

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>

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MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS IN THE MODERN CONDITIONS: ISSUES OF THEORY

А. Ш. Садигов,
докторант кафедри "Прикладна економіка",
Азербайджанський державний економічний університет (UNEC), м. Баку, Азербайджан

МАРКЕТИНГОВІ КОМУНІКАЦІЇ У СУЧАСНИХ УМОВАХ: ТЕОРЕТИЧНІ ПИТАННЯ

The article deals with the theoretical foundations of the study of marketing communications in modern conditions. The urgent need to rethink theoretical approaches to the economic content of marketing communications and related categories is substantiated. The essence of marketing communications, their place and peculiarities of formation in the marketing complex system are analyzed, the relevance of promoting goods and services through these communications is argued. Based on the analysis of domestic and foreign sources, the concepts of "communication", "marketing communications", "complex of marketing communications" and its components (advertising, sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing) are studied. The purpose, tasks and new opportunities of advertising in the information society are revealed. The targets of an important component of marketing communications — sales promotion are highlighted, such types of them as strategic, tactical and operational are highlighted. A classification of PR types in the system of marketing communications is carried out, their key goals and contents are determined in various areas. The main elements of external PR are presented, the grouping of PR technologies in the system of marketing communications is carried out, the algorithm of operations for the rationalization of external PR is proposed. The specificity of direct marketing is shown. The characteristics of the states of purchasing readiness are given — awareness, knowledge, goodwill, preference, conviction, making a purchase. Changes are indicated, which led to the transition from the traditional understanding of marketing communications to the paradigm of integrated marketing communications. The degree of research of verbal and non-verbal communications, which are the main forms of communication impact, is determined. The classification of marketing communications depending on the process, the totality of relationships and tools is presented. The study is supported by informative 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, advertising and public relations. At the end of the publication, certain conclusions are made, indicating the topicality of the study of marketing communications in a theoretical context.

У статті розглядаються теоретичні основи дослідження маркетингових комунікацій у сучасних умовах. Обґрунтовується назріла необхідність переосмислення теоретичних підходів до економічного змісту маркетингових комунікацій і пов'язаних з ними категорій. Проаналізовано сутність маркетингових комунікацій, їх місце та особливості формування в системі комплексу маркетингу, аргументовано актуальність просування товарів і послуг за допомогою цих комунікацій. Виходячи з аналізу вітчизняних і зарубіжних джерел, вивчені поняття "комунікація", "маркетингові комунікації", "комплекс маркетингових комунікацій" та його компоненти (реклама, стимулювання збуту, зв'язки з громадськістю, прямий маркетинг). Розкриваються мета, завдання та нові можливості реклами в умовах інформаційного суспільства. Висвітлюються цільові установки важливої складової маркетингових комунікацій — стимулювання збуту, виділяються такі види як стратегічні, тактичні та оперативні. Проводиться класифікація типів PR у системі маркетингових комунікацій, визначено їх ключові цілі та змісту за різними напрямками. Представлено головні елементи зовнішнього PR, здійснено групування PR-технологій у системі мар-

кетингових комунікацій, запропоновано алгоритм операцій для раціоналізації зовнішнього PR. Показано специфіку прямого маркетингу. Дана характеристика станів купівельної спроможності — поінформованість, знання, прихильність, перевага, переконаність, здійснення покупки. Позначено зміни, до яких привів перехід від традиційного розуміння маркетингових комунікацій до парадигми інтегрованих маркетингових комунікацій. Визначено ступінь дослідження вербальних та невербальних комунікацій, що є основними формами комунікаційного впливу. Представлено класифікацію маркетингових комунікацій залежно від процесу, сукупності взаємозв'язків та інструментів. Дослідження підтримується інформативними схемами, що доповнюють емпіричний матеріал, що міститься в статті. Матеріали статті можуть бути використані при підготовці фахівців у галузі маркетингу, реклами та зв'язків з громадськістю. У висновку публікації зроблено певні висновки, що свідчать про злободенність дослідження маркетингових комунікацій у теоретичному розрізі.

Key words: marketing communications, complex of marketing communications, advertising, public relations, sales promotion, direct marketing, purchasing readiness, algorithm, classification.

Ключові слова: маркетингові комунікації, комплекс маркетингових комунікацій, реклами, зв'язок із громадськістю, стимулювання збуту, прямий маркетинг, купівельна спроможність, алгоритм, класифікація.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The modern information society is characterized by the penetration of information and communication technologies (ICT) into all spheres of entrepreneurial activity. This is possible due to the formation and effective implementation of the communication policy of the enterprise — marketing communication policy. In the process of marketing management, the company, when implementing the communication function, should not only create a high-quality product, set an attractive price for it, but also bring it to the target groups of customers, communicate with its customers and consumers. The formation of a complex of marketing communications (MC) depends on many factors affecting their main functions and determined by the goals of these communications, which form a complex hierarchical system. There is an organic combination of the advantages of a network approach with the latest ICT, innovative forms of communication and commercial activities in the business environment, which significantly changes the aura of entrepreneurship and requires a rethinking of theoretical approaches to the economic content of MC and related categories.

ANALYSIS OF RECENT RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

The study of theoretical issues of marketing communications in entrepreneurial activity is devoted to the works of leading Western market scientists — I. Ansoff, B. Berman, P. Drucker, K. Keller, F. Kotler, J. Lamben, J. Nielsen, M. Porter, A. Thompson, F. Trias De Beza, R. Wilson, B. Halligan and others. Categorical aspects of MC were covered in fundamental publications of Ukrainian scientists: A. Bratko, A. Voichak, S. Garkavenko, V. Gerasimchuk, G. Zagory, S. Ilyashenko, N. Kudenko, T. Lukyanets, M. Oklander, A. Pavlenko, P. Pochentsova, T. Primak, I. Reshetya Nikova, O. Romanenko, S. Romata, A. Fedorchenko, A. Shafalyuk and others. Among Azerbaijani scientists, we note the scientific works of Sh. Akhundov, A. Ashurov, R. Akhundov, I. Abbasov, L. Hajiyeve, T. Imanov, A. Mamedov, D. Mamedov, S. Mirzoev, E. Guliyev, R. Shyukyurov and others.

Existing scientific works are of great theoretical and practical importance, however, the economic development of domestic enterprises based on foreign experience requires further research. In modern conditions, it is important to improve the classification of the MC system, determine their goals and components of the MC complex, which will make it possible to develop a single, effective marketing communication program in the enterprise.

PURPOSE OF THE ARTICLE

The purpose of this article is to study the conceptual apparatus of MC in modern conditions, to identify the nature of the main definitions and to present the author's understanding of these issues. To achieve this goal, theoretical generalization methods were used to determine the original MC categories, as well as analysis and synthesis to characterize them. The need to solve outlined problems determines the choice of issues considered in this article. Among them are the disclosure of the essence of MC as a system, their goals, improvement of its classification and a clear definition of the components of the MC complex, which allow to obtain the maximum economic effect and significant social benefits from entrepreneurial activity.

STATEMENT OF THE MAIN BODY OF RESEARCH

The advent of the digital economy has fundamentally changed the entire marketing communications (MC) system. This applies to their tools and composition, mechanism and relationships between enterprises and customers, relations between investors and public organizations, commercial and advertising activities, etc. Currently, the composition of MC has high dynamics in accordance with their constantly emerging modern mechanisms. In this regard, the study of these mechanisms, the clarification of the conceptual apparatus of MC is a significant task of scientific research.

Theorists in the field of the information society believe that the modern economy is completely within the framework of information disseminated through various channels through digital communications. Along with this, the information society is "amazed" by advertising, brands from the pages of the media (primarily on the Internet) demand loyalty from customers. As a result, economic literature has developed a prevailing opinion about the system of digital MC that has developed in modern society [1, p. 5—7; 2, p. 6—13].

In our opinion, the main components of MC that require comprehensive study are such categories as communications, information impact, integrated marketing complex, etc.

The category "communication" appeared in scientific circulation at the beginning of the twentieth century and received various interpretations. Most scientists consider the transmission and exchange of information in society in order to influence it as an important content of communication [3, p. 12]. According to F.I. Sharkov, communications (including marketing) is a system where interaction processes and communication methods take place that allow

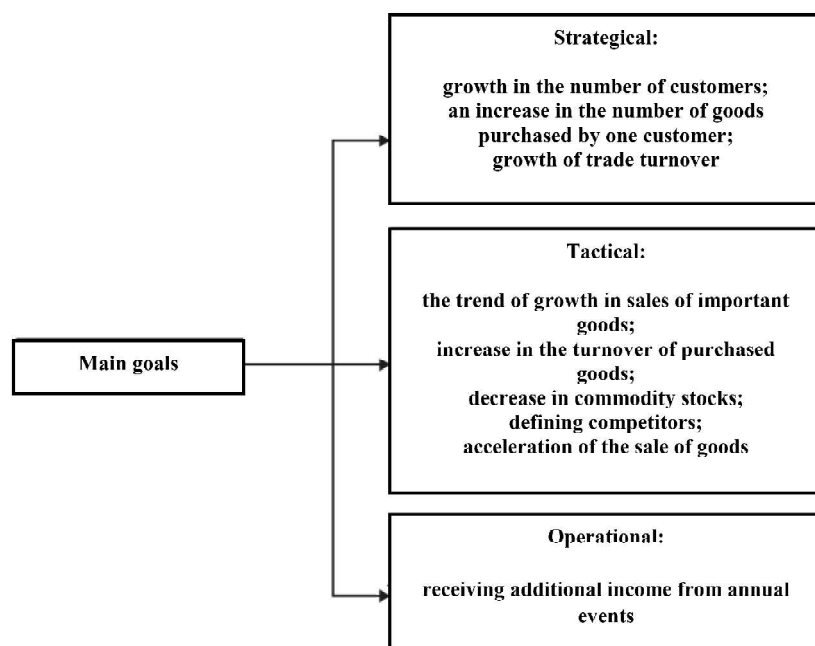


Fig. 1. The ratio of strategical, tactical and operational sales promotion

you to form, transmit and receive various information, in this case marketing [4]. Many scientists-economists support the point of view that marketing communications mean the distribution of messages transmitted in different forms and in different ways [5]; management of the process of promotion of goods and services at all stages: before sale, at the time of purchase, during and after the end of the consumption process [6; 7, p. 40].

MC include the following components: advertising; promotion of sales; public relations (PR); direct marketing.

Advertising occupies an important place in the MC system and is a very capacious and multi-purpose type of commercial activity, while having independent significance. As evidenced by international practice, it acquires maximum efficiency in the implementation of the entire marketing complex. The object of advertising is the product, and the

properties are payment, efficiency, focus on a specific purchase, sale through a system of intermediaries. Its main goal is to influence the consumer in such a way that he chooses the advertised product when buying. The objectives of advertising are to inform the consumer about the goods and services, their properties and terms of sale. During the development of MC, new opportunities for advertising appear, which turns into a more complex multilevel and multistructure object.

Promotion of sales as an element of the MC complex is expressed through a system of incentive measures and methods aimed at strengthening the response of the target audience to individual events within the marketing strategy of the company as a whole and its communication strategy, in particular. In the sales incentive system, a significant place is given to planning, which includes several phases: the selection of a target group for the implementation of incentive measures; selection of the goals of the shares, formation of tasks and incentives; timing definition and audit of incentive measures; setting stimulus costs. A number of sales incentive goals are identified: strategic, tactical, operational (see Fig. 1).

Public relations, or PR, is a constant activity to ensure cost-effective information interaction between the company and its public. In this case, they are classified into external and internal (see Fig. 2).

The goals of external PR, as a rule, include the development of corporate im-ja, the formation of prestige and positive reputation of the company; promotion of jobs and services; development of measures in the field of necessary opportunities and discussion issues; resolving conflict situations; bringing the concept of marketing firms in promising markets to the understanding of consumers; higher efficiency of marketing activities.

The content of PR can be reflected in the following areas:

a) PR in the field of trade: the formation of a positive image of any trading company, product and company producing it; advertising of trading firms, goods and services

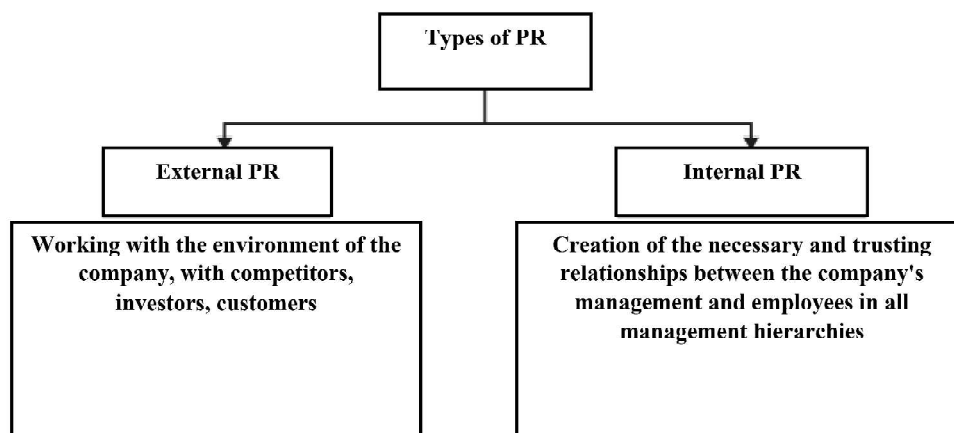


Fig. 2. Types of PR in the MC system

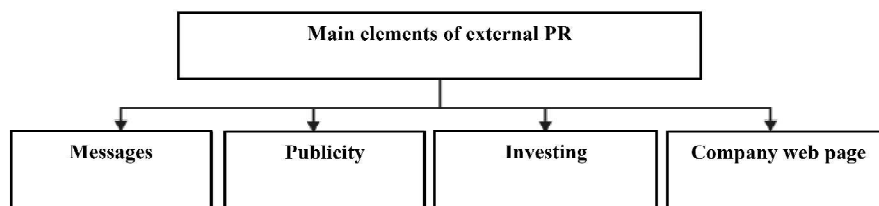


Fig. 3. Direction of external public relations in the MC system

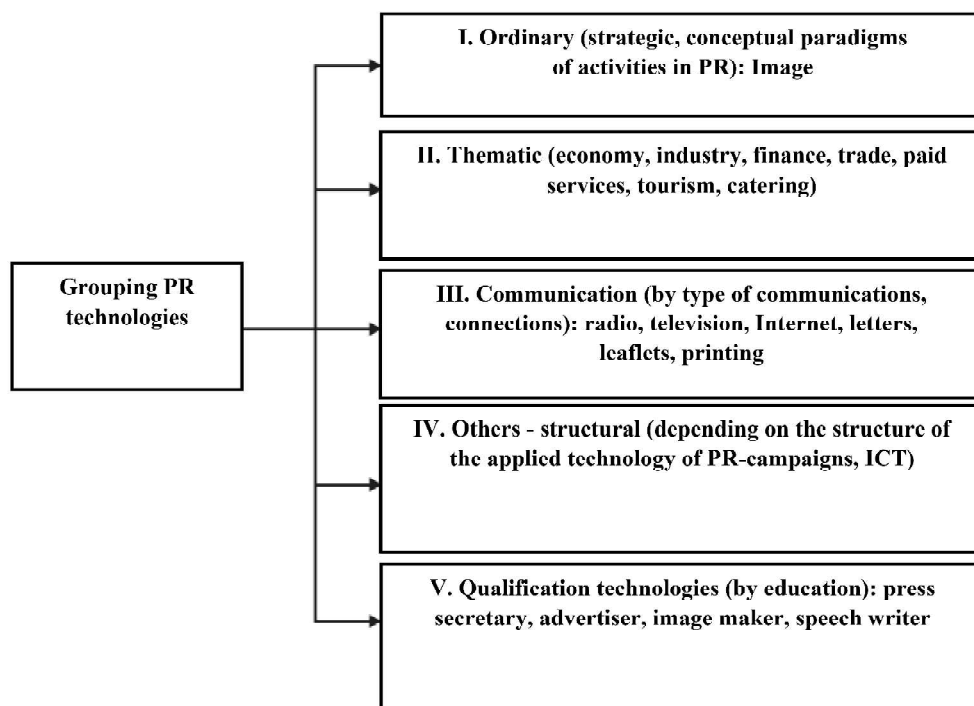


Fig. 4. Grouping of external PR technologies in the MC system

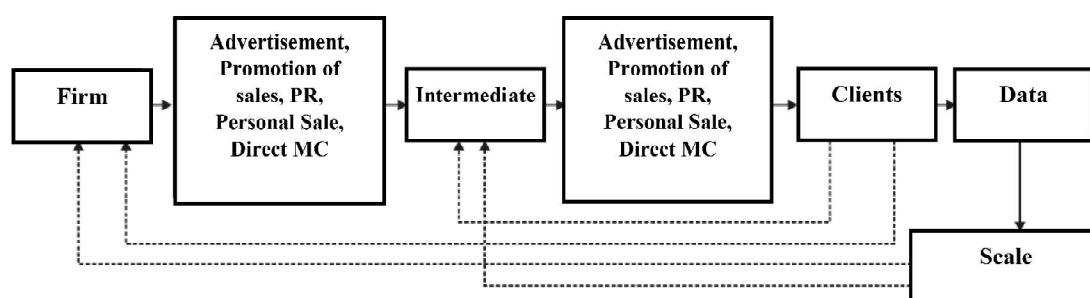


Fig. 5. CMC flow-chart

and organization and promotion of relevant advertising campaigns; forming brands and logos of trading companies and products sold by them;

b) PR in the field of media: preparation and publication of materials in the press; formation of information environment on television; advertisement; creating news; affirming the positive image of firms or different individuals; propaganda of society through the media.

External PR is implemented by means shown in Fig. 3, and their classification is shown in Fig. 4.

To create a rational external PR, one should adhere to a certain algorithm of operations: determining the range of needs for customers — identifying the competitive advantages of firms and goods that provide the main benefits of customers of a particular segment — determining the motives due to which customers make purchases (exclusivity of goods, efficiency, reliability, quality of services, etc.) [7, p. 50].

Internal PR is aimed both at effective organization of communications within the company and to overcome crisis situations, maintaining corporate traditions, increasing employee loyalty to their company. Its objectives are: distribution of the communications chain; improving corporate culture; strengthening of personnel independence; creation of a single information space; formation of reliable communication links and achievement of mutual understanding; receiving feedback from the company's employees; publicity in the manual; creation of uniform corporate concepts of conduct in accordance with the corporate code and ethics.

An important component of marketing communications is direct marketing, which has different interpretations: an

MC tool that uses many media tools to influence the client; logistics that ensure the sale of the company's goods directly to the end customer without the participation of intermediaries; means for promoting the product based on the use of databases and the combined use of various forms of communication with the target audience; special type of marketing activity [8; 9].

In our opinion, the category of direct marketing can be defined as an interactive communication system based on the joint application of basic types of promotion of goods and services and communication channels for direct impact on the target market segment in order to obtain a certain return. Its specificity lies in the combined application of the main types of marketing communications and communication means, the addressability of the communication message, the economy, as well as the interactivity of feedback with the communicator [7, p. 52—53].

Often in the economic literature there is the concept of "complex of marketing communications" (CMC). According to I. V. Borushko, CMC is "a specific combination of advertising, public relations and propaganda activities, promotion of sales and sales, personal sale and direct marketing techniques used by enterprises, organizations to achieve advertising and marketing goals" [10, p. 8]. CMC can also be defined as a promotion complex, an incentive complex, integrated marketing communications (IMC) and activities to generate demand and stimulate sales.

CMC unites participants in this communication, channels and communication techniques and is considered as a single complex.

CMC includes a number of sequential units (Fig. 5).

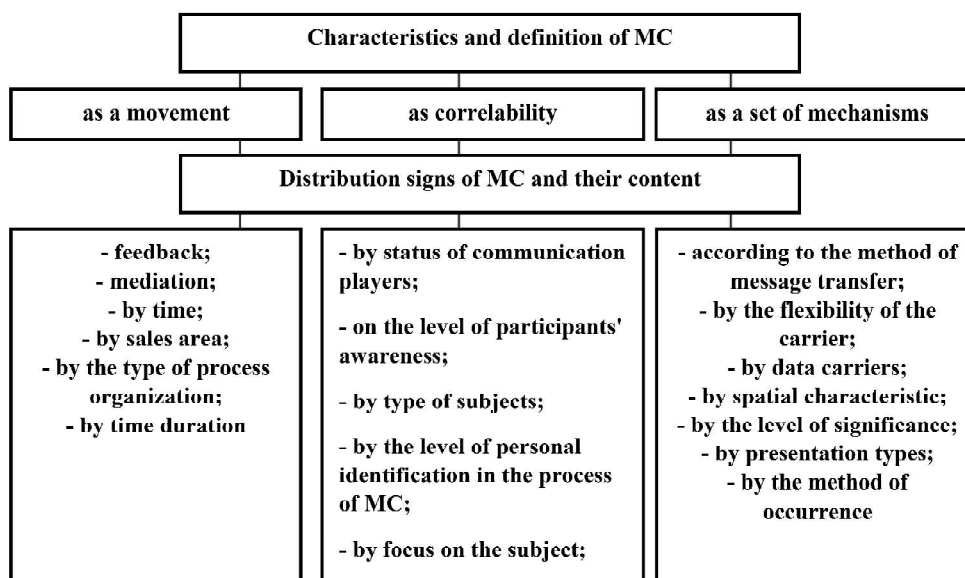


Fig. 6. Classification of MC depending on the process, sets of relationships and tools

In direct connection, information goes from the manufacturer or commercial company (block I) to customers, target audiences (block V). If in block II the component marketing communication acts as an advertiser's order, an appeal layout for connections with the audience, then in block IV the components of the promotion complex are characterized as implemented forms of influence on the mass customer. After the client receives communication information, an action takes place based on the expression of the client's desire to purchase the necessary product. Information is shared with the environment, so block VI reflects information and personal communications. Contact audiences include the public's views on values, the firm and their advertising.

The modern company maintains communications with its intermediaries, clients and various contact audiences. Companies must still communicate with their customers. At the same time, the composition of communications should not be accidental. Companies train sales staff to be knowledgeable and friendly with all participants in the communication process. There are a number of factors affecting the ratio of CMC components: the type of market, the level of customer's readiness to purchase goods and the stage of the product life cycle. Promotion measures are distinguished by the significance and consistency of financing in consumer and industrial goods markets.

It should be noted that the target audience goes through several states of customer readiness, which can be attributed to [10, p. 11–12]:

— Awareness. It is necessary to determine the level of awareness of the target audience about the product or company. The audience can be completely unaware, know the same name, or something insignificant besides the name.

— Knowledge. You should know which part of the audience has insignificant, some or sufficiently complete information about the product, decide on the formation of knowledge.

— Benevolence. It is necessary to assess on a special scale the ratio of the target audience to the product, and in accordance with the results obtained, first eliminate the shortcomings, and then popularize the advantages of the product and company and its positive actions.

— Preference. The target audience may feel favorable to the product, but not give it preference over others, which requires the communicator to take effective measures to form consumer preference or loyalty.

— Conviction. It is important to ensure that the target audience is convinced of the need to buy a specific product.

— Making a purchase. The communicator must mobilize the techniques that lead the client to make a purchase and get them to implement this final step.

Currently, the main communication trend is the active use of IMC. IMC connects all MC mechanisms — advertising, sales promotion, PR, personal sales, direct marketing. At the same time, the main elements of the marketing complex also participate in communications. In particular, the product affects the client with its quality, packaging, design; low price indicates poor product quality; distribution channels carry image load, etc.

IMC converts MC in order to "see them as they are seen by the client — as a stream of information from a single source" [11, p. 11–13].

The shift from traditional understanding of MC to the IMC paradigm led to the following changes:

— The distribution of responsibility, i.e. for coordination of all tools of the IMC system for this product by the customer, is the responsibility of the communications marketer.

— A strategy for entering a new market, where the main part of the firm's IMC is advertising. The entry into the market of new brands should begin with their exclusive distribution.

— Coordination of individual media. When using IMC, the choice of promotion means is not limited to advertising and public relations activities and is supplemented by sales promotion methods.

— Step-by-step marketing positioning. Communications campaigns should target individual consumer audiences, which may include customers, staff, sales staff, distributors, nonprofit representatives, and more.

Among the above forms of communication impact, verbal and non-verbal communications occupy a special place. The ability to build verbal, or speech, communications is one of the conditions for successful communications. The structure of the language is determined by the power of the character dictionary, grammar, syntax, redundancy. Certain requirements are made for the content of texts created for communication — the formation of an effective impact on the audience, non-standard, professionalism, etc. Non-verbal communications are poorly studied. This is despite the fact that, according to the researchers, in the process of communication, information is transmitted in words by 7%, sound character and intonation by 38%, while the remaining 55% are transmitted non-verbally [12, p. 39].

Summarizing the above, we can present the following classification of MC (Fig. 6).

From the position of MC as a process, it is significant that it ensures the rational exchange of information about goods and services of firms, coordination of joint actions, and obtaining mutually beneficial results. By characterizing MC as a set of relationships, it can be argued that they provide stability in the creation of values and contribute to the provision of MC.

CONCLUSIONS

Thus, the concept of MC is a complex category of the market environment. In the context of the information society and the digital economy, the approach to them is fundamentally changing. At the same time, one should study in depth such areas of MC as advertising, promotion of sales, public relations, direct marketing. In the field of advertising: advertising becomes more complex, multilevel, multifaceted, multistructured. Promotion of sales: new ratios of strategic, tactical and operational goals of promotion of sales are formed. PR: new directions of external and internal public relations are emerging. IMC solves integration problems in the field of MC at a higher quality level.

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