending. The National Association of Realtors (NAR) projects existing home sales to grow at a rate of 6.4% and 4.1%, in 2015 and 2016, respectively. In spite of this, existing home sales in absolute numbers have not yet reached their pre-recession levels, which is indicative of potential in the years going forward. New home sales are also expected to register a whopping 33% and 27% increase over the next two years, which

could further fuel demand for home improvement goods. Additionally, prices of both existing and new homes are projected to increase, with the former growing at a rate of 5.6% and the latter growing at 2.7% in 2015" (Newstex, 2015).

Analysis of the industry and the economy is crucial to the growth, or demise, of The Home Depot. The home improvement industry is very dependent on the state of the economy. If consumers sense financial instability, they are less likely to be compelled to spend money to improve their homes. On the other hand, if consumers see the economy in a state of growth, especially the real estate market, they will be more inclined to pursue home improvement projects. Home improvements can lead to an increase home value. When the market is in a positive standing, increased home values are very beneficial. Home Depot has to align itself with the volatility of the market. An industry and economic analysis should be the forefront of all market research performed by The Home Depot. The Home Depot needs to be able to adapt to how its consumers react to the economy.

During the Recession of 2008. The Home Depot shifted focus and used the down economy as a window of opportunity. Instead of focusing on opening new stores the focus shifted to improving operational functions and improving the customer experience. "The company plans to have 100 percent of its stores hooked into the rapid deployment system by years' end, which should boost sales, due to fewer out of stocks and create a more cost efficient product flow to stores, reducing costs. Additionally, the company has built up initiatives to improve the analytics it uses to evaluate merchandise and display. By more effectively analyzing the kind and amount of product that goes into stores, the company has been able to cut down on inventory close outs and related discounts" (Duff, 2010). The Home Depot decided to make

improvements that would last beyond the economic downturn, instead of trying to adapt to a temporary situation.

Marketing and Promotional Analysis

The Home Depot utilizes a variety of mediums in its marketing communications strategy. In 2014, The Home Depot spent 793.7 million dollars in promotion and advertising (Statista, 2015). "Home Depot's promotion activities include the following tactics:

- Advertising (TV commercials)
- Personal selling (store personnel)
- Sales promotions
- Public relations
- Direct selling (contractors)" (Rowland, 2015).

The Home Depot has a very diverse product offering and implemented various means of communication to interact with customers. Sales associates are the biggest tactic utilized. Sales associates are knowledgeable on products and current promotions. So knowledgeable that they even create content for the company's blog (Rowland, 2015). Beyond the sales associate, the internet would be the next largest tactic utilized. Currently The Home Depot utilizes:

- Main Website: www.homedepot.com
- Blog: http://blog.homedepot.com
- Twitter: www.twitter.com/HomeDepot
- Instagram: www.intsgram.com/HomeDepot
- Pinterest: https://www.pinterest.com/homedepot/
- YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/user/homedepot
- Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/homedepot

• Charitable Organization: http://www.homedepotfoundation.org

It is safe to say, The Home Depot has not shied away from digital avenues. Each website providing content that is relevant to the consumer.

A quick Google search of The Home Depot will generate quite a few results, 97 billion to be exact. Beyond the content and websites created by The Home Depot, there is a lot of earned media. Whether it is news reports or a stock analysis or content generated by consumers, there is some mention of the company. "Home Depot has established a lifestyle brand around all aspects of home building, maintenance, décor and gardening. They understand their target audience and therefore are more effective in marketing to them. With over one million fans on Facebook, their content on the social network includes consumer polls, helpful tips, product/service promotions, "Tell us Tuesdays," and "Mystery Product" guessing games" (ZOC Digital, 2013). This speaks to the public relations of the company.

With such a large advertising and promotion budget and the use of various media to engage and interact with consumers, it is clear that The Home Depot was focused on implementing a marketing communications strategy that would fully reach its target market. This approach would allow The Home Depot to remain a leader in the home improvement retail industry.

Target Audience

Home Depot has divided its target audience into three specific segments. "The Home Depot's target market segmentation consists of do-it-yourself (DIY) customers, do-it-for-me (DIFM) customers, and professional customers. Within these target markets, they specifically market to female DIY and DIFM customers" (Business Analysis of Home Depot, 2015). "The Home Depot Executives realized they were missing out on a large market because they were not

effectively marketing to female shoppers. In response to this, they started offering "Do-It-Herself" workshops, which showed women how to use different tools and complete decorating or home improvement projects on their own. Their efforts were widely successful (Business Analysis of Home Depot, 2015). Overall, the general demographic of each segmentation is similar. Middle-aged, middle class home owners. By offering low prices, workshops, and instructional videos, Home Depot is targeting consumers who are not afraid to dive into a project themselves. It is also catering to licensed professionals and contractors who are eager to learn a new skill or technique for their trade. Home Depot's target market, no matter the segment, is price sensitive while wanting to obtain as much information as possible.

Currently, Home Depot is missing out on a target demographic that has a large amount of potential, millennials. "The National Association of Realtors 2015 report on generational trends found that millennials, who are currently between ages 25 and 34, make up the largest share of homebuyers at 32 percent. Even more striking, millennials now constitute 68 percent of first-time homebuyers" (Palmer, 2015). This demographic is also more likely to purchase a home that may need more work and customize it to meet their needs.

Millennials are very price sensitive. "Nearly a third of Millennials prefer full-on "fixer-uppers" to homes in need of only slight repairs. Why? Well, these homes come with more appealing price tags, but that's only part of the "big picture." Millennials also want their unique fingerprints on their living spaces and homes which reflect their personal style and design aesthetic. Buying a fixer-upper lets them get in on the ground floor, in a manner of speaking" (Wingman Advertising, 2015). Home Depot already has the advantage of being competitively and relatively low priced. Home Depot's current non-professional target audience is geared towards home owners. Home Depot can use the same services and offerings it currently has to

start attracting the Millennial demographic. By establishing a connection with them now, Home Depot will be able to create a brand loyalty with Millennials for when they become homeowners. Instead of attempting to establish the connection after homeownership, it would occur prior.

This new target market segment will be called the "Crafty Millennial." These 18 to 30-year-olds are currently living on their own, in predominately rented or shared spaces. These spaces are smaller due to the price and/or location. There are many DIY projects suited towards smaller or shared living spaces. Essentially, ways to make it more personalized even though it is not a permanent residence. The Crafty Millennial is price sensitive so they aim to get the most out of their dollar. They are willing to tackle projects that are low cost but will add an air of personalization to their living space. The Crafty Millennial is next in line for home ownership. The Crafty Millennial is willing to save up for that special project and put in a lot of planning and researching. If Home Depot started using its current resources to reach out to the Crafty Millennial market, Home Depot would take another leap in front of its competition. Home Depot has already experience substantial growth, the goal is to ensure that the company stays relevant and maintains that growth in the future.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- •Upward sales through the recent recession
- •Diverse and exclusive product offering
- Knowledgable associates providing excellent customer service to unknowledgable millennials
- •Implementation of an interconnected retail progam offering more buying options

Weaknesses

- •Developed an online presence in 2014, which is late compared to others
- Success is dependent on the U.S. economy
- •Data Breach gives consumer a sense of financial insecurity, especially to millennials who are weary of financial situations.

Home Depot SWOT Analysis

Opportunities

- Housing market recovery
- International markets
- Consumers increasing use of online marketplaces and mobile apps which appeals to the digitally driven millennials
- Millennials are crafty and will be more prone to doing DIY projects

Threats

- •Millennials are crafty and will shop at odd and end stores before going to specific home goods related stores, creating a larger group of competitors
- •Millennials shopping habits will be dependent on the current economic conditions.

Campaign Objectives and Strategies

Marketing Objectives

Increase online revenue by a minimum of 15% in one year by engaging the Crafty Millennial through interactive media avenues.

Increase Home Depot brand awareness by 15% for the Crafty Millennial market segment over the next 12 months. Creating brand awareness at this stage will assist them entering the next stage of the market segments.

Transitional consumers should account for 25% of revenue in the next four years.

25% of the Crafty Millennial market will have a preference for the Home Depot brand compared to competitors within the six months of campaign launch.

Marketing Strategies

Customer service associates increase exposure and push use of apps and interconnected retail program.

Remain competitively priced to stores such as Ikea, Walmart, Urban Outfitters, using price match guarantees.

Introduce new do-it-yourself workshops: renter's edition.

Ensure content shows Millennials tips and tricks that they can carry with them when they become homeowners.

Create a student discount/incentive program offering special deals and promotions.

Media Advertising Plan

Media Objectives

To reach 60% of the Crafty Millennial market segment a minimum of four times every month for one year to attract new customers while increasing brand awareness.

Use of paid media to maintain average reach of 75% for the next year to maintain brand awareness with existing target markets (Do-It-Yourself, Do-It-For-Me, and Professionals). Reach 45% of Crafty Millennials during the back-to-school season a minimum of three times using geographically targeted school/university sponsorships.

Media Strategies

Use paid media to effectively target the Crafty Millennial market, which consists of 18 to 30 year olds living in metropolitan areas with an annual income of \$25K or more.

Will use a combination of mass media and direct media vehicles in a national campaign.

Campaign will be national, but focus on college towns and metropolitan areas to attract the Crafty Millennial.

Paid media will follow a continuity scheduling, appearing consistently throughout the year to maintain awareness.

School/University sponsorships will geographically target the Crafty Millennial segment. When moving from home, whether living on or off campus, the Crafty Millennial will seek ways to make their new living quarters more like home. It will also build more brand awareness for when the Crafty Millennial is moving into the next stage of life after graduation.

Crafty Millennials are cost sensitive because of a limited budget. Most will not have an extensive television package. Broadcast advertisements will be strategically placed to ensure more potential of views.

Internet ads and pay per click advertising will be used concurrently. These mediums will be used once the potential consumer initiates a search. This tactic will be to strengthen awareness more than increase reach.

Media Tactics

- Television
 - o Channels such as VH1, MTV, primetime networks, E!
 - o Subscription streaming services, such as Hulu, Vevo
- Internet Ads

- o Pandora, Spotify, iTunes Radio,
- Social Media ads
 - o YouTube, Pinterest, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Tumblr, blogs, etc.
- School/University sponsorships
 - o Sponsoring schools and school events
 - o Sponsoring college sports team
- Email
- Pay per click

Flow Chart

		_	//	//	//	/	//	//	//	/	(3)		/	/	/
		1		X8.	Κ.	/	/	/.		15	73	1	%	<i>7</i>	
	/	8/4	8/2	SE S		0	50%	37/	3% c	<i>3</i> / 0	3%	9/	3		
Television															
Local Stations															
ABC															
CBS															
Fox															
NBC															
E!															
VH1															
MTV															
BET															
FX															
Mobile															
Home Depot App															
Ads for other mobile apps															
Social Media															
Facbook															
Instagram															
Twitter															
Pinterest															
YouTube															
Blogs															
Tumbir															
Digital Advertising															
Buzzfeed															
Email															
Pay per Click															
Online Catalog															
Subscription Streaming Services															
Hulu.com															
Pandora															
iTunes Radio															
Spotify															
Vevo.com															
Sponsorships															
Schools/Universities															
College Sports Teams															

As stated in the Media Strategies, paid media will follow a continuity scheduling. Some media will be used throughout the year, while others will be used at strategic points of the campaign. For example, there will be a heavy push of television advertisements from April to September. This push will create more brand awareness during the back to school and moving season for for the Crafty Millennials. Members of this target market will be moving into dorms, rented spaces or their own homes during this time. Overall, there will be media usage during all 12 months of the IMC plan.

Direct Marketing Plan

Direct Marketing Objectives

Obtain a 10% response rate to DIY workshop/presentation invitations for each event across all direct marketing media.

Obtain a 20% coupon redemption rate driven emails and direct selling during the 12-month campaign.

Increase email click-through rate by 15% during the 12-month campaign

Increase online catalog views by 20% during the 12-month campaign

Increase online sales by 30% driven specifically by direct marketing media.

Direct Marketing Strategies

Use direct marketing media in a one-step approach to generate response through signing up for workshops/presentations, sharing tutorials/presentations with social network or buying products. Direct Media will be a part of a national campaign, primary focus will be college and metropolitan areas to attract the Crafty Millennial.

Direct Media campaign will follow a pulsing schedule. Schedule will be maintained year round with a heavier push from May-December to capture graduating Crafty Millennials that are moving away.

Direct Marketing Tactics

Email

- Market segment will opt-in to receiving emails when signed up for workshops or when visiting the website.
- Notify of upcoming workshops
- o Notify of special promotions to increase revenue

- Special incentives to drive more traffic into stores
- o Highlight parts of the catalog
- Showcase new projects and products
- o Be utilized throughout the 12-month plan
- Online catalog
 - Showcase different projects or design options for dorms and rented spaces.
 - o Offer coupons in the online catalog.
- Direct Selling (In-person/online)
 - o DIY Workshops/Presentations/Demonstrations
 - In-store demonstrations on quick and easy projects. Sign-up occurs before the event through social media, email, in-store, etc.
 - Workshops and presentations can occur on school campuses decorating tips for dorms and rented space.
 - Hand out coupons and catalogs at workshops and presentations.

Public Relations Plan

Public Relations Objectives

Increase The Home Depot's earned media by 5% on each of the primary social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram). Earned media is any reference to The Home Depot by a third party.

Develop a partnership or sponsorship with at least 5% of colleges/universities nationwide.

Obtain a 15% participation to sweepstakes/contest promotion across all media.

Increase audience engagement (followers, friends, etc.) on The Home Depot's owned social media sites by 10% during the 12-month campaign.

Public Relations Strategies

Develop brand specific content that is easy to share across all media.

Collaborate with colleges and universities, especially the respective housing departments, in promote awareness and special promotions that The Home Depot is having.

Develop a sweepstakes/contest to attract more interest from the Crafty Millennial

Public Relations Tactics

- Community Involvement College/university sponsorships, attending on and off campus housing fairs, partnering with neighborhood housing/apartment complexes, creating a student brand ambassador program
- Sweepstakes/contest Create a contest for college students to win a free dorm/apartment makeover.
- Branded content Videos showing a millennial shopping in Home Depot and explaining different decorating projects, photography specific to Home Depot/DIY projects

Social Media Plan

Social Media Objective

Increase social media following across all networks by 15%. Social media following includes all followers and views.

Social Media Strategies

Implement a social media campaign that interacts directly with the Crafty Millennial target market.

Social Media campaign will follow a continuity schedule to maintain a presence all-year round. Campaign will be stronger during the back-to-school and graduation time of year in order to capture the 'Crafty Millennial' during a peak moving season.

Build a relationship with "Crafty Millennial" on social media through relevant responses and pushing relevant content out.

Maintain a presence on social media through creative and relevant post.

Social Media Tactics

- Social networking sites sharing photos and videos on the following social networking sites:
 - o YouTube
 - Twitter
 - o Instagram
 - o Pinterest
 - o Snapchat
 - o Tumblr
- Blog
 - O Blog will be used as a more detailed an in-depth media. Highlighting specific products and the different projects it can be used for, giving step by step instructions for DIY projects, sharing how-to videos. Keywords and search engine optimization will be very crucial in this tactic to ensure the content is searchable and drive more web-traffic.

Integrated Creative Strategy Statement & Creative Brief

Integrated Creative Strategy Statement

Rational Factors for Crafty Millennials Shopping at Home Depot

- One stop shopping center for all home products
- Low cost "More Saving, More Doing"
- Established brand/company
- Brand-partnerships (exclusive products)

Emotional Factors for Crafty Millennials Shopping at Home Depot

- Price Sensitive
- More inclined to perform DIY
- Prefers being hands-on

Final Integrated Creative Strategy Statement: Home Depot is the cost-friendly store to handle all home project needs for any living space.

Other Integrated Creative Strategy Statements:

- Home Depot is the one-stop for affordable DIY projects for any living space.
- Home Depot will help you make a home feel like yours at a low-cost.

Creative Brief

Client

The Home Depot

Why are we advertising?

To successfully attract and engage a new market segment for Home Depot, the Crafty Millennial.

Whom are we talking to?

Crafty Millennial, 18-30 year olds, male and female, income \$25K+. Price driven consumers. In the market for home improvement or home decorating ideas for non-permanent residences.

What do they currently think?

Home Depot is a store for older homeowners. Home Depot will not have anything that can be used in a rented/non-permanent residence.

What would we like them to think?

Home Depot offers solutions and products for all residences, permanent and non-permanent. Home Depot is the place for affordable and unique home projects.

What is the single most persuasive idea we can convey?

Home Depot is the cost-friendly store to handle all home project needs for any living space.

Why should they believe it?

Home Depot is a strong and affordable brand in the home improvement that will be able to cater to all home improvement needs, big or small.

Creative Guidelines

Banner web ads 30 second television commercial Artistic color shots of DIY projects (in progress and completed) Color, 30 second how to DIY videos

Major selling idea or key benefits to communicate

Do-it-yourself Low cost Acceptable for rented spaces

Measurement and Evaluation Plan

The main objective of this Integrated Marketing Communications plan for The Home Depot is to target a new market segment, the Crafty Millennial, increasing brand awareness and increasing sales. There will be evaluations before commencing the campaign, while the campaign is in action, and at the conclusion of the campaign. This campaign will run for a 12-month period.

Pre-Testing

Before implementing the campaign, copy testing will be utilized in small test markets of the new market segment. Specifically, at smaller schools/universities that have a diverse population and is representative of the entire Crafty Millennial market. Copy testing is the method of pre-evaluation because this market segment is less prone to completing surveys or focus groups. The completed advertisements and promotions will be used in order to gauge a true perception and evaluation. Pre-campaign will utilize both copy testing and test marketing before the full roll out of the campaign. This stage will last for six months before the start of the campaign.

Campaign In-Progress

While the campaign is in progress, metrics and analytics will be heavily utilized. Close watching of social media numbers (likes, follows, views, etc.) and tracking mentions of the company and related hashtags. This will measure brand awareness, consumer engagement and the effectiveness of reaching the target audience. Optional surveys will be presented to in-store and online shoppers. Information obtained during the 12-month campaign period will determine if the shopper is a part of the Crafty Millennial segment and what influenced them to make a purchase. These metrics will measure the effectiveness of each media to drive sales.

Post-Testing

At the conclusion of the campaign, testing and analytics will be used to measure if the campaign met or exceed the objectives. First sales will be measures, specifically sales in the areas surrounding schools/universities and metropolitan areas where the Crafty Millennials dwell. Recall testing will also be conducted to test brand awareness and brand recall. Social media analytics will then track the total consumer engagement throughout the entire 12-month campaign. A final count of responses to direct marketing (sweepstakes entrants, coupon redemptions, online catalog views and email click-through) will be utilized to evaluate the campaign.

Conclusion

The Home Depot has been a powerhouse as a retailer in the home improvement industry. In order for The Home Depot to maintain it's dominate presence, the company must evolve with it's consumers. This Integrated Marketing Communications plan is designed to tap into a new target market that will eventually transition into one of the company's current target markets. This new market segment, The Crafty Millennial, shares similarities to The Home Depot's current target market and is also next in line to enter that market. This IMC plan will engage the Crafty Millennial during an earlier stage of their lifecycle in order to increase sales, brand awareness, and customer engagement.

The implementation of the plan will increase online revenue, increase brand awareness and increase market share. The elements of this plan will support the marketing objectives during the 12-month period of the campaign. These objectives will be measured and evaluated pre-and-post campaign and while the campaign is in progress. Adjustments will be made to support trends to ensure maximum effectiveness of the Integrated Marketing Communications plan.

Appendices

The following materials will	aide in the implementa	tion of the Integrated Marketing
Communications plan for Th	e Home Depot.	

Figure 1: SWOT Analysis	. 28
Figure 2: Creative Strategy Statement Brainstorming	. 29
Figure 3: Media Flow Chart.	30

Strengths

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- •Diverse and exclusive product offering
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Weaknesses

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Home Depot SWOT Analysis

Opportunities

- Housing market recovery
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- •Millennials are crafty and will be more prone to doing DIY projects

Threats

- Millennials are crafty and will shop at odd and end stores before going to specific home goods related stores, creating a larger group of competitors
- Millennials shopping habits will be dependent on the current economic conditions.

Figure 1: SWOT Analysis

Rational Factors for Crafty Millennials Shopping at Home Depot

- One stop shopping center for all home products
- Low cost "More Saving, More Doing"
- Established brand/company
- Brand-partnerships (exclusive products)

Emotional Factors for Crafty Millennials Shopping at Home Depot

- Price Sensitive
- More inclined to perform DIY
- Prefers being hands-on

Figure 2: Creative Strategy Statement Brainstorming

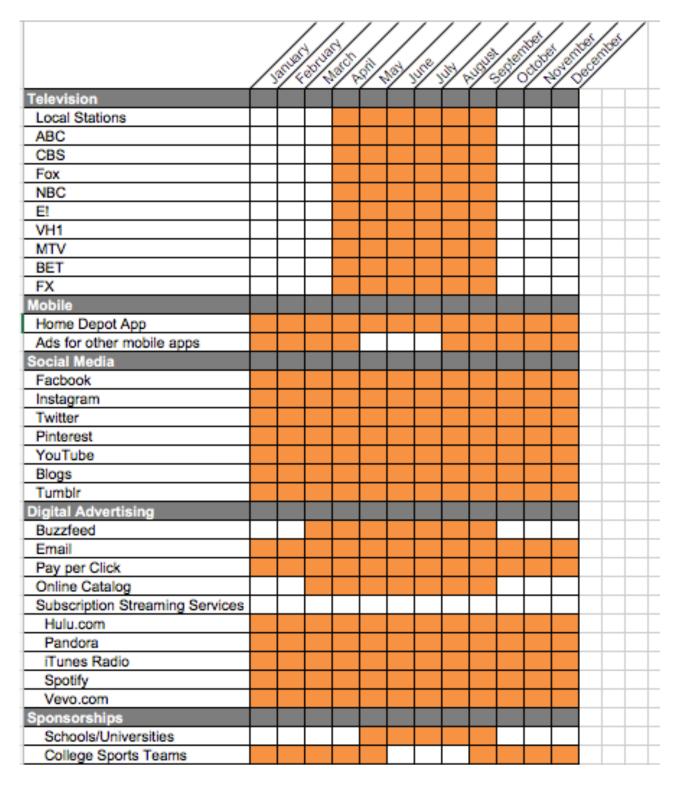


Figure 3: Media Flow Chart

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