Amazon

bonding customers with integrated service

Amazon’s interest in technology is as a means to deliver value through integration and CRM thinking.

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Centre for Integrated Marketing

The Centre for Integrated Marketing has been funded by industry to research best practice and develop intellectual and other tools on behalf of leading marketers and their agencies.
Integrated Marketing is an holistic discipline that inspires coherent and creative organisation, culture and customer experience alignment around fundamental truths of the brand to deliver value to customers, employees and the organisation.

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Highlights

The Amazon brand was born in the insight that the Internet could revolutionise the means to sell to consumers. The race to Internet success was funded by fanatical excitement that led to a basket full of bad practice in the chase for customers, with too many dot-com companies not creating value. Attracted only by the lure of deep discounts and free giveaways, consumers vanished once companies tried to improve margins. This was classic bad marketing thinking, not a revolution. By contrast, Amazon is proving to be category-leader in acquisition, sales and retention performance, with exceptional bonding levels, so demonstrating what the Internet is really about.

Amazon illustrates many of the opportunities that are available through the use of good technology. As proof of this, Amazon has been extremely successful in creating very high levels of customer bonding. For example, research by Millward Brown in their BrandZ study showed very high levels of loyalty: 54% of US category buyers are committed loyalists to Amazon, or Bonded as Millward Brown name them, compared with an industry average of well under 10%. This is a phenomenal performance, comparable with a small number of giant brands, such as Gillette, that have been prominent for decades.

Integrated Marketing learning points

Research across a range of industries and companies by the Centre for Integrated Marketing has identified a number of high impact diagnostic factors that indicate successful Integrated Marketing in organisations and brands. Amazon’s customer
focused implementation of technology registers a high score on many of these, including on the following essential factors:

1. Customers feel that all their brand experiences come from one identity.
2. Customers trust the brand’s promises.
3. The brand treats different kinds of customers in ways appropriate to them.
4. Whenever appropriate, the brand recognises individual customers wherever they interact or do business.
5. Customers are happy with the brand experience.
6. There is a service-oriented ideal that encourages aligned commitment across the organisation.
7. Everyone nurtures what the brand means to committed customers.
8. The brand organisation is excellent at realising high value propositions.
9. Objectives are coherent with the brand/company’s competence.
10. There are no silos.
12. The organisation works in effective partnership with the members of its value stream.
13. Business processes are actively aligned to the brand value promise.
14. Quality customer information is available in a timely way at every point of need.
15. There is a profound shared knowledge of key customer groups.
16. Customer management focuses on the value of customers over their lifetime.
17. The company and agencies all work together in partnership.
18. Evaluation is managed as a learning discipline across the participants.

Overview of how Amazon operates

Amazon’s interactive technology is smart. It's naturally focused on servicing the high value customers; its services naturally favour the regular shopper, while effective with the low value shopper. It can add up the margin on individual customers and knows their interests.

When an existing customer comes online, Amazon practices the direct marketing principle of recognising the customer by using a ‘cookie’ previously placed on their computer. As a result, Amazon personalises what the customer sees. For example, each customer will get tailored recommendations. These recommendations are generated using sophisticated statistical software that profiles the kinds of interests of each customer and also compares them with other customers, profiling them into similar groups. Each of the books and other products that Amazon carries also has category information about it, and of course there is the buying history of which customers are buying it. As a result, Amazon is more able to recommend books or other products that are likely to be relevant to that particular individual.
The website is therefore designed as a sophisticated communication tool that automates the process of creating value for the customer by recognising his or her interests.

It is an interactive, direct marketing tool that facilitates a stream of dialogue between the customer and the brand. As the customer buys or does not buy products, knowledge about the customer increases, as does the ability to serve their interests and needs.

The Amazon Internet system can also provide other related services that complement this. For example, the customer is able to register their interests, which is used in profiling, and can also register to receive information in the form of newsletters. On the Amazon.com site services provided include prompts and advice about birthday presents. This is an example of permission marketing. To add to customer involvement, there is even a facility to set up information about yourself for others to read.

Amazon makes use of one of the characteristics of the Web that is regarded as its particular strength. This is the ability to allow people to dialogue with each other. The way it does this is by allowing customers to review books and other products. Direct marketing has always aimed to involve the customer and this is a very powerful technique for doing so. Customers trust each other, often more than then they trust what they know to be advertising material. So one of the functions on the website is a system to allow customers to record their reviews, which are then scored according to how much they are appreciated by other customers. Amazon, however, goes beyond merely providing this function; it adds the classic direct marketing technique of recognising and rewarding its best customers – those who provide many valued reviews. Readers can even review the reviewers and find out about their interests.

Amazon set about finding ways to increase the sense of customer community and belonging, as well as providing interesting information for customers. So you can access information such as the favourite books of people living in Detroit, or how many people are actually online from Minnesota. Each Internet firm needs to tailor its functionality according to the kinds of services and information that its customers would find valuable.

And of course the website is designed as a way of selling. Amazon focused step-by-step on the whole process of selling to customers online, streamlining the process to make it as fast as possible while adding in as many hooks as it could to sell additional products in the process (for example, by telling you what other customers who have bought the book you have just bought have also found worth buying). From the moment of clicking on the Amazon site in My Favourites, it takes 15 seconds or less to complete the ordering of a book, including paying for it. Its patented one click technology gives unique advantage in creating customer convenience. Here is also a very practical use of knowledge of the customer designed to service the customer.

**CRM strategy in practice**

The 10-Steps strategy outlined:

1. Investment: Invest according to customer value
2. Relationship: Optimise the whole customer relationship
3. Reputation: Be true to the brand and its positioning
4. Relevance: Service each customer community appropriately
5. Value: Create enduring value first, tactical worth second
6. Touchpoints: Manage the relationship at all appropriate touchpoints (CODAR)
7. Imagination: Bring imagination to the customer experience
8. Learning: Measure and learn
9. Technology: Use technology like an artist
10. Stakeholders: Make it good for everyone

Notice how these leading CRM (and service marketing) practitioners

- Think in an integrated way, from strategy to practice, and back again, paying attention to the details that build brand and customer equity.
- Systematically develop business value through integrating customer sales, service and communication effectively.
- Use technology as a means to deliver CRM thinking, not as the objective.

**Invest according to customer value**

Amazon’s investment is strategically focused on the high value or regular buyer.

Most of Amazon's acquisition strategy has been based on PR, word of mouth (inevitably a practice weighted in favour of heavy buyer to heavy buyer) and Internet banners. Spending on Internet banners favours those who are already online shoppers, thereby focusing spend on heavy users. Furthermore, the investment in quality has been instrumental in creating stunningly effective word of mouth. In the first three months of 2000 alone, during the high growth phase of the Internet, Amazon.com acquired 3 million new customers, with virtually no significant investment in recruitment. Where did they come from? The answer seemed to be word of mouth and street creed. 70% of category buyers thought Amazon was the bookstore setting the trend and 74% would recommend to friends.

Furthermore, what matters when it comes to customer loyalty is less the percentage of customers who keep returning than the percentage of valuable
customers that return. As [ ], Chairman of Ogilvy One, put it, Fish where
the big fish are!

Category level analysis shows that one-third of customers generate 67% of sales
(Source: BrandZ 2000 study) and Amazon's loyal customers are skewed to purchase at
a higher rate than loyal customers across the category. Indeed, 40% of Amazon.com’s
customers are frequent users, compared with the category average - heavily weighted
by Amazon - of only 8%.

Since the web site is the major communication medium for the Amazon shopper,
this inevitably means that frequent, high-value buyers have more messages
imprinted on them than infrequent and low value buyers. Since so much is
invested in making it a positive experience, this means that investment is focused
where it is going to count the most.

Finally, one of the reasons why big brands are successful and most effective with
regular shoppers is that they have ubiquitous channel distribution. Amazon
achieves an equivalent through the convenience of buying online that it offers,
especially as Amazon – as we will see below – makes it particularly easy for
shoppers to buy. Through the combination of high consumer brand awareness,
presence in the My Favourites folder, a wide range of products and Amazon’s
recognition of the online customer, within its world Amazon achieves the goals of
targeted frequent communication, distribution presence and accessibility.

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**Optimise the whole customer relationship, not just acquisition**

Like other dot-coms, the Amazon story is famously about massive investment in
customer acquisition. As first mover, Amazon has high name recognition among
consumers and spectacular growth and scale. But as important has been the
investment in retaining customers and increasing Amazon's share of their wallet.
Amazon is betting that the acquisition cost of its customer equity will be repaid
through the way it tackles the ongoing relationship with customers.

Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos expresses one of the fundamental principles of good
marketing when he famously said, “When people ask me if our customers are loyal, I
say, ‘Absolutely, right up to the second somebody else offers them a better service.’” He
is determined to make customer service “the cornerstone of Amazon.com”, wanting to
make Amazon.com the most customer-centric company on the planet, the most
customer-centric company in history. The investment in service is also seen as an
investment in marketing communication, not only immediately to the online customer,
but also through word of mouth. “It was seeing how successful word of mouth was in
the first year that really led us on this path of being obsessively, compulsively, anal-
retentively focused on customer service,” said Bezos.

As he put it, instead of putting 30% of resources building great customer
experience, and 70% shouting about it, “the optimal thing to do is to spend 70% of
your time, energy, focus and dollars building great customer experience and
30% shouting about it”.

Great technology created by impassioned people is the most important part of
this 70%. Amazon's CRM technology integrates lean advertising, service and
selling through the way it operates at each Touchpoint. It uses this combination to
acquire customers, to develop them through cross selling and up selling, and to
avoid customer loss.
Amazon’s thinking at all times is centred on what will keep the customer returning and buying, and numerous highly practical and automated techniques are used to achieve this. Jeff Bezos’ commitment to the belief that the customer is always right led to a system architecture that was designed to protect and serve and delight the customer. For example a highly flexible facility to return books and use outstanding balances to part fund future purchases was generated by just one set of transactions from just one customer. Customers can sign up for regular e-mails on their subjects of interest and in addition to the system automatically picking up their interests they are invited to go online to register others. For example, "As a customer who had previously bought books on brands" I was advised in advance of the launch of a new book by a major author.

Be trustworthy in ethics and brand values

Technology enabled a symbolic act that defined the brand. When Fast Company asked Jeff Bezos what his smartest mistake was, he said that it was over committing on start-up inventory. He commented that the rational decision would have been to offer a limited number of book titles and then ramp up. Instead they launched with one million book titles and said, "damn the torpedoes". Bezos’ passion was meeting people’s needs through the online environment and he thought big and he thought high-quality service from the beginning.

The point about a million book titles is that it means all books.

It is information technology that enabled Amazon to make this kind of promise. It is relatively easy with IT to download the complete file of books in print and make it available on the Internet. Of course the problem is then delivering them but this is why Amazon has also invested so substantially in high-quality automated warehouses, the invisible step in the technological value chain.

This story also illustrates exactly how leaders define brands for good or ill when they perform highly symbolic acts, the key moments of truth for the future of the brand. These are then repeated in miniature, so to speak, with each customer. Each time a customer comes online, all the principles come into play, testing the ability of the brand to align its operations at this critical moment of truth. It’s the test of brand-character, brand-truth and customer focus.

The Amazon end-to-end guarantee includes the delivery process and product satisfaction.

The web site has a consistent look and feel; anywhere you go it is unmistakably Amazon. The technology in the web site is harnessed to communicate brand values, not only in its appearance but also in its functional performance. For example, convenient shopping across a broad range of products is one of the Amazon values. This is demonstrated or achieved through a wide range of measures including its patented 1-Click purchasing system, which enables a purchase in less than 20 seconds.
The undoubted challenge for the Amazon brand will be to convert the high level of awareness and association that it has gained for books into the Amazon ambition to be The e-mporium of the 21st century: Amazon.everything.

**Service each customer community appropriately.**

**Lovejoy goes kayaking**

One story sums up both Bezos’s long-term vision and how the concept of communities fitted into it. He told an employee called Lovejoy, who was interested in kayaking, that in the future when he came to Amazon.com he wanted him not only to find all the books on kayaking but also to be able to read articles on the subject, buy subscriptions to kayaking magazines, buy a kayaking holiday and even have a kayak delivered to the house. The story expresses with his determination to sell more individuals by focusing on and servicing a particular community’s interests through high-quality technology and other business competencies.

As the story illustrates, Jeff Bezos soon recognised how a brand can attract multiple communities of interest. A great deal of Amazon IT investment and strategy exploits this. By identifying like-minded people using increasingly sophisticated software techniques, beginning with collaborative filtering and now using some artificial intelligence, Amazon can customise recommendations more effectively. However, the Amazon philosophy is more a mass of individuals with clusters of interests than communities of individuals with clusters of interests. Nevertheless, they exploit the principle of tailored communication well.

When you buy say a book, Amazon’s computers not only tell you what else you might like but what other people bought and what they thought of those purchases. The site allows readers to post their opinions about books, to rate products, to swap anecdotes. As one commentator put it: "There is, in all this, a kind of humanness that is exactly the opposite of what online shopping was supposed to be like. Amazon is not a depopulated, Logan’s Run kind of store."

Amazon thus achieves three objectives:

1. It gives the customer an immediate feeling of being serviced and helped in a practical and trustworthy way that goes towards creating a social bond, a primary element in developing committed customers because it means that they are more likely to feel that the brand meets their needs and values.
2. It gives the customer and experience of being part of a larger group; in a very modest way it contributes to a sense of belonging, that vital need described by Abraham Maslow and again contributing to social bonding. Successful CRM is fundamentally based on the principle of treating each customer as an individual. When we know the kind of customer we are dealing with we can treat them even better as individuals.
3. It significantly helps to develop customer sales and share of wallet. To the extent that Amazon is market leader, it sets the share of wallet target for the rest of the category. So effective has this been that Amazon.com has not only been growing at a phenomenal rate in what had been a dead market, but it has actually led to growth in the market.
It would be invidious to criticise so effective an operator, but what are the next opportunities for improvement? Many sites, such as Microsoft and Yahoo, allow users to configure their home page. That’s a great service to offer and with cookie technology reasonably achievable. The data can also be used in community analysis and profiling.

Amazon goes to great lengths, and generally quite successfully to tailor data and presentation on the website and in its email and e-newsletters, and it provides customisable options, e.g. the preferred store home page from its category range. Generally, the scale of personalisation does differentiate it from the pack.

It uses the standard, though routinely not used, database marketing technique of insertion of variable text/images, for example, the books read by other readers or recommendations. When financial service companies send personalised information about accounts, it rarely amounts to more than a mass mailing with personalised data. It is still talking to everyone in the same way. The really smart move is first tailoring look and feel, tone and copy and content and offer towards particular communities and then personalising with individual data as above. Here is the Amazon opportunity.

If I was Amazon’s chief marketing officer, I would want to be able to:

- Understand my different types of customers and use this to generate tailored drive to web programmes.
- Recognise not only who has come online but also the type of customer who has come online - their community and their interests.
- Then I would want to be able to design a number of different sides to my brand to appeal to those different types of customer.

The recommendations above represent the step beyond just offering configuration options. When Amazon can create different newsletters, different web images and different product selections tailored to different customer communities, not just one model personalised, or a series of separate communications from different product sets, then it will be even better at using the Web as a one-to-one tool.
Create enduring value first, tactical worth second

Many web sites look for stickiness. The larger challenge is to generate the kind of superglue value that bonds customers for life. Amazon has conceived an entirely new way of thinking about the ancient art of retailing and in the process created a series of brilliant communications that have earned it amongst the highest levels of loyalty in retail or e-tail. The latest BrandZ study puts Amazon amongst the top 5 US brands for achieving high levels of consumer bonding, which is not surprising since its culture aims to move consumers from transactional clicks to relationships that click. Amazon therefore adds stickiness not just to its web site, but also to customer relationships? The Amazon “flow experience” keeps customers returning to the web site to browse and buy.

“When I went in to test the Amazon performance, I ended up buying a book I didn’t plan, just because its recommendations were so smart.”

Let us consider the Amazon Service in terms of the two Value models discussed in earlier sessions: the Cloverleaf Model and the Financial, Social and Structural Bonding model.

The Cloverleaf Model

The Cloverleaf Model of value creation has 4 main elements:

1. Knowledge and information: including both what you need and what you’re given.
2. Process: what you do or have to do to experience the service.
3. Tangibles: what you get and the aesthetic response to tangible and sensory elements – for example, design and build/execution values.
4. Relationship: the quality and type of relationship, for example how intimate and personal it is.

Knowledge
Recommendations, newsletters, reader’s comments, product descriptions, search facilities, reminders and so on are key technology driven aids to differentiating the knowledge dimension of the customer experience.

The investment in knowledge to obtain customer familiarity, e.g. by completing details about yourself or frequent purchase and the statistical algorithms that are applied to this as recommendations all make Amazon increasingly valuable, increasing loyalty.

With greater expertise in the Amazon site, users can also get more value out of it. It is easy to use but rewards the regular shopper.

Customer process
Book lovers love to browse books; shoppers love to shop, and the Amazon structure makes it easy to browse and buy. Take books. Like many book lovers I
still like to go visit and browse the tangible world of the bookshop. However, one of the biggest gaps between what I would buy and what I did buy has historically been the complexity of turning an interesting book review into a purchase. Now, when I have an impulse, it is easy and quick to buy. This is of course the promise of well-executed web site, and what applies to books applies to all the other interest groups that Amazon caters for.

Functional performance and tangibles

Amazon systems deliver a broad choice of products efficiently and effectively, as well as recommendations that are pretty effective. Its web site has good aesthetic presence: functional but not boring; full of information but not cluttered.

Hello, Angus Jenkinson. Check out the new recommendations area. (If you’re not Angus Jenkinson, click here.)

Can’t find the right gift? Waited till the last minute? No worries. Send an Amazon.com gift certificate instantly—in e-mail or attached to an e-card.

Relationship

The relationship is substantially with a system and other customers. Call centre technology has not been implemented so it is hard to talk to anyone. You do get emails from Editors and can email customer service, which tends to produce uneven and sometimes standard or automated responses. There is potentially room for improvement here. However, the technology does do a superb job of recognition and automated interaction.

Manage the relationship at all appropriate touch points

Amazon is committed to an interactive approach to CRM marketing. It invites you to subscribe to newsletters emailed to you. It welcomes you to each return and acts like it expects you. It provides an opportunity for you to tour its home and in each room it comments on its furniture and fittings, introduces you to other friends and plays the host. It makes suggestions. It is instantly responsive to your demand and promises prompt despatch. And it even responds to complaints.

Amazon automated the complex process that starts when you hit the patent-protected “1-Click” buy technology and ends when your purchase is delivered to your door. Then they created a “flow experience” that keeps customers coming back to Amazon’s website to read product reviews or one another’s “wish lists,” And it’s all guaranteed.

Critical MOT: Want to buy.

Here’s a big one. You hear about something, maybe you read a review, see an ad, someone mentions it, and you want to buy. Any hassle means potentially lost sales and lost affection. Solve it quick and we build behavioural and emotional loyalty. Earlier, we described how the 1-Click option speeds up the buying process, but there is another great tool for dialogue between the brand and the customer.

Ever been to one of those big stores where they really do sell a lot of stuff? Ever walked around them? Browsing is great when you want to browse. Finding is great when you want to buy. How about having someone to ask who says just where it is, and then says, “Click me once and you got it!”

Well here you are. Amazon’s excellent search engine goes scurrying through the shops for you like and eager beaver to bring back just what you want. And it’s smart, offering Z-shops and reseller options, especially when New isn’t there, as well as related stuff.
Bring imagination to the customer experience

In the early days Bezos interviewed every salaried employee and decided whether a person should be hired - and this was after an exhausting process involving other team members. He did this because he was convinced that he needed to hire absolutely the best people he could find in order to create a brilliant service culture. "Competitors can never copy a culture," he said. During the process of quizzing applicants he asked them about their values and personal interests. He also set challenges such as "how would you design a car for a deaf person?" The answer of course is to plug your ears and drive around in cars to experience what it feels like to be a deaf driver. According to Bezos, one of the Amazon.com mantra is that "we're going to obsess over our customers and not our competitors".

Here is just one critical example of how imagination goes into the shopping experience to make a critical difference. Recommendations are at the heart of Amazon’s success: Amazon’s own recommendations plus those of other customers.

Amazon has
- a series of newsletters on various topics,
- an immediate set of recommendations when you come online,
- your own area for recommendations,
- specialist advice on all kinds of key topics, like Digital cameras or buying cars online, or editors choice Jazz,
- best seller recommendations, and much more.

Amazon has editors and experts on all topics; they classify products and aim to be a perfect guide, and when they don’t know they enlist thousands of customers into giving advice. It adds up to a powerfully imaginative tool for social bonding and increasing sales. Even critical reviews by other readers that put you off purchasing increase trust in the brand.

Measure and learn

Amazon has exact knowledge of the value and cost of each of its customers and has impressive feedback systems and can use this knowledge to design and improve its systems, marketing and services. There are always opportunities to improve, even at Amazon. However, a Business Week interview with Bezos
demonstrates their commitment with a brilliant application of continuous service improvement, which by the way follows the Pareto principle.

Q: Where are you trying to improve efficiencies? Any examples yet?
Bezos: One is customer service. We take the top 10 customer service requests and we continuously eliminate them, starting at the top. The No. 1 reason was “I typed in my Zip code wrong.” So we built a tool where people can change their shipping address by themselves, so they don’t have to call customer service. You go about systematically eliminating these top reasons for calling customer service. I’m pleased to report that at this point, our No. 4 reason why customers call customer service is to say “Thank you.” That’s an example of the way you go about improving operating efficiency, by removing the root causes for why customers call or e-mail.

Use technology like an artist

Perhaps the most important point to make is that most people don’t think of Amazon primarily as a technology company but as a service or shopping site. The many examples already given indicate how technology is harnessed to CRM purposes that add value.

Amazon’s CRM system depends on the following functional applications:

1. A relational database of customers, including a history of their purchases and activity, as well as the marketing activity of the brand (such as sending newsletters). This is the kind of functionality that we saw in session 3.5, when describing the marketing database.
2. A relational database of product information, including not only basic information such as price of also reviews, editorial and such like.
3. An order processing system, including financial processing, such as credit cards, linked to a back-end delivery system. In the case of Amazon, this includes automated warehouses.
4. A dynamic web page management system that can take standard information and formats and customise them to the customer.
5. An efficient and brand enhancing site design and appearance, including navigational tools and aids.
6. Automated communication systems, such as e-mail systems, order information systems, and message management while the customer is online, that ensure personalised, timely and relevant communication.

In reviewing the Amazon website, it is worth noting that a Microsoft research study in 2001, conducted with Cranfield, identified that integrated corporate websites, such as Amazon, are much more effective than other styles, such as non-interactive (or even interactive) or transactional sites. It is the most mature sites that realised the greatest benefits from e-business services. It also found that customer satisfaction is the key performance indicator, and much more important than so-called e-indicators.

Make it good for everyone

The 10th challenge is to:

- Develop brand, knowledge and financial equity for the company;
• Create fulfilment, development and financial satisfaction for the employee;
• Ensure the customer is happy and committed, and hence create customer equity.

Despite the immense losses and rollercoaster share price ride, clearly the CRM systems have contributed brilliantly to these goals.

What is it like to work for Amazon? Bezos is clearly committed to making it a good experience, and there have also been famous emotional benefits from participating in such an impressive marketing story, but there are also many growing pains, not least damage to stock options and layoffs late 2000. As far as the technology is concerned, however, clearly the fact it handles so many things well, from automated warehouses to customer purchase, makes things potentially better for the employee. It’s certainly generally good for the customer, as the high bonding levels show. And finally its delivering profits!

CODAR Analysis

CODAR is a tool that achieves the big ambition of unified communication planning and evaluation. CODAR, a proprietary tool with a patented technique, defines and evaluates all communication activities, from top to bottom, across all contact points, within all disciplines, and related to all and any business objectives, using a single intelligent framework derived from the way communication affects people. CODAR leans on cognitive theory, while also drawing from behavioural and systems theory. It also draws on decades of marketing communication practice and psychological theory.

CODAR application architecture

CODAR has the following holistic and fractal architecture:
• An overall business-related goal, such as market share, brand or customer equity.
• A hierarchical but fractal communication planning structure: master communication objectives with multilevel subsidiary communication objectives and activities
• Communication priorities and objectives for each communication activity, from the master plan to the lowest level communication activity, based on a unified framework of planning dimensions.
• A set of measurable objectives for each planning dimension defining what constitutes successful accomplishment.
• A defined relationship between lower and higher-level communication activities, such that the contribution of each communication activity to the overall plan is clear.
• Optimisation tools for channel planning, selecting the best media and discipline combinations
• A learning and evaluation econometric database
• A communications knowledge base

CODAR planning dimensions

CODAR uses five dynamic and inter-dependent planning dimensions to plan and evaluate any communication. These are:
1. **Idea forming**, referring to the communicator’s objective of influencing the ideas, associations and thinking of the communication recipient, for example about the brand or a particular project or product. This is therefore primarily a cognitive planning dimension.

2. **Relationship building**, referring to the objective of causing the communication recipient to feel him or herself connected through some form of relationship with the brand or its representatives. Examples might be the feeling of affinity with the values of the brand or culture, trust or appreciation, the sense of being personally recognised and appreciated, gaining accessibility to the communicator or brand, feeling a sense of belonging to some privileged or special group, involving the brand and its products more in everyday life, and others. This is therefore primarily an affective planning dimension.

3. **Behaviour activation**, referring to the objective of causing an intentional or actual behaviour change by the communication recipient, for example sales activation, sales enquiry or commitment to behaviour change. This is therefore a conative-planning dimension.

4. **Help** or service support, referring to the objective of providing required help or support to the communication recipient, for example in the form of information about a product or policy or help in a process. Here the objective is to reduce anxiety and generate the feeling of being cared for.

5. **Product experience**, referring to the objective of giving the communication recipient an experience, whether actual, such as in a product trial, or imaginal, such as through a virtual, visual or verbal representation of the subject or product. Here the proposition is that it is difficult to agree to a proposition unless it and its consequences can be imagined. Each of these objectives or dimensions is present to some extent in every act of business-oriented communication. However, the relative priority and specific objectives of each element will vary from communication to communication. It is the process of selecting the relative priorities (represented on a radar chart) and specific content of these objectives and subsequent evaluation of performance against them that constitutes the core of the process and tool.

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Amazon Website CODAR Analysis

![CODAR Analysis Diagram](image-url)
Executive takeaway

The learning from this case (and others) suggests the following actions by senior marketing executives:

1. Develop processes and tools that allow a thorough understanding of customer communities and the brand and ensure that this is available to and understood by all relevant executives and staff.
2. See customers as people to serve with relevant value propositions: bonded customers are more valuable, and bonding comes from trust and appreciation.
3. Be enthusiastic and passionate. Encourage communication and shared learning across the teams, have a win-win attitude and co-operate effectively with internal and external agencies.
4. Design and implement routines for collecting unduplicated customer data and elaborate them into relevant and timely information about customers that is available at the point of need.
5. Focus on the most valuable customers and actively audit all available Touchpoints in order to optimise customer acquisition, retention and upgrade.
6. Ideas are the driving force of your brand and business. Ensure that your organisation/brand is motivated by an equally powerful and clear organising idea. One that connects customers and employees with a vision of achievable success.
7. There must be an emphasis 3D-Worth: balanced benefits for customers, employees/partners, and the organisation.
8. The brand must provide value that no competitor offers and that the organisation communicates it clearly to everyone involved, internally and externally.
9. All parts of the brand service work together. The brand experience must be consistently of relevant value and service. All aspects of the business are designed around delivering the brand value promise.
10. There is a coherent set of values that the leaders transmit through the organisation. The brand appeals to people who have affinity with the values of the organisation.
11. Good leaders will motivate people, which is fundamental to success.
12. There is a constant dialogue with the customers whose return on investment is effectively measured.