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**INSTRUCTIONS**

*Do not attempt the questions as it is. Read all your handouts twice and apply the handouts strategically on these questions. For example, a question that pertains to communication challenges learn them first from notes or the internet like “communication challenges in IMC”.*

**SALMAN’S OLD-TIME ICE CREAM AND CHOCOLATE SHOP**

Salman Khan was excited to open his new business venture in the springtime. Salman’s Old-Time Ice Cream and Chocolate Shop was established to take advantage of several opportunities and reach multiple audiences, all in one location. In the summertime, ice cream should sell best. In the winter and spring, chocolate products may be given as Eid’s, Valentine’s, Christmas, and Mother’s Day presents. Salman also decided to sell fast food throughout the year, including burgers, hot dogs, grilled cheese sandwiches, pretzels, fries, and other items.

To make his store stand out, Salman chose to locate on the outskirts of town, where parking would be readily available and the store would be surrounded by a more natural environment including a nearby forest. Then, he was able to obtain a passenger car and caboose from a now-defunct railroad company that could be set up as a place to enjoy ice cream in a unique seating arrangement in addition to the regular tables inside the shop. Outside of the rail cars, Salman placed a swing set and other items for children. The biggest challenge Salman faced was getting the word out. He contacted a local advertising and promotions agency to help him get started. The first question the account executive asked was, “Well, what is going to make your store stand out?” Salman responded, “Several things. First, I am re-opening a company that served this area for years, called “Khalis” Ice Cream.” I plan to generate publicity letting everyone know that we will be selling the same kind of great-tasting ice cream that used to be offered by that company. Second, I have a partnership with a local chocolatier that is on the far side of town. We’ll be selling their products in our store. And third, we are appealing to that old-fashioned, old-time relaxation that people enjoy in the summer. Families should love that.”

Next the executive asked, “Who are your major competitors?” Salman answered, “For ice cream I suppose it is Chaman, and Mc Donald’s. For chocolate products, it’s probably Jan’s Deli and Tehzeeb. But we are set up in such a unique way we should be able to attract people differently.”

The executive and Salman agreed that the company’s launch was a key time to communicate this difference. They also believed the target audience would be pretty large, including families with children, grandparents with grandkids, and other people looking to enjoy high quality chocolate and ice cream in a unique atmosphere, possibly after enjoying a quick meal. The executive pointed out that getting people to visit for the first time would be one factor but that generating return business throughout the year was the real key to long term success. It was time to get started.

1. Salman’s store will be a local business that competes with large Int./national companies. What communication challenges does that present? What opportunities does it offer?
2. Which of the emerging trends in marketing communications can Salman use to promote his new business? Explain how it can be used.
3. What should be the first message that Salman should try to communicate to all potential customers? Should he emphasize price, value, or some other element of his business?
4. Will Salman be able to use social media in his marketing communications efforts? If so, how? If not, why not?

**Solution:**

**Salman’s store will be a local business that competes with large Int./national companies. What communication challenges does that present? What opportunities does it offer?**

**Answer:**

Since Salman’s store will be a local business competing against large international companies, it may not have the budget that already established international companies have. Salman’s store will also be new so all the advertising channels will be dominated by other already established local and international companies, so the challenges that this presents will be that Salman won’t be able to access all the media channels at once due to intense competition and bidding war from the international companies. For Salman to achieve true integrated marketing communication, he will have to advertise through all advertising channels at once and send the same message, but he may not be able to bid against large international and already established local companies for time and space on traditional channels like TV, Radio, and billboards as the already existing companies can outbid him and they would have goodwill established with the advertising agencies and channels. As a result of the established goodwill, the advertising agencies would rather keep their old customers happy and loyal and advertise for international companies than to make them dissatisfied and lose future business with them. The goodwill of the international and local companies is another challenge that Salman will be facing in achieving true integrated marketing communication. Other challenges include management support and resources, cross-media creativity, unifying technology, strategy, unifying customer data, and unifying brand assets.

Salman will, however, have an opportunity to advertise on social media which is not controlled by or restricted only to international companies, but also available to anyone that understands the know-how of social media advertising. Social media advertising is also going to be cheaper than traditional advertising and there would be less to none bidding wars against international companies for time and space. Social media advertising can be done via Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Personalized video advertising is an emerging trend in marketing which can be taken advantage of by Salman’s store and run advertisements on the various social media channels at the same time to achieve integrated marketing communication on all the online channels. Salman Khan himself is a celebrity so any advertisement he makes will already have an endorsement from a celebrity if he includes himself in the ad. Another opportunity Salman has is that he is building upon the Khalis’ ice cream brand so he can advertise accordingly by introducing his store as the new face of Khalis ice cream which would attract Khalis’ existing customers.

**Which of the emerging trends in marketing communications can Salman use to promote his new business? Explain how it can be used.**

**Answer:**

There are many emerging trends in marketing communication these days; some of which are Virtual Reality, Voice Search, Interactive Content, Personalization, Chatbots, Story Telling, Reviews and Word of Mouth, and GDPR Compliance and Data Rights.

Salman can use Virtual Reality to give his target market a firsthand experience of eating at an environment created inside a caboose and passenger cars. This will allow the customers to experience the seating plan at home via Virtual Reality before going out there and having an ice cream for real.

Interactive content such as videos, stories, polls, and quizzes can be used to keep the target market engaged. Videos can be used to show them a preview of the stores. Stories about the history of the caboose and passenger cars will keep the target market engaged with the asset of the brand. Polls can be used to test the target markets’ knowledge about the history of the passenger cars, caboose, and Khalis ice cream. Similarly, they can be quizzed about the location and number of stores in an area, the active timing of the stores, and the different menu items the stores will be providing.

Chatbots on Facebook can be used to answer potential customers’ questions using Frequently Asked Questions FAQ. Most importantly though, keeping the customers satisfied would take priority because these days, new potential customers rely on other customers’ word of mouth and reviews before they acquire a product or service. Salman will have to enable reviews on his social media pages to give the target market an idea of its customers’ positive experiences.

Most customers like a personalized experience. Salman can take advantage of this by writing its customers’ names on the ice cream holders of the ice cream that they purchase. He can record data such as his customers’ birthday and send them cards and coupons for free ice cream on their birthday. This would attract more and more customers as they would feel that the entire experience is catered to them, ergo a personalized experience.

**What should be the first message that Salman should try to communicate to all potential customers? Should he emphasize price, value, or some other element of his business?**

**Answer:**

Salman should focus on emphasizing his store’s value rather than its price. This is because Salman is making a unique store that lies on the outskirts of towns which will have an abundance of parking space. This is going to be one of its values that he can advertise. Another value that Salman is providing is that he has procured a passenger car and a caboose which would provide for a very new and unique environment and seating plan for people to come to and enjoy while they have an ice cream, chocolate or any fast food item as Salman will also be selling fast food items. All in all, the main focus of Salman by opening these stores is on the value that he can provide, be it in the form of ease of access and parking spots, or in the form of new and unique environment, or in the form of the items that he would be providing like ice cream, chocolates, and fast food. Any and all the customers that would visit the stores for these purposes wouldn’t be price sensitive so focusing on emphasizing price would actually devalue the value that Salman is trying to create for his customers.

**Will Salman be able to use social media in his marketing communications efforts? If so, how? If not, why not?**

**Answer:**

Of course, Salman would be able to use social media in his marketing efforts. It is one of the easier forms of advertising that connects to billions of people that use social media, and these days there isn’t a soul that doesn’t use social media. This way he would reach multiple potential customers that he otherwise may not by advertising on traditional channels like TV and Radio, as most people are moving away from the use of those mediums and meeting all their news and social needs via social media. This move away from TV and Radio by people should be enough of a motivating factor for Salman to advertise on social media channels.

Salman can create a Facebook page for his business via which his potential customers can connect to him and get a first look at his business through this page. He can also relay messages to his potential customers by advertising through this page. Leaving contact numbers and emails via this page would give access to his customers regarding any queries they may have about his business.

Salman can make snap bits of video advertising through Snapchat and Instagram showing the inner dynamics of his store and how the many elements of it interact with each other and the customers. He can go live on Instagram or snapchat on a busy day for his business to give other potential customers an idea of what his store would look like on a busy day and how relaxing and easily accessible it is even on the busy days due to its location being on the outskirts of towns which makes for parking space being available at ease.

Salman can take advantage of Twitter by tweeting when a celebrity or famous person visits his store to give potential customers an opportunity to meet with them and go and visit the store at the same time as their favorite TV or online personality.