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A. Sadigov,

Doctoral student of the Department of Applied Economics,

Azerbaijan State University of Economics (UNEC)

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9387-2104>

INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS: FEATURES AND STRATEGIC FOCUS

A. Ш. Садигов,

докторант кафедри “Прикладна економіка”,

Азербайджанський державний економічний університет (UNEC),

м. Баку, Азербайджан

ІНТЕГРОВАНІ МАРКЕТИНГОВІ КОМУНІКАЦІЇ: ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ТА СТРАТЕГІЧНА СПРЯМОВАНІСТЬ

The article analyzes the essence, characteristics and goals of integrated marketing communications, reveals the features of the process of their formation and the strategic focus on enterprises. The process of integrated marketing communications is considered and schematically presented. The objective reasons for the relevance of this topic in modern conditions are indicated. The main factors influencing the process of implementing the concept of integrated marketing communications and the main problems solved in the process of their use are identified. A schematic model of the components in the system of the firm's strategy

and the formation of integrated marketing communications has been compiled. The conceptual foundations and approaches to their content are defined. Considering integrated marketing communications as a significant event in the modern vision of market interaction and a way of communication impact on the target audience, the author outlines their prospects. Based on the above approaches, a conceptual model of the system of integrated marketing communications and an algorithm for its development and implementation in the activities of the enterprise are proposed. As a factor in the effective formation of integrated marketing communications, attention is focused on Internet marketing. The directions of its use in organizing a campaign to promote goods and services are shown. The article attempts to determine the main mechanisms of integrated marketing communications on the Internet, depending on the goals of the enterprise to promote goods. A flow-chart of the theoretical and methodological substantiation of integrated marketing communications has been developed, which can serve as a basis for choosing a future strategy for the company's marketing activities and the basis for making managerial decisions. The study is supported by informative tables and diagrams that complement the empirical material contained in the article. The materials of the article can be used in the preparation of specialists in the field of marketing. At the end of the publication, certain conclusions are drawn regarding the features of integrated communication technologies and their strategic focus.

У статті проаналізовано сутність, характеристику та мету інтегрованих маркетингових комунікацій, розкрито особливості процесу їх формування та стратегічну спрямованість на підприємствах. Розглянуто та схематично представлено процес інтегрованих маркетингових комунікацій, що розширює можливості до розуміння їх особливостей формування та розвитку. Вказано об'єктивні причини актуальності цієї тематики в сучасних умовах. Виділено основні фактори, що впливають на процес впровадження концепції інтегрованих маркетингових комунікацій та основні проблеми, які вирішуються у процесі їх використання. Складено схематичну модель компонентів у системі стратегії фірми та формування інтегрованих маркетингових комунікацій. Визначено концептуальні засади та підходи до їх змісту. Розглядаючи інтегровані маркетингові комунікації як значну подію

сучасного бачення ринкової взаємодії та спосіб комунікацій на цільову аудиторію, автор окреслює їх перспективи. На основі вищевказаних підходів пропонується концептуальна модель системи інтегрованих маркетингових комунікацій та алгоритм його розробки та впровадження у діяльність підприємства. Як фактор ефективного формування інтегрованих маркетингових комунікацій акцентується увага на інтернет-маркетингу. Показано напрями його використання при організації кампанії з просування товарів та послуг. У статті зроблено спробу визначити основні механізми інтегрованих маркетингових комунікацій в інтернеті залежно від цілей підприємства щодо просування товарів. Розроблено блок-схему теоретико-методологічного обґрунтування інтегрованих маркетингових комунікацій, яка може бути базою при виборі майбутньої стратегії маркетингової діяльності компанії та основою для прийняття управлінських рішень. Дослідження підтримується інформативними таблицями і схемами, що доповнюють емпіричний матеріал, що міститься в статті. Матеріали статті можуть бути використані при підготовці спеціалістів у галузі маркетингу. Наприкінці публікації зроблено певні висновки щодо особливостей інтегрованих комунікаційних технологій та їхньої стратегічної спрямованості.

Keywords: *marketing communications, integrated marketing communications, marketing activity, features, strategic orientation, algorithm.*

Ключові слова: *маркетингові комунікації, інтегровані маркетингові комунікації, маркетингова діяльність, особливості, стратегічна спрямованість, алгоритм.*

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Marketing interactions, reflecting the essential aspects of the market paradigm of the modern economy, drive the movement of marketing communications towards their integration. This trend is most clearly manifested in the formation of integrated marketing communications (IMC). Today, the role of marketing communications (MC) in the economic activities of enterprises has noticeably increased. The

construction and use of IMCs in the enterprise management system is relevant, which will make it possible to develop and implement a single marketing communication program with effective and integrated use of MC tools in their activities.

The development and implementation of effective communication policies, the coordination of communication tools with each other to achieve maximum efficiency, is one of the key factors of success. Enterprises direct efforts to meet the needs of consumers and customers, while trying to inform promising consumers as much as possible about their product, services and sales conditions, convince them to give priority to these products and brands. These goals are achieved by promoting through a complex of marketing communication channels, which is a IMC.

ANALYSIS OF RECENT RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Analysis of modern scientific publications indicates that research on the issue of analyzing the essence of IMC, their place and roles in marketing activities and enterprise management are the focus of scientists and practitioners. In the scientific literature, the problems of the formation and use of IMC are considered by both domestic and foreign scientists marketers: I. Ansoff, Sh. Akhundova, G. Bagieva, V. Barinova, R. Best, A. Voichak, E. Gulieva, RJ, T. Dibrova V. Zunde, I. Ibragimov, F. Kotler, S. Mazytkina, S. Mirzoeva, T. Primak, I. Reshetnikova, E. Romat, O. Romanenko, P. Smith, A. Starostina, B. Halligan, S. Holenson, M. Sherasheva and others. At the same time, assessing the contribution of these scientists to the development of marketing theory, the study of the essence of marketing communications in general and integrated marketing communications, in particular, it should be noted that the analysis of the process of formation and management of integrated marketing communications, their strategic aspect was not given sufficient attention. In this regard, this article discusses the features of the formation and use of integrated marketing communications in the marketing activities of enterprises and their strategic focus in the context of a volatile consumer environment.

PURPOSE OF THE ARTICLE

The purpose of this article is to study the essence of IMC, the peculiarities of their forging as a holistic, integrated system of activity of an economic entity and to identify the strategic orientation of the manifestations of these communications in the conditions of the modern consumer environment.

STATEMENT OF THE MAIN BODY OF RESEARCH

MC in general economic research is interpreted as a set of mechanisms, methods and technologies that contribute to the creation and transfer of data of various market entities on the promotion of information about goods or services to target audiences with mandatory feedback. However, in recent years, the concept of IMC has become widespread, the theoretical and methodological basis of which is “the idea of balancing various forms and methods of communications within the framework of the general marketing strategy of the company's interaction with buyers and business partners, ensuring the achievement of effective impacts on them due to the system completion of various types of marketing activities, creating conditions for their rationalization and generating a cumulative synergetic effect of integrating the processes of transmission and perception of information about goods, services, projects, competitors, prices, new players in the market, etc.”[1, p. 3].

The relevance of theoretical and methodological directions for the study of IMC, the determination of the laws of their formation and sequence of development, the creation of modern mechanisms representing IMC as an advanced technology of marketing activities, creating conditions for the growth of its effectiveness by combining all methods and tools for promoting goods into a complex system, and at the same time creating sustainable competitive advantages of firms, is caused by a number of objective reasons, which include:

Firstly, the need for a systematic analysis of the patterns of the formation of the IMC system, the identification of the internal logic of its development within the framework of the experience of promoting individual MC to an integrated system in

world practice, which gives communication resources new research approaches and expands their functional prerequisites.

Secondly, the importance of the formation of a system model of IMC, expressing an integral set of communications using tools, methods and technologies of MC and, thereby, creating a synergistic effect.

Thirdly, the urgency of measures to reorganize the IMC system to create a positive environment for the exchange of data between firms that bring goods and services to the market with a target focus (including the volatility of the attitude of customers to advertising information, the growth of personal needs for the product, the increased functionality of the IMC system through the use of information technologies, etc.

Fourth, the weight of investment and innovative transformations of economics in general and the work of separate firms, in particular, as well as the development of marketing research preceding the formation of IMC. In this regard, in-depth scientific research should be carried out to make effective management decisions on MC corresponding to the modern stage of development, capable of scientifically substantiating modern models and methods of their integration, and determine the methodology for assessing the effectiveness of the entire system.

Fifth, the materiality of the reaction of the inherent features of the process of creating MC in the corporate sector of the economy, reflecting the corporate culture, the nature of interaction with clients, the possibility of using an integrated approach to the formation of MC in the production, commercial and logistics systems of the company in certain territories.

I.A. Ibragimov believes that the composition of strategic marketing facilities is very wide, because among others they include “functional areas of the organization – areas of activity, organizationally represented by functional structural units specializing in the performance of certain functions and ensuring effective activities, both structural units and the organization as a whole” [2, p. 49-50]. Such functional

areas can be, for example, marketing research (market research) or internal marketing (labor management). Currently, the above problems have been sufficiently investigated and presented in the economic literature [3; 4; 5].

Strategically, these strategic marketing actors can be classified as follows:

- market-leading firms, which include those with a significant share in the respective market, compared to other firms;
- competitive firms that have every opportunity to become a leader in order to gain market share;
- catch-up firms with certain potential, but their system of long-term goals does not provide for leadership;
- small firms that build their operations in small segments.

In this direction, for individual firms operating on the market, many over-the-top scientists offer a systemic marketing strategy (Table 1) [6; 7; 8; 9; 10].

Table 1. Ratio of strategic market leadership

Market leader strategies	Competitive strategy	Strategies for catching up firms	Small firm strategies
Market expansion Barrier protection Increase in specific gravity	Direct focus Indirect focus	Commodity race Assortment race	Keeping customers on the market Interconnection with other firms

In general, any strategic marketing area should include: the formation by a company of its own market with knowledge of customers and their requests; the company's presentation of its special values for this market; creation by the company of its own coordination network for delivering its idea to the target market.

The development and implementation of a special company strategy involves the creation and application of a marketing complex system, as well as IMC (Fig. 1).

In our opinion, the study of components in the company's strategic activity system in relation to IMC is a new step in such scientific developments.

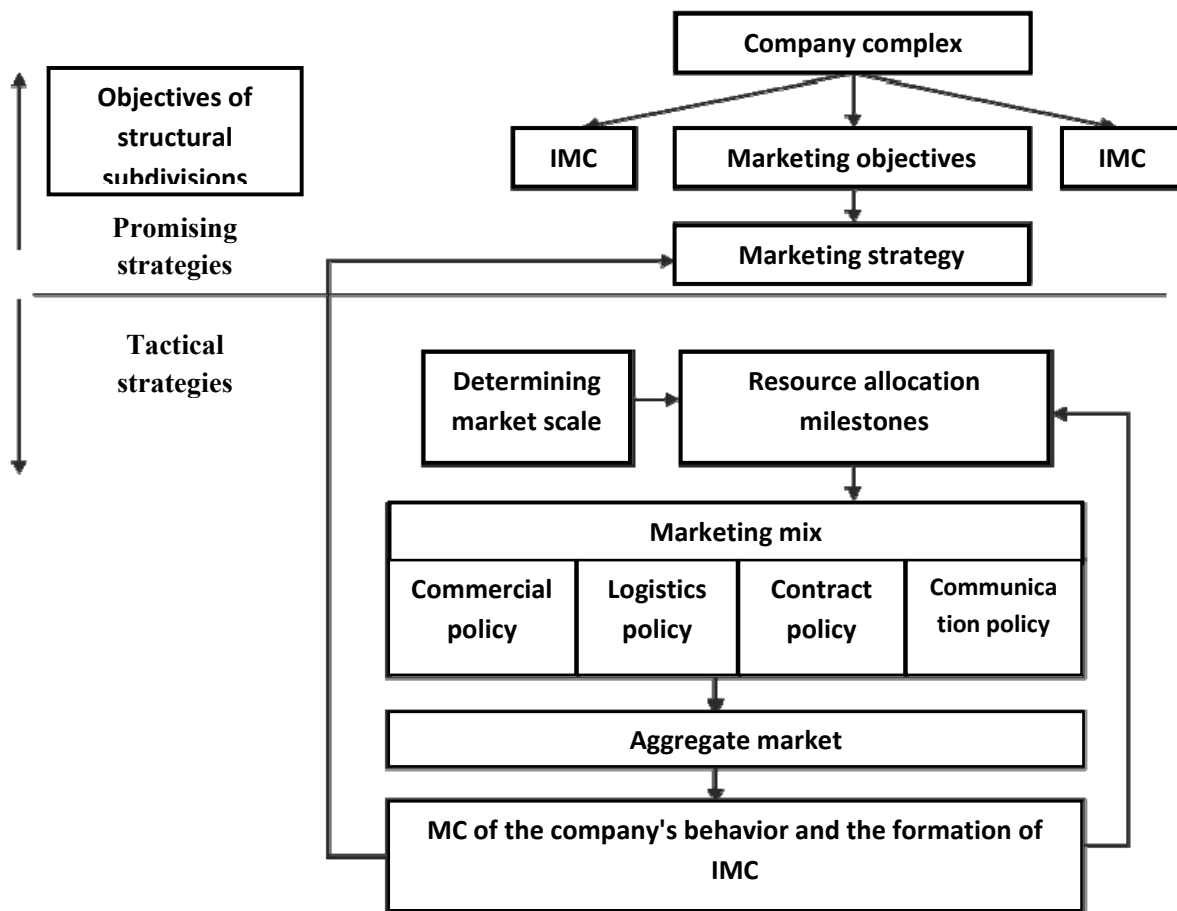


Fig. 1. Components in the company strategy and IMC formation system

This approach makes it possible to define the management system of MC as a focused activity of the company to form market stability based on information technologies and market trends.

Hence, the purpose of MC can be attributed to:

- search for the necessary information for customers about the product, company and sales;
- creation of a positive image of the firm;
- stimulating the client with data of a certain orientation to goods and services, as well as to the conditions of sale;
- formation of stable relationships with clients.

It follows that the distribution of MC goals can be achieved on the basis of the decomposition of the main goal into strategic, tactical and operational goals. The characteristic of MC as a process can be represented as follows: sender; coordination;

means of circulation and its distribution; decryption; barriers; feedback; response; receiver. The supplier is the party sending the appeal to the other party. In this case, the information goes through the coding process and is brought to the client through the information distribution means – MC channels, through which the appeal is transmitted from the sender to the recipient. The customer receives the information by decrypting the message, where the receiver assigns value to the characters transmitted by the sender. Further, the response communication process is established – a set of responses of the recipient resulting from contact with the appeal. After that, there is a phase of round-trip communication, that is, part of the response that the recipient brings to the attention of the sender. The complexity in the MC process is such an integral set of the system as unscheduled media interventions, or distortions, as a result of which an appeal is received to the recipient, which is different from what the sender sent, i.e. barriers are created.

The development of the conceptual foundations of the IMC can be represented by the following example:

Table 2. Phases of IMC development

Phases	Period	Basic Phase Models
Category development	1990-1995	IMC information typology model
Development of an integration model	1995-2000	Partner relationship model
		5-step model
Rationalization of integration models	2000s	8-step IMC model
		Cyclic model of IMC

Next, consider the approaches to the content of the IMC:

- IMC as an MC planning paradigm arising from the need to assess the strategic role of their different areas;
- IMC as the planning paradigm of MC, which determines the strategic role of communication areas and their coordination;
- IMC as a practice of unification of all MC managers;
- IMC as a need to assess the strategic importance of their individual areas and the optimal combination to ensure phasing and find the maximum impact of communication programs;
- IMC as a system of technological sales methods that are aimed at effective interaction between firms and target groups;

- IMC as a type of MC activity, characterized by a special synergistic effect.

Considering IMC as a significant event of the modern vision of market interaction and a way of communication impact on the target audience, it is advisable to note their prospects. These include:

- development of integrated promotion paradigms as a promotion system depending on targeted marketing;
- combination of mechanisms, methods, technologies in IMC, which will lead to the emergence of their new conceptual models;
- systematization of the main promotion paradigms will provide an opportunity to talk about their system, in which firms begin to actively use the collected information about possible customers;
- development of personal media technologies in the Internet communication space, deepening the client's market;
- the development and application of integrated knowledge about the client is a guideline for the evolution of the MC system, where the composition of messages and the level of their saturation with these or other data will be determined to a greater extent by the client himself;
- MC paradigms will be reformed depending on the development of concepts in commercial activities;
- development of standard paradigms for formation of promotion process in company marketing;
- intensification of processes in business markets, transition of markets from the competitive phase to the hyper-competitive phase, from transaction marketing communications to communications of stable relationships with clients;
- an increase in the number of direct-response, “different” communications carried out in the form of communication, in which the capabilities of intermediaries in communication are activated.

Based on the above approaches, a conceptual model of the IMC system can be proposed (Figure 2). The formation of IMC contributes to the solution of problems, which include the study of the market and economy with a variety of forms and models implemented by modern firms.

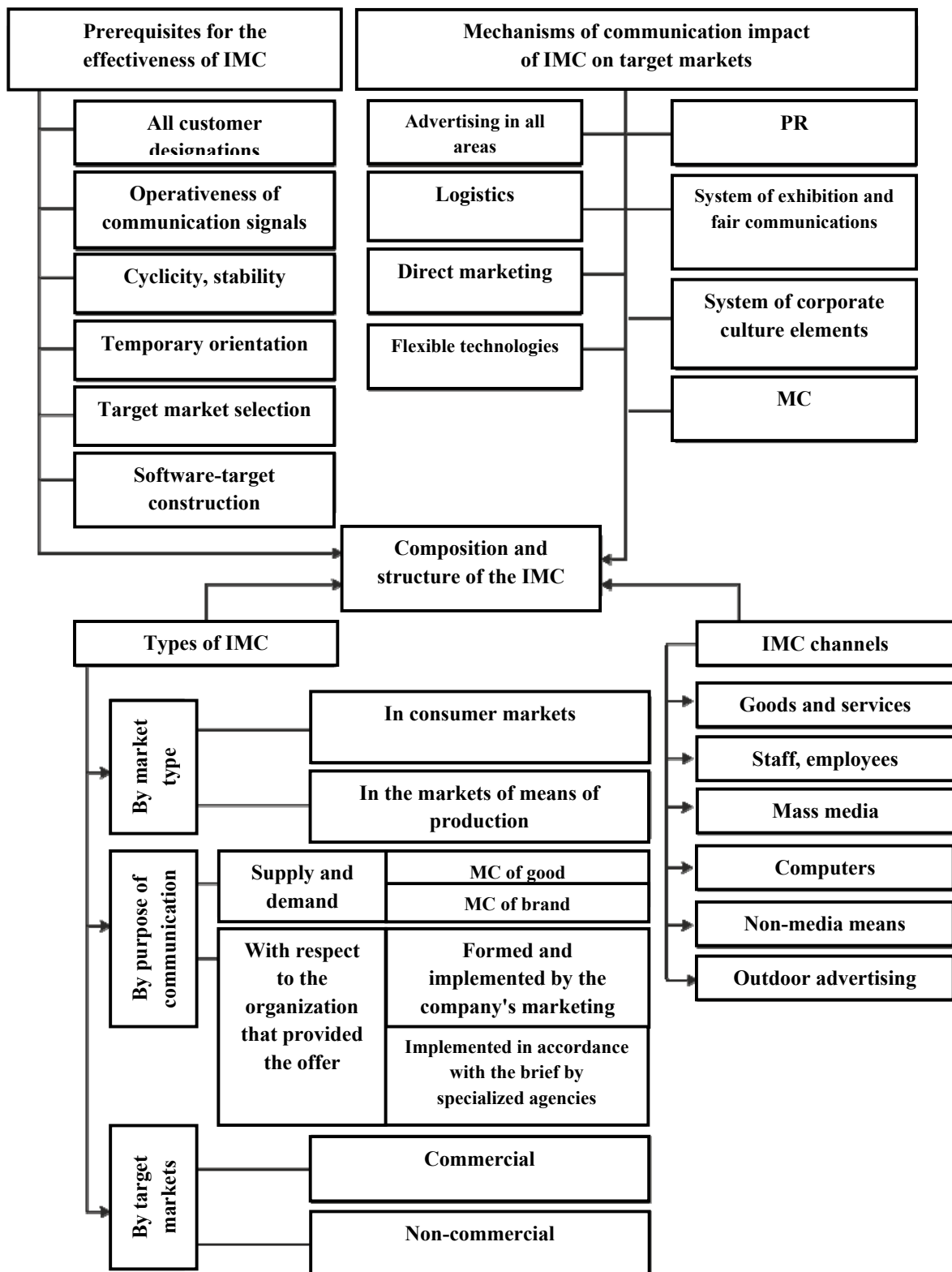


Fig. 2. Flow-chart of the conceptual model of the IMC system in modern companies

Further, we propose the company's IMC algorithm (Fig. 3).

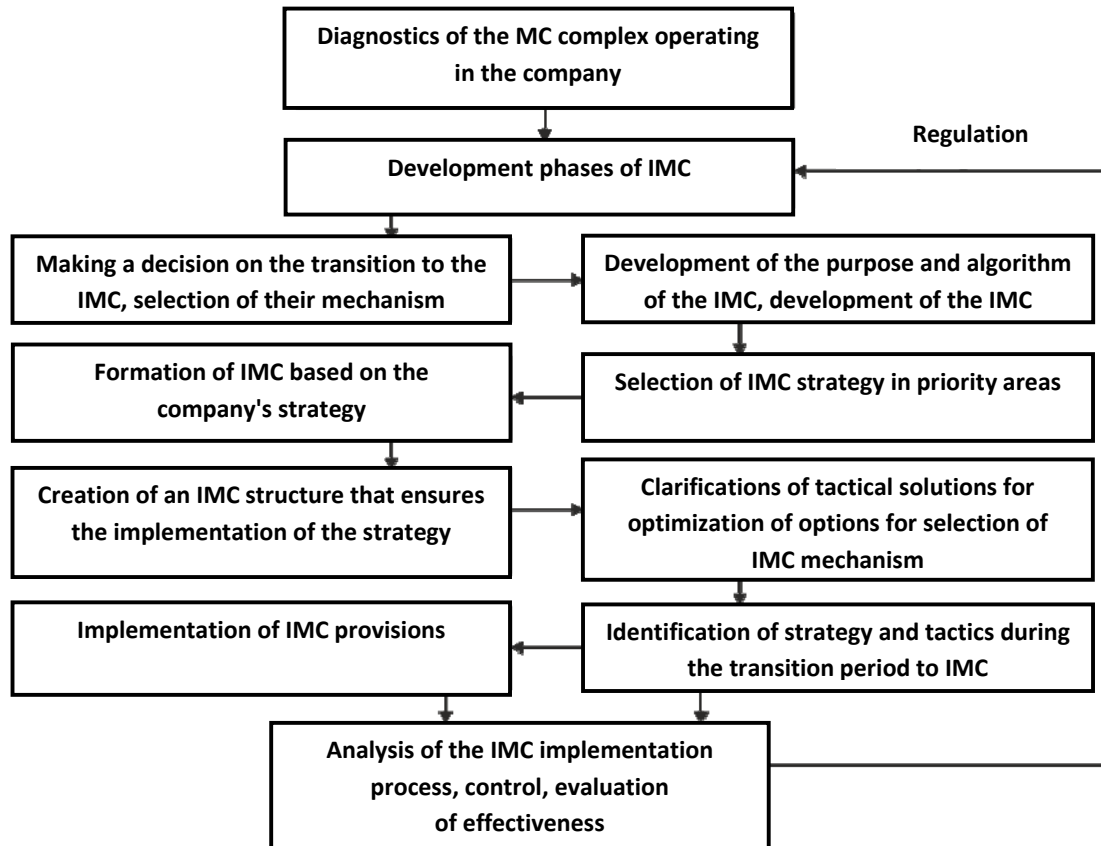


Fig. 3. Flow-chart of the algorithm for the development and implementation of IMC in the company

For more efficient formation of IMC, modern information and communication technologies should be used, in particular, Internet marketing [11]. In general, Internet marketing, duplicating the main features of existing marketing, differs from it in the composition of communication tools (Table 3).

The problem of selecting MK funds when organizing a campaign to promote goods and services on the Internet can be carried out in the following areas: designation of goals; definition of the target audience; selection of promotion tools; media planning. The goals can be both short-term sales growth and their long-term strategy. To achieve them, it is necessary to allocate a target audience, which will be covered by a range of communication influences and the selection of MC tools will be carried out.

Table 3. Composition and structure of Internet marketing in the IMC system

Advertisement	Sales promotion	Public relations	Personal sales	Direct marketing
Media advertising Contextual advertising Advertising screensavers	Online games Virtual contributions Loyalty programs	Internal site Mailings Internal blog Press releases Internet mass-media Interactive services Online workshops External corporate forums and conferences	Online presentations Interbet catalogs Websites	Email Mailings Internet catalogs Online shopping Search engine optimization

Table 4 below shows the possibilities of using separate mechanisms depending on the goals of the promotion company.

Table 4. IMC mechanisms on the Internet depending on the company's goals for the promotion of goods

The purpose of the company to promote goods on the Internet	Mechanisms of IMC				
	Advertisement	Sales promotion	Public relations	Personal sales	Direct marketing
Sales growth	Media and contextual	Online promotions	Printed, aimed at sales and promotion	Website organization form	Mass and addressable mailings, communication to the website page
Creating an image	Media and contextual, aimed at informing	Printed, about successful promotions	Information describing corporate events	Making deals	Mass and address Mailings

Thus, summarizing the above, it is possible to develop a flow-chart of the theoretical and methodological justification of IMC (Fig. 4).

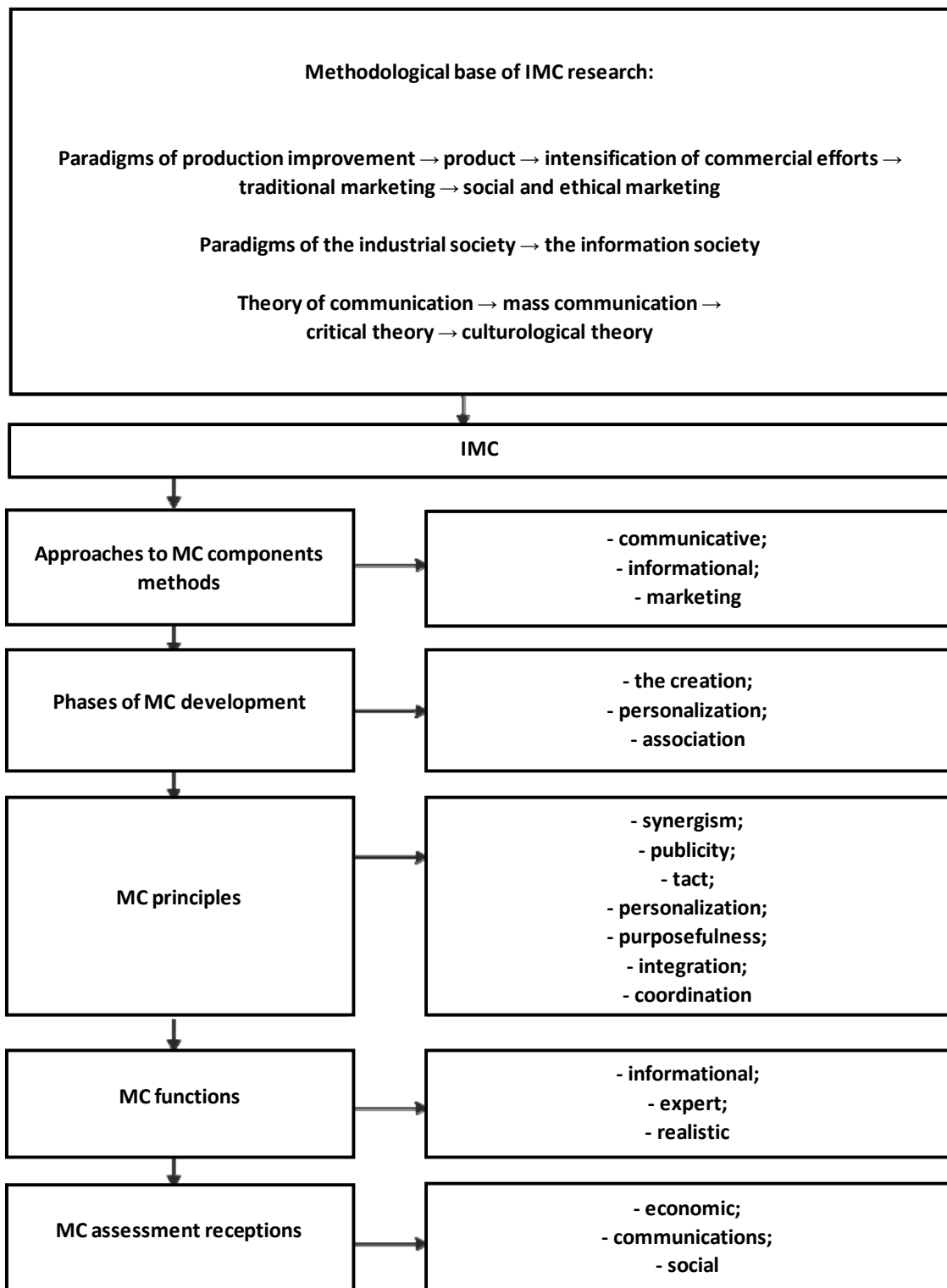


Fig. 4. Flow-chart of the theoretical and methodological substantiation of IMC
 Compiled by the author on the basis of [12, c. 10].

CONCLUSIONS

Thus, studies conducted to identify the peculiarities of integrated communication technologies and their strategic orientation made it possible to conclude that IMC is an even more complex category of the market environment than MC. Its features appear in the following directions:

- formation of a new ratio of leadership in the MC market;
- change of components in the IMC formation strategy system;
- change of stages and phases of IMC development;
- formation of a new conceptual model of the IMC system in modern firms;
- development of a special algorithm for development and implementation of IMC;
- change in the composition and structure of the IMC due to the introduction of the Internet;
- as a result, the model of methodological justification of IMC was changed.

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