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## **Introduction**

The effectiveness of an organization's marketing and strategy are essential factors that drive the growth and success of the business. If companies want to thrive in today's tough business environment and win new customers, they need to devise strategies that are not only effective but also cutting edge, with the goal of increasing customer satisfaction and focus. In recent years, consumers have placed increased importance on a few aspects, including a company's commitment to environmentally friendly practises and a positive image for the brand it represents. The evaluation of the marketing strategies and plans that Adidas has developed in order to increase their appeal to customers will be the primary subject of this research project. In the course of this research, a number of the most important theoretical aspects of marketing will be analysed so that various marketing tactics and actions can be discussed and understood in more depth. It will be possible to analyse these innovative marketing methods for the effects that they have had on the community if the influence of these techniques is studied and analysed thoroughly. The most important marketing strategies that Adidas is utilising in the current climate will be dissected, and the impact those strategies have had on the efficiency of the company will be evaluated.

## **Background information of Adidas**

German brand Adidas is one of the major makers of sporting goods and accessories in the world. The company is headquartered in Germany. When Adi Dassler established Gebrüder Dassler Schuhfabrik in 1924, one of his primary goals was to supply athletes with the highest-quality equipment that was available (Wilson, 2012). The headquarters of Adidas may be found in Germany, and the corporation is responsible for the employment of more than fifty thousand people (Mahdi et al., 2015). The constant commitment of the company to provide goods of the greatest possible quality to customers is one factor that contributes to the success of the brand. Adidas is one of the most successful sports brands in the world and operates as a global public corporation. The business provides customers with a comprehensive selection of goods, which range from athletic footwear and apparel to a large collection of accessories, such as watches, wallets, glasses, and other items associated with sporting activities (Wohlfeil and Whelan, 2006). Over the course of recent years, this company's financial expansion has been incredibly robust, and they are widely regarded as an efficient distribution route for high-quality products. Since Adidas' acquisition of Reebok in 2006, Adidas has appealed to the top market sector,

while Reebok has catered to the lower-end market (Muhammad, 2021). Reebok is still a subsidiary of Adidas.

### **Communication**

Communication refers to the fundamental process of exchanging information between individuals.. Niknam et al (2020) assert that communication can be defined as the exchange of information among individuals through a shared platform of symbols, signs, or behaviours, as posited by certain scholars. The significance of business communication is expounded upon, given that the prosperity of any organisation hinges on the efficacy of its communication practises. The phrase "business communication" pertains to the act of conveying viewpoints, thoughts, and notions that are pertinent to commerce to the appropriate recipients. The absence of essential elements in communication precludes the attribution of successful communication. Efficient communication necessitates the existence of essential constituents, including a sender, information, receiver, and feedback. Despite its apparent simplicity, communication is a complex field of study.

According to Daylight (2017), there exists a diverse array of factors that can impact the transmission of a message from its originator to its intended recipient. Factors that influence human behaviour encompass a range of variables such as affective states, socio-cultural context, communication strategies, and geographic location. Due to the intricate nature of modern workplaces, employers globally assign significant value to the possession of exceptional communication abilities. The task of achieving precise, efficient, and open communication is indeed a formidable one, as noted by Kuznar and Yager (2020). The sender typically utilises a blend of verbal and nonverbal cues to "encode" communication, as posited by Talukdar (2017). Upon receipt, the recipient proceeds to decode the message, which may have been transmitted in various forms, including oral or written. The intricacies of communication may result in the dissemination of slightly varied messages to multiple recipients. Incomplete communication can result from various factors, such as unclear messaging, unsuitable setting and medium, hindrances to message delivery, or misdirected messaging.

### **Models of communication**

The utilisation of communication models facilitates the comprehension of fundamental concepts, methodologies, terminologies, and tenets of communication among students. Although there may be variations in the demonstrations of certain models, most of the

components remain consistent. The classification of communication models can be broadly categorised into three distinct groups (Foran and Lee, 2022). The first category is linear models, which exclusively concentrate on one-way communication. The second category is interactive models, which take into account two-way communication. Lastly, the third category is transactional models, which examine two-way communication in which messages become increasingly intricate as the conversation progresses. The Shannon-Weaver model, which is a theoretical framework for communication, will be elaborated upon in the following section.

### **Shannon- Weaver model of communication**

Since its initial publication in 1948, this model has undergone significant modification, and development. Warren Weaver was a scholar of the scientific discipline, whereas Claude Shannon was an expert in the field of mathematics (Ma, 2015). The aforementioned notion is also applicable to interpersonal communication among humans and has a noteworthy influence on present-day social sciences. This particular model is widely recognised as the foundational framework for a vast majority of contemporary communication theories, earning it the moniker "the mother of all models."

The Shannon-Weaver model posits that the communication process comprises five primary stages. The components of communication include the sender, encoder, channel, decoder, and receiver. The utilisation of the term "noise" was initially introduced in the Shannon-Weaver model (de Mesa, 2022). The term "noise" is used to describe any factor that creates disturbance or interference in the channel stage of a model. This phenomenon pertains to the presence of ambient sounds that impede the recipient's auditory perception of a message or to external stimuli that hinder their focus on the communication (Peterson and Khalimzoda, 2016). The Shannon-Weaver model's original focus on electrical communication limits its consideration of the various human elements that may impact a receiver's message decoding process. The presence of barriers to language or cultural disparities may hold significance in this scenario, as these factors are distinct from any possible interference in the communication channel (Rohayatin et al., 2022).

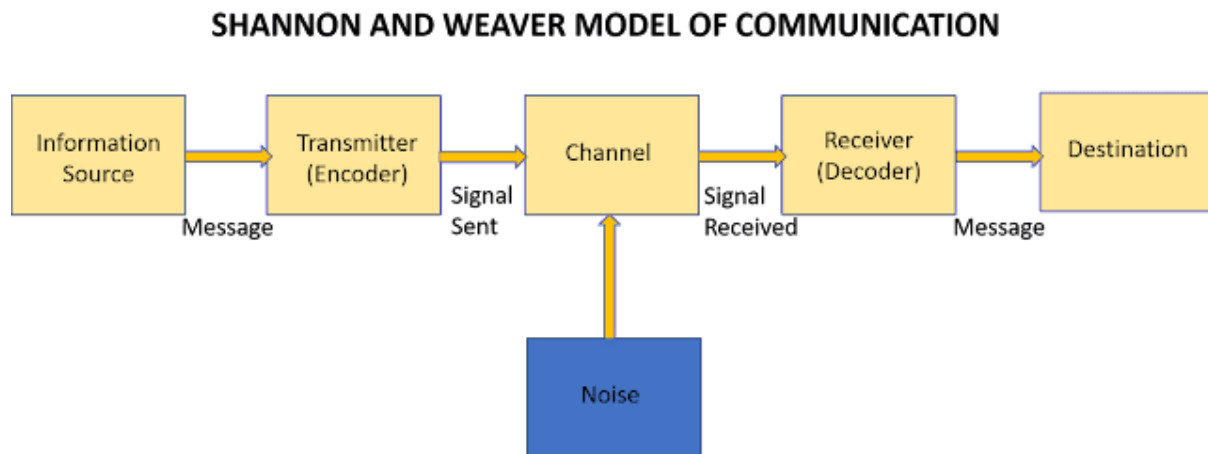


Figure: Shannon And Weaver model of communication (Adapted from Michelle, 2023)

### **Advantages and disadvantages of Shannon-Weaver model**

The Shannon-Weaver model exhibits certain imperfections. The process has been subject to criticism for its tendency to oversimplify and convey a unidirectional and linear model of communication, while also neglecting the nuances of human interpretation, as noted by Chris (2023). Furthermore, it encounters difficulties in accommodating modern multimedia communication, wherein extensive audiences receive information at diverse intervals. Notwithstanding, the fundamental concepts persist in present times and have served as the foundation for various other innovative theories and communication models.

### **Integrated marketing communication**

Integrated marketing communication, or IMC for short, is a relatively recent innovation in the field of marketing communication. IMC was developed with the intention of supporting senders in speaking with a unified voice. Customers regularly use a range of devices to access the internet, which has resulted in rapid changes in what channels are available, how they are used, and technological progress (Finne and Gronroos, 2017). This has led to rapid growth in the number of customers who own several devices. The consumer has the ability to access a variety of media formats and is able to interact with a number of them at the same time. They can choose to accept or reject certain sources, receive and send messages, and participate either actively or passively in different forms of media (Keller, 2016). Additionally, the consumer is influenced by a range of social media platforms in addition to a number of other sources, like communication inside relationships (Key, and Czaplewski, 2017).



Figure: IMC (Adapted from Taylor, 2019)

Synergy is the target of the traditional IMC approach, which works towards the goal of consolidating all of an organization's outbound communications into a single channel of communication (Keller, 2016). Since the company still manufactures the instruments, this perspective continues to be mostly instrument-driven (Finne and Gronroos, 2017). In the literature on IMC, outcomes are frequently emphasised, along with effectiveness, consistency, and careful attention to detail (Keller, 2016). As an IMC competency grows, it is likely to be felt in better performing initiatives, which in turn result in enhanced brand outcomes such as market position or financial success.

### **Promotion**

Promotion is defined as an attempt to make anything popular or successful, notably through the use of the advertising process. Promotional activities help businesses attract customers to their products and services (Chong et al., 2017). This approach of appealing customers pushes them to buy. Promotions for goods are a popular marketing strategy used by both large and small businesses to acquire new customers. The fundamental goal of product marketing is to advertise a new brand or unique product.

### **Strategies for offline promotion**

Any sort of advertising that is not done in person is considered offline marketing. This includes advertisements in print media, television, and other types of broad media. There are numerous methods of offline marketing, each with its own set of advantages and downsides (Boisen et

al., 2018). Radio ads, like TV commercials, allow businesses to express their company's message and image. Delivering out seasonal cards and gifts, offering coupons, producing a book or booklet, sending announcements, and attending trade shows are just a few examples of offline techniques used by corporations (Fan et al., 2015).

### **Online promotional strategies**

Social media advertising includes blog advertising and more. Advertising's latest "buzz" Bangladesh adopted social media marketing early. As firms communicate with customers online, the organisational purpose has replaced the social cause (SI, 2016). Social media uses "wisdom of crowds" to share knowledge (Shareef et al., 2017). Community interaction can be done on blogs, wikis, podcasts, forums, weblogs, photos, and videos. Social media promotion aims to sell a business, product, or service. Social media is community online marketing. Affiliate, email, and keyword advertising are internet promotional methods (Shareef et al., 2019).

In the instance of Adidas, a significant proportion of promotional material and advertisements are disseminated via social media platforms. This particular brand maintains a consistent connection with its social media followers, boasting a substantial following of 35 million and 25 million on Facebook and Instagram, respectively (Wallace, 2022). Adidas has opted to endorse its brand via various channels such as televised commercials, online promotions, and outdoor advertising, among others. Adidas collaborated with David Beckham, Laila Ali, and Muhammed Ali to create a number of noteworthy advertisements (Crasto et al., 2020). The advertising campaign that utilised the slogan "impossible is nothing" has been widely recognised as one of the most effective campaign in history. The Adidas promotional campaign also encompassed integration with diverse game advertisements. The enterprise has gained recognition and favorability among youthful consumers due to its dynamic presence on social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. By utilising an email marketing platform, the organisation can effectively communicate with a vast global audience of subscribers (Mahdi et al., 2015).

Similarly, Adidas successfully garnered a significant following of loyal enthusiasts who repeatedly patronised the brand for its other offerings, owing to its employment of meme marketing and limited availability tactics. The significant increase in item margins can be attributed to the brand's financial strategy of restricted supply. In addition, collaborating with leading technology firms and prominent athletes constituted a significant achievement in the

progress of Adidas (Zhu, 2021). The Adidas brand and Kanye West engaged in a collaborative effort to introduce the latest collection of footwear, known as the Adidas Yeezy line. Nonetheless, the aforementioned agreement was short-lived as a result of unfavourable circumstances surrounding Kanye West.

## **Branding**

A brand can be defined as the unique identity narrative of a company that sets it apart from its competitors who offer similar goods and services within the market. The objective of advertising is to establish a prominent position in the minds of the target market and become their preferred provider of products and services. According to Decker (2023), branding is a sequential procedure that culminates in the provision of brand-promoting assets, including a tagline, logo, visual design, and tone of voice. Several authors have defined branding as a process that involves acquiring knowledge, creating, and implementing distinctive attributes of an organisation in a manner that leads consumer groups to recognise and link the brand with the organization's products and services. According to Decker (2023), branding is regarded as a procedure that enhances the worth of an organisation in a competitive market. The branding efforts of businesses facilitate the growth of a potent and advantageous perception of the firm. The presence of a well-known brand can serve as a valuable resource in attracting customers and generating revenue, particularly within the ecommerce industry, which is constantly experiencing the emergence of new brands (Shoffian et al., 2021).

## **Brand equity**

The determination of a brand's worth is contingent upon the perception of its quality and appeal by the consumer. The aforementioned notion is commonly known as brand quality within academic discourse. The determination of various factors such as brand recognition, consumer loyalty, and customer satisfaction are crucial in this regard (Tanveer and Lodhi, 2016). The establishment of brand equity is a crucial factor in the triumph of a business enterprise, as it can significantly influence consumer behaviour, marketing strategies, and potential partnerships (Liu et al., 2015).

The constituents of brand equity encompass brand recognition, brand allegiance, perceived excellence, and brand connotations. Brand awareness refers to the capacity of customers and prospective customers to identify and acknowledge our brand. The phenomenon of customers exhibiting a consistent pattern of repeat purchases towards a particular brand over an extended duration is commonly known as "brand loyalty." The construct of perceived quality pertains to

the level of quality that is attributed to a brand by consumers (Cho et al., 2015). The associations of a brand refer to the characteristics and features that are linked to the brand.

### **Keller's brand equity model**

Keller's brand equity model is a popular measure of analysing and maintaining the brand equity. The components of this model are identity, meaning of the brand, response of the brand and relationships of the brand (Duman et al., 2018). The model is represented as a pyramid with each of its components.

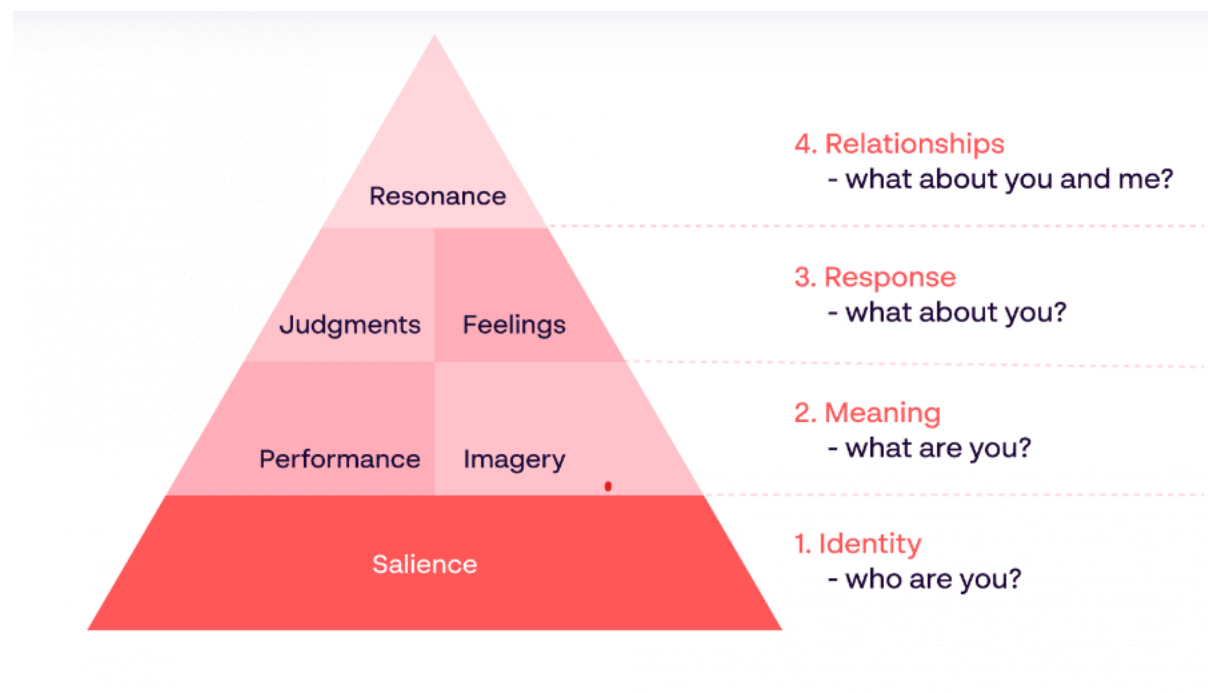


Figure: Keller's Brand equity model (Adapted from Papirfly, 2019)

- Brand identity- This aspect of brand equity model corresponds with the factors that contribute the brand image to the particular organisation (De Oliveria et al., 2015). In case of Adidas, its various products and specific features of the products are potential of demonstrating the brand identity of the firm.
- Brand meaning- brand meaning of a brand is the opinions and perceptions that the customer group holds regarding a particular brand. In case of Adidas, they have a good brand meaning among the customer group because, they are one of the leading brands in the sportswear and accessories.
- Brand response- brand response, another factor of the brand equity model indicates the responses of the customers towards the particular brand. This includes the opinions, suggestions, and attitude towards the brand (Keller and Brexendorf, 2019). In case of

Adidas, customers are really satisfied with the functioning of the brand and they have a good response to the operations of the brand.

- Brand relationships- Relationship factor of Keller's brand equity model indicates the relationship that the brand has build through collaborations and partnerships that influences the operations of the brand (Farjam and Hongyi, 2015). In case of Adidas, they are always recognisable for the collaborations and partnerships with high ned brands and famous personalities, that attracts the customers.

### **Customer journey**

The customer journey encompasses all the experiences that customers go through when interacting with your company and brand. Instead of looking at just one part of a transaction or experience, the customer journey considers the full experience of being a customer (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). Stages of the customer journey includes awareness, consideration, purchase, post purchase and advocacy.

- Awareness stage- this is the stage where a person gets to be aware of a particular product by a brand (Rosenbaum et al., 2017). Brands like adidas makes this awareness possible to consumers by advertisements and promotional activities.
- Evaluation and consideration- in this stage of customer journey, customers assess the service they are interested in and they compare it with similar ones in the market. In this stage people compare goods regarding their specification and features.
- Decision- in this stage of customer journey, customer makes the decision to make the purchase.
- Retention- retention stage of customer journey is a reflection of the brands loyalty and customer satisfaction with the brand (Becker and Jaakkola, 2020). This stage also focus on customer care and support structure provided by the company.
- Advocacy- advocacy stage of the customer journey denotes the recommendation that is given to the society by a customer after using the products or services by an organisation (Halvorsrud et al., 2016).

### **Customer touchpoints**

The term "customer touchpoints" pertains to the diverse stages or instances wherein a brand initiates interaction with its customers all over the entirety of their customer journey. The classification of customer touchpoints is based on the specific stage of the customer journey that the customers are presently experiencing, and can be divided into three distinct groups

(Bacur et al., 2019). The three distinct phases in the consumer buying process are pre-purchase, post-purchase, and during purchase. Customer touchpoints, which denote the different instances of relations between a brand and its customers, are pivotal in influencing the trajectory of a customer's journey from the initial stage of discovering a brand to the ultimate stage of developing brand loyalty (Barann et al., 2022). The employment of customer touchpoints can aid in the measurement and surveillance of one's progress.

### **Different customer touchpoints**

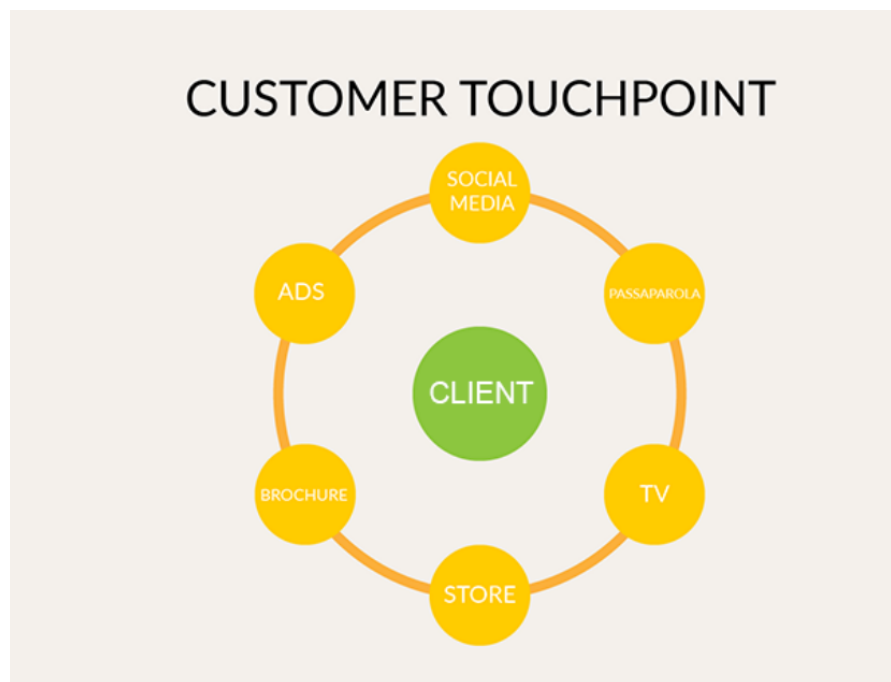


Figure: Customer Touchpoints (Adapted from N, 2018)

- Before purchase- Online advertisements serve as a crucial customer touchpoint prior to the actual purchase. Social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Pinterest are among the various customer touchpoints (Towers and Towers, 2021). Customer touchpoints prior to purchase include search engine optimisation and blog content, as well as company referrals.
- During purchase- The act of purchase represents a crucial juncture within the customer touchpoint. During the purchase process, customer touchpoints for any given brand may include various services offered by the brand, such as customer reviews, product brochures, and information regarding current sales (Manthiou and Klaus, 2022).

- After purchase- Following a purchase, customer touchpoints, such as feedback surveys, serve as a means to assess the customer experience with the brand. One of the customer touchpoints includes the receipt of emails pertaining to products (Homburg et al., 2017).

### **Customer journey map**

Chris, a 26 year old athlete always prefers quality over quantity. He was scrolling through ecommerce channel to purchase a shoe for hiking. He got the attention of an product in ecommerce site, where the link leads him to adidas website. He further compares various similar products available on eth website based on cost, quality and customer reviews. He was interested in few of the products and thought of making a purchase. Days after this, advertisement of adidas products pops up on his feed and the brand also announced summer sales. This made him to go for purchase of the same products and makes online payment. He received confirmation email on the same. Post purchase stage is characterised by using the product. He also recommended this product to his friends who came along with him for hiking. Chris was happy with the quality of the product and tend to make more purchases in the future.

### **Strengths and weaknesses of customer journey map**

A customer journey map is helpful to businesses because it helps them figure out the engagement as well as involvement of a potential customer in the purchasing process. The brand will gain an understanding of the necessity and relevance of each stage of the customer journey once it has analysed the numerous stages included on the map of the customer journey and its many components (Berman, 2020). One of the shortcomings of the customer journey map is that the creation of such a map requires a significant investment of time and resources, which means that it may not be relevant to all companies and brands (Temkin, 2010).

### **Total engagement model**

The Total Engagement Model is a marketing approach commonly utilised by organisations to comprehend and manage the dynamics of customer and brand engagements. The total engagement model comprises various components, including brand awareness, considerations, conversion, loyalty, and advocacy.

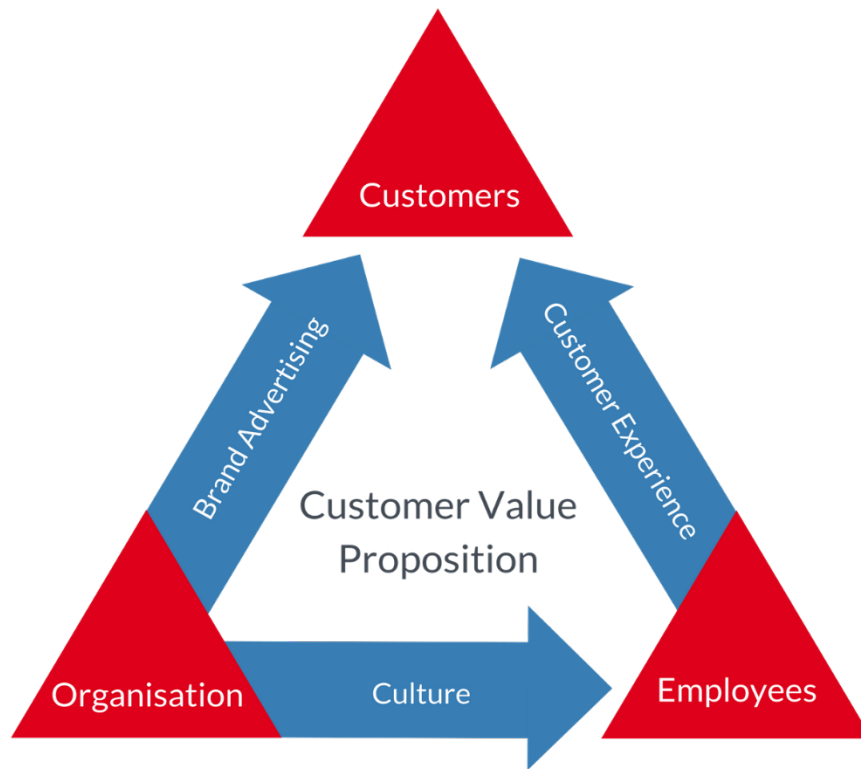


Figure: Total engagement model (Adapted from Tao, 2016)

The Adidas company has incorporated this particular model into their implementation of diverse strategies and interventions aimed at augmenting brand awareness among their customer demographic (Kumar and Nayak, 2019). The augmentation of brand recognition for this sports brand is facilitated through the utilisation of suitable advertising mediums and promotional initiatives. The element of consideration in the total engagement model is impacted by various brand activities, including collaborations, influential partnerships, innovative marketing initiatives, and product placement. The Total Engagement Model employed by Adidas can elucidate the brand's pre-eminence in the industry, as well as the degree of customer engagement and value that it has attained throughout its history (Hollebeek, 2011). The brand's success can be attributed to its expansion beyond innovative business and promotional strategies. Visibility enhances customer awareness (Harrigan et al., 2018). The process of consideration involves fostering a level of understanding and awareness among consumers with respect to the products offered by a company. This is accomplished through the utilisation of appropriate communication channels that were previously deliberated. The third stage in the process involves the transformation of consideration into a purchase, which can be facilitated through various channels such as outlet stores and sales partners. The degree of customer satisfaction has a significant impact on the level of loyalty exhibited by customers

(Zheng et al., 2015). Brand satisfaction is positively correlated with customer loyalty and repeat purchases. Advocacy refers to the act of customers providing recommendations to the wider society through feedback and reviews.

## **Conclusion**

The present study elucidated the communication tactics and promotional endeavours implemented by adidas to augment the efficacy of their brand. The examination of the brand equity model and internal marketing communication, along with the channels of communication, elucidated the diverse tactics and measures implemented by Adidas in their marketing endeavours. The examination of the customer journey, customer touchpoints, and analysis of the total engagement model in relation to Adidas has revealed multiple facets of the customer experience, as well as opportunities for brand enhancement and advancement. The research findings also highlighted the importance of these factors in facilitating the achievement of organisational objectives.

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