THE ROLE OF CORPORATE COMMUNICATION IS IN IMAGE BUILDING: A CASE STUDY OF SAFARICOM LIMITED

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DECLARATION

This Management Research Project is my original work and has not been submitted for award of a degree in the University of Nairobi or any other University.

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This study is dedicated to my sons Ivan and Clyde for their support and encouragement during the long hours spent carrying out the research.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ABSTRACT

The study was a descriptive study whose objectives were to determine the extent to which Safaricom's public relations activities are known and appreciated by customers and to determine the significance of advertising in corporate image building of Safaricom limited. The study was based on uses and gratification theory and persuasion theory. The study was a survey of 200 respondents but only 109 were interviewed resulting to a response rate of 55%. The population of interest in this study consisted of users of mobile telephone services within Nairobi. Respondents were identified through convenience sampling that involved initial selection of Safaricom customer care centers. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics such as mean scores and standard deviations.

Results indicated that 88% believe that Safaricom is the best service provider and 93% had recommended the service provider to their friends and associates. Negative publicity about Safaricom was encountered by 41% and 59% reported to have encountered positive publicity about Safaricom. Results indicated that mass media plays an important role in creating awareness and shaping corporate image. Most respondents (76%) were aware about Safaricom's public relations activities. The study

revealed that advertisement influences learning about Safaricom's new products and services to a great extent and also influences purchase of Safaricom's line to a great extent. On the other hand, a decision to discontinue advertisement would have a very small influence on customers' switching to a competing service provider.

The study recommends that Safaricom should continue using advertisement and public relations in building its corporate image. Future research need to investigate the link between corporate communication and Safaricom's financial performance.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SMS – Short Messaging System

ATM – Automated Teller Machine

LTD – Limited

PR – Public Relations

AIDA – Attention, Interest, Desire, Action

TV – Television

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 Background

There can be no doubt that images of corporations, however right or wrong they may be, seem to form in a way a very complex communication process, involving most varied information sources. It starts with ones experiences in very early life, school children and fairy tale books and other leisure literature, theatre and so on and may take in accounts by relatives, acquaintances and friends. The mass media is continuously "offering" images of organizations to the outside world. In his famous book "public opinion" Lippmann (1922, 121) wrote:

> "Man is learning to see with his own mind vast portions of the world that he could never see, touch, smell, hear or remember. Gradually he makes for himself a trustworthy picture inside his head of the world beyond his reach."

The influence of mass media is especially great when no other source of information is available; especially great, too, if there is no possibility of checking on media reality. In this respect television appears to make particularly powerful impact, at least on average recipients, because of its pictorial documentary character. Using the

phrase, "the medium is the message", Macluhan's (1972), succeeded in jerking his readers out of the old patterns of thought and into a new way of looking at the effects of mass communication. Some of the human effects media derive from the content as well as the medium-in other words, "the message is partly the message". Certainly with electric media, western man himself experiences exactly the same inundation as the remote native. He is (western man) no more prepared to encounter TV and Radio in his literature milieu than the native of Ghana is able to cope with the literacy that takes him out of his collective tribal world and beaches him in individual isolation.

Macluhan alludes to the formative power of the media. For it is not evident that the moment that sequences yield to the simultaneous one is in the world of the structure and configuration. In fact in the electric age this integral part of structure and configuration has become prevalent in communication sciences. When electric speed further takes over from mechanical movie sequences then the lines of force in structures and in the media become loud and clear. It was at this point, agrees Gambrich, E.L, that cubism –the most radical attempt to stamp out ambiguity and to enforce ones reading of the picture that of a man-made construction, a colored canvas-occurred. It sets up interplay of planes and contradictions or dramatic conflict of patterns, light textures that "drives home the message", by involvement. Instead of the specialized illusion of the third dimension on canvas, cubism gives the inside and outside, the top, bottom, back

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and front and the rest in two dimensions thereby dropping the illusion of perception in favor of instant sensory awareness of the whole. Cubism by seizing on instant total awareness suddenly announced the medium is the message.

Similarly, Doob (1967), in his report "communication in Africa" poignantly illustrates why the medium is the message, by narrating the story of one African who took great pains to listen each evening to BBC news, even though he could understand nothing of it. His attitude to speech was like ours to melody –the resonant intonation was meaning enough. Just to be in the presence of those sounds at 7:00 pm each day was important to him. In the 17th century our ancestors still shared this native attitude to the form of media.

The psychologist C.G Jung perceived this in another connection: every Roman was surrounded by slaves. The slave and his psychology flooded ancient Italy, and every Roman became invariably and of course unwittingly, a slave. Because of living constantly in the atmosphere of slaves, he became infected through the unconscious with their psychology. No one can shield himself from such an influence."

Mass media channel have become "fixed charges" of the entire life of the society. And this pervasive fact creates the unique flavour of any society. Our human senses of which all media are extensions are also

"fixed charges" on our personal energies and that they also configure the awareness and experience of each one of us. Deeply concerned that there should be serious study of mass media today Pope Pius XII in 1950 said:

> "it is not an exaggeration to say that the future of modern society and the stability of its inner self depend in large part on the maintenance of an equilibrium between the strengths of the techniques of communication and the capacity of the individuals own reaction. Failure in this respect has for centuries been typical and total for mankind. Subliminal and docile acceptance of media impact has made them prison without walls for their human users".

Yet up into the 1970s the thesis was widespread in communication science that mass media had no effects at all. This empirically untenable thesis has never had validity in respect of the forming of the images we have of other people or organisations. Joseph Klapper, for example, argued that mass communication could not be regarded as a necessary nor sufficient condition for effects of communication to be achieved. One of the factors Klapper saw as responsible for the assumed ineffectiveness of the mass media was the predisposition of the recipients, that is, selective attention, selective perception and selective retention. He concludes by pointing out that there had

always been a substantial number of people within the audience who did not display selective processes and absorbed the message.

1.1.2 Background of Safaricom Limited

Safaricom Limited is a mobile service provider company offering services within the East African region. It is headquartered in Nairobi city in Kenya. Safaricom Limited is Kenya's current leading Mobile Telephone Operator. They pride themselves in providing world class GSM (Global System for Mobile Communications) service to over 6 million subscribers in Kenya. Safaricom was formed in 1997 as a fully owned subsidiary of Telkom Kenya. In May 2000, Vodafone group Plc, the worlds largest Telecommunication company acquired a 40% stake and management responsibility for the company. Safaricom's aim is to remain the leading Mobile Network Operator in Kenya. In order to achieve this, a strong focus has been placed on quality of service to their customers.

In modern world of globalization, Safaricom has been able to keep pace with the global mobile telecommunication scenario by having strategic business associations; associations which add value to the global mobile telecommunication initiative and which help in meeting the dynamic challenges of the modern mobile telecommunication world. Their strategic association with the world leaders in mobile telephony has created a niche in the Kenyan market today. Safaricom offers a range of products and services including SMS, Voicemail, Get-

it, 191 Direct, various tariffs, 24hour customer service, Roaming service (to our postpaid customer), ATM top-up, Vending machines, Emergency numbers(e.g. 911) Executive voicemail (for postpaid customer) and community phone (phone booths), SMS Sokoni, Get-it sports scores, Safaricom online, Mobile Office, Third party top-up, SMS2Mail and M-PESA.

To build its image and attract and strong loyal customer base, the company recognizes the important role played by public relations and advertisement and spends large sums of money in rolling out advertisement in both print and electronic media. The public relations department of the company is responsible for managing the firm's public relations.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Organization image is important for growth and survival of firms in a competitive environment such as Kenya. Firms spend resources building their image to attract and retain customers. Advertisement and public relations are some of the major means through which firms communicate their image to outsiders. Radio and Television are the strongest image shapers. In any case, it appears that varying communication sources are responsible for the images or pictures of others in various strata of the population (Kunczik,1990).Using the mass media as a vehicle the central task of the image industry is to present a winning image that evokes the aura of success.

Image building by organizations cannot be conducted only through the mass media. A survey by Boyd in 1986 showed clearly that different people use different sources of information with different emphasis to form their images of others. Education and travel were for instance of extraordinary importance to image building. This study whose central focus is Safaricom LTD will investigate the role of both the mass media and interpersonal communication in image building among its subscribers. It is evident that Safaricom spends time and money promoting a positive image using various PR tools. Besides a strong focus on quality of service to its customers, the company, through its PR agency, has engaged various medial outlets for its image building. Safaricom's aim is to remain the leading Mobile Network Operator in Kenya. Corporate image is important given its contribution to attracting and retaining customers.

A review of literature revealed that no study about Safaricom's corporate image has been done and this contributed to motivation for this study. A Study by Wahome (2006) on strategies in corporate communication did not establish the role of mass media in image building. While not ignoring his findings, this study seeks to bridge existing knowledge gap by finding responses to the following research questions:

i. To what extent are Safaricom's subscribers exposed to its PR activities?

ii. What is the significance of advertising in corporate image building of Safaricom limited?

1.2 Study objectives

The study will be based on one general objective and two specific objectives.

General Objective

To determine the contribution of corporate communications in building a favorable image for Safaricom, hence increasing subscriber base.

Specific Objectives

1. To determine the extent to which Safaricom's PR activities are known and appreciated by customers.
2. To determine the significance of advertising in corporate image building for Safaricom Limited.
3. To establish the extent to which Safaricom's PR activities persuades its customers to stick to *'the better option'*.

1.3 The Limitations and Scope of the Study

The study was based on Safaricom's customer care centers within the Central Business District of Nairobi city. Interviews of respondents were done within these customer care centers. The study however faced particular challenges the most significant being the incomplete responses given by customers and the limited period of time within which the data had to be collected and analysed.

1.4 Justifications for the study

This study will be useful for the following purposes:

1. The study will act as an eye opener on how to re – organize PR activities in a better way which may contribute to stronger corporate image of Safaricom limited.

2. The results of the study will be useful for managerial planning by Safaricom – so as to know what PR activities they should intensify and which ones they need to discard.

3. The study will provide additional body of literature in the field of corporate image in the telecommunication industry. This will aid researchers and scholars who are interested in studying the role of corporate communication in image building of organizations.

1.5 Theoretical framework

Theories are explanations of how and why things happen the way they do. Just everyone wants to know how and why things happen. Different theories are used to explain communication. This study has adopted two theories namely, the use and gratification theory and the persuasion theory explained in the sections that follows.

Uses and gratification theory

It is concerned with how people use media to satisfy their needs (an outcome of Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs). Uses and

gratifications theory takes a more humanistic approach to looking at media use. Blumler and Katz believe that there is not merely one way that the populace uses media. Instead, they believe there are as many reasons for using the media, as there are media users. According to the theory, media consumers have a free will to decide how they will use the media and how it will affect them.

Blumler and Katz values are clearly seen by the fact that they believe that media consumers can choose the influence media has on them as well as the idea that users choose media alternatives merely as a means to an end. Uses and gratification is the optimist's view of the media. The theory takes out the possibility that the media can have an unconscious influence over our lives and how we view the world. The idea that we simply use the media to satisfy a given need does not seem to fully recognize the power of the media in today's society. The first assumption of uses and gratifications theory is that a change in one part of the system, will of necessity, cause a change in another part of the system. Much as VCRs changed television viewing, the internet is now changing the way we interact with all other forms of media. The second assumption of this theory is that audiences use the media to fulfill expectations. Media use is a means to satisfy wants or interests. The third assumption of uses and gratifications theory is that audience members are aware of and can state their own motives for using mass communication.

In specific relation to this study, the results will test the authenticity of this theory within a Kenyan context. For this study, the findings will reveal whether PR activities as communicated by Safaricom – especially through the mass media is one such information that audiences use for gratification purposes and to what extent.

Persuasion Theory

Persuasive theory analyses key components necessary in communication, but for this particular purpose, it demonstrates the importance of the source of communication (advertising) in the entire process. Persuasive theory in this case stipulates that the key characteristics of source should include credibility, attractiveness and power. Attractiveness is used to capture the attention of the audience. Credibility assists the audience to comprehend the arguments presented in the advertising message. Power lands the audience to yield to the message. Credibility as per Tan (1985) constitutes of expertise and trustworthiness. Expertise is acquired through training, experience, ability, intelligence, professional attainment and social status. Trustworthiness is considered as a motivation to communicate objectively (without bias) or otherwise, a desire to manipulate people. Trustworthiness therefore comes about as a result of honesty, integrity and believability. Studies by Tan *et al.,* (1985) show that a credible source is more likely to persuade people to change their stand on an issue better than a source who lack these characteristics.

The theory of persuasion fits the current study because corporate communication (advertising) plays an important role in persuading customers to buy a company's product or service. Customers gain experience through the firm's offer and communication which in turn contributes to image creation and development in the minds of consumers. Furthermore, the media through which the advertisement is carried and how the advert is run also play an important role in building company image. This study attempts to establish whether Safaricom's PR messages persuade their clientele and to what extent this persuasion is successful.

Fig 2: Advertising Message Spectrum

Model 1

Awareness

Unawareness ⟷ Effect/Action ⟷ Comprehension

Conviction

Model 2: AIDA Model

Advertising ▸ Message ⟶ Attention ⟶ Interest ⟶

Desire   Action

Effect

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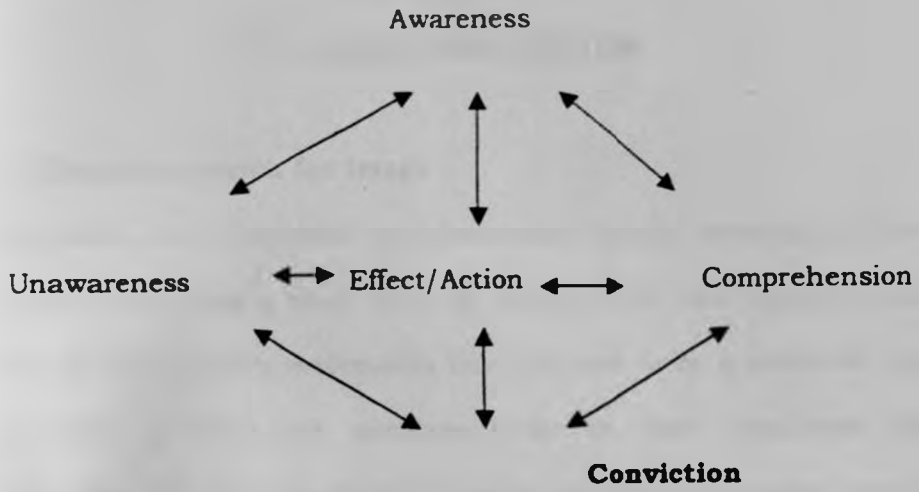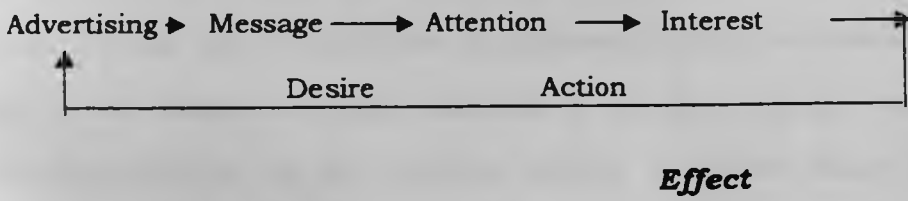
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Corporate search for image

Companies are concerned with ensuring loyalty, creating culture, shared values and a clear sense of direction for their organizations. That is why mission statements have become more fashionable and emphatic to bring the message home to their employees and customers. Mission statements for most corporate companies tend to send the message that they are fast, responsive, and energetic and dedicated to their publics.

In a bid to promote their image, Companies have diversified and spread to different countries where they also have diversified their business to ensure they meet their customers' needs as a one stop shop. Through the diversification the company's image is enhanced and if that image is explicitly controlled it can be the single most powerful influence on the corporate culture. Corporate image is concerned with four major areas of activities i.e. Product/services – what you make or sell.

Environment – where you make or sell it i.e. the physical location.

Information – How you describe and publize what you do.

Behaviour – whether people within the organization believe in each other and in their publics. All these communicate ideas about the company.

A good example of a product that has achieved global respect through advertisement is Coca-Cola. Coco-cola as a product is a soft drink; a maroon fizzy liquid of which some would say has no intrinsic interest or merit. It is different from thousands of other soft drinks made all over the world. However, everyone the world over has either heard about it or even partaken of it.

The imagery of Coca-cola however is simply stupefying. Its global success is a tribute to the ingenuity, fantastic dedication and immense sum of money devoted to communication about it through constant and sustained quality and captivating advertisements. It has become the world's greatest brand due to an unequalled global distribution system. The traditional bottle, the logotype, the colours, and the lavish advertising on a mega scale combined with obsessive attention to detail have enhanced its image and quality the world over. Coca Cola has become synonymous more or less through out the world with all the goods things in life, fun to be precise. That is why most coke commercials have characters that are young, physically fit and energetic having fun and good life. It therefore creates the impression that if you take coke then you are definitely fun loving and of course you enjoy life. Because communication, more particularly

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advertising and packaging, gives life and identity to consumer products, advertising especially has become a prism through which many products that we use in everyday life are revealed, therefore many people have come to associate advertising with product image building.

Advertising is broad and encompasses the following: advertising agencies, consumers and market research institutions, public relations houses, media uses, production and design house among others. Advertising industry players and independent researchers are mandated to keep in check the functions of the advertising industry; its contribution to economic growth, its impediments to growth, its expansion or non-expansion, replenishing effects or it floundering effects, its highs and lows and its expanse and depth. Advertising in Kenya is still a little nascent compared to the developed countries. Nonetheless, Kenya is picking fast with the modern and more effective advertising styles and strategies that were unknown in the past.

Perhaps one of the most interesting industry developments, fueled by growth, media fragmentation and related pressure on audience delivery, is the birth of media specialists. Experts say the media Specialists play a very critical role in overall advertising process. Advertisers, the world over have realized this and are therefore seeking for advice from the specialists. This has led to the registration of many advertising companies as there is demand for their services.

Unlike in the past days when primitive media were used to communicate, the media specialists make consumers perceive and view products with a new image and meaning in their lives.

Advertising has become more meaningful and serves a very important purpose, that of giving more information about the product to ensure the consumers buy it.   Advertisers are more inclined to giving consumers information so that they may make informed buying decisions. Producers invest in brand equity which ensures product quality for the consumers. In spite of this, critics still have their ways and own point of view. Advertising has been embraced by many companies in order to drive sales, create product awareness, increase profit margins and image building. In order to create a lot of impact advertising should be timely i.e. can be done just before a product is launched or during promotions.

2.2 Communication in advertising

Advertising is a mass media communication tool. Its effectiveness, just like other means of communication depends on a guideline to effective communication. There is need to approach everything from the point of view of the audience – what is on their minds and what is in it for them. This gives the audience a sense of involvement in the communication process and in what is going on, get them involved and you get their interest. Advertising can be used to build up a long term image for a firm or trigger quick product sales. Advertising can

efficiently reach geographically dispersed buyers (Kotler and Keller, 2007) implying that it is appropriate in situations like telecommunication services where subscribers to a particular service provider are dispersed across the country.

The subject matter should be made part of the atmosphere the audience lives with – what they talk about and what they hear from others. That means getting the material adopted in their channels of communication.

Communicate with people, not at them – communication that approaches the audience as a target makes people put their defenses up against it.

Advertising, as a marketing force, aims primarily towards the ultimate sales of a product or service. Culturally, advertising may be characterized in two theoretical ways. Firstly, theory stated within the framework of economic laws, asserting that advertising affects knowledge about the demand for a product. Secondly, theory stated with orientation that advertising is to help to recognize and modify the basic perpetual process of the consumer, so that he/she is guided towards seeing and feeling a product in a given predictable way.

2.2.1 Influence of Advertising on Perception

There is need to investigate the structure of the product as can 'object' in relationship with individual. Utilizing techniques of different levels

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of penetration, getting at 'unconscious' and 'conscious' attitudes and needs, three sources of meaning about a product have been isolated; that is: The set of meaning stemming from the cultural definition of the product.

The source of meaning coming from the brand image, that is, the consumer organized set of notions about the brand.

The source of meaning coming from the direct experience with the product.

2.2.2 The corporate Brand Image as a source of Meaning

The brand image as a source of meaning helps the consumer further to select and organizes the stimulation of the product, display and other communications directed to him/her. Meads Social Psychology suggests that an "Image" guide one's action and attitude towards the object. It has been further suggested that the meaning of any message is the "Change that it produces in the (already existing) image" that an individual harbors about the object in question. This means that the message value in the Newspaper or Television commercial for example lies in the degree and direction of change in a brand image previously held by the reader or viewer (Reinforcement of already image implies a change in degree).

A whole different set of notions and actions are inherent in the name, hence the differences among brand images represented. This means that the differences among brand images are much more than literal

product differences, despite having may be fairly comparable function intricacies. Brand image may undergo changes more quickly than the basic cultural definition of the product, hence influence on the perception of the brand image vis a viz the class of the product.

Once established through advertisement, a brand image lends consistency and predictability in the consumer relationship with the product, which allow him/her to select and experience those aspects of the product he values. This implies that the brand image appears to be relatively a stable organization of perception about a product. Senses become attained differently and the social values inherent in the product – consumer interaction are different from brand to brand.

2.2.3 Advertising and the Brand Image

Advertising seems to help the consumer discriminate a brand from many product offers. The brand image is the factor organizing concept through which the consumer is guided towards perceiving unified pattern of stimulation and therefore a pointer to the feeling that one brand is distinctly different from another brand, when purchasing.

These factors are often termed as "irrational" motive of the consumer in purchasing products. Skeptics, classic economists and behaviorists in marketing research might demonstrate by blind fold test how suggestible and average consumer cannot distinguish

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between various brands by failing to consider the value of the brand and its overall symbolic effects. Customer cannot be torn apart by tests oriented towards seeing the product in its barest utilitarian terms. In other words the consumers purchases the brand and its cluster of meanings as much as he/she purchases the literal product.

"Hidden Persuasion" is probably the reference group and other symbolic values implied in most social communication. Advertising can creates strong sub-categories of values and needs within social structure and associate these with the product. Consumer selection is therefore based on these brands whose set of implied experiences fit into the sub-group with which they identify. This can be reasonably argued that the brand correlates to the consumer to an extent that consumer perceives the brand image in this stable, predictable (and pleasurable) manner, and therefore the brand becomes a need-satisfying monopoly rather than a competitor with other brands.

Localize – get message conveyed as close to the individual's own milieu as possible. A number of channels of communication should be used, not just one or two. The impact is far greater when it reaches people in a number of different forms.

It is a way of noteworthy to ensure that what is said on the subject is the same, no matter which audience it is directed to or what the context is. Maintain consistency: still; advertisers should tailor – make each message for the specific audience as much as possible.

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Advertisers should not propagandize, but make sure that they make a point. When a communicator draws conclusions in his/her summation of information, it is more effective than depending on the audience to draw its own conclusions.

Credibility has to be maintained because it is essential for all these points to be effective.

2.3 Effective Advertising

For the content of any message to meet the communication object, Rotal D. Coule, in his article "Decision–making of the content for message" has specified the use of the step four approach that comprises of the four 'S' issues of "Substance", "Style", "Sequence" and "psychology".

Substance

Highlights the need to identify information to help a person or a group to understand, know something or learn to do something. This involved the planning and designing of logical schedule for delivery systematically orchestrated messages through various channels to reach various audiences. It is proposed that the plan should have thematically organized points also appropriate to advocate particular behavior or attitude changes.

Style

Look into the form of the messages and the plan for the number of messages needed to be produced with in a given time and space.

There is need to study audiences before undertaking the actual campaign.

Sequence

Touches on the need to realize that if communication objectives based on change in attribute and behaviour are to be attained, the designers must be knowledgeable in and understand beliefs, and attitudes, practices and knowledge the target audience have with regard to this information.

The interview through looking at the cognitive aspect may have to deal with issues about how intergroups relations affect behaviour and attitudes. Pursuing information, motivation and action approaches could also be useful and so are studies that relate to the use of inductive and deductive approaches to gain information about the audience.

Psychological

Psychological aspects deals with how messages recipient perceive the sources and the medium, issues of safety and competence, credibility of the spokesperson as testimonial givers should be taken into consideration. The decision to give one-sided or multiple sides of an issue is important when putting the audience into consideration. Most messages should reinforce a population's beliefs, values and lifestyle.

The overall objective of information in the advertising should hinge on the core fact that content planning involves the consideration of need to gain and hold the attention of the target population or prospect. To

ensure this, it is mandatory to have not just an exercise or research to diagnose the situational analysis but also to hold a systematic observations analysis in selecting appropriate content for effective change. Like wise, inter-related strategic decision –making is required to satisfy the need of the varied psychological disposition within the target prospects.

2.4 Media and advertising

According to Mort Rosenblum, "advertisement in general sense, is exceptional, something out of ordinary that benefits, enlightens or titillates. The more worthy the advertisement, the more coverage it should get. Advertisement has economic worth. Herman and Chomsky (1988) contend that the media are drawn into symbiotic relationships with powerful sources of information by economic necessity and reciprocity of interest. The media needs a steady and reliable flow of information to meet their daily news demands and imperative news schedule that they must meet. Therefore they are forced to concentrate their resources where significant news (in this case "Advertisement") often occurs. Business mergers involving television, radio and newspaper chains have granted larger "cross–media chains and huge international conglomerates fighting for shares of national and international markets. For example, in Kenya; the nation media group doubles up as having newsprint and still holds over electro-magnetic spectrum on which broadcasting through television is on.

As subsidiaries of giant corporations, many newspaper, radio stations and television networks must pay even greater than usual attention to graduation figures, ratings and other indicators of probability. The bottom line cuts out more than ever. Therefore, this means the point of media, concentration is on the presumably the big corporations. Therefore, also if the management of most media houses has interests with corporate world, advertisement is in a way expected to follow the corporate investment trail.

In arguing for the benefit of the free markets as a means of controlling dissident's opinion in the mid-nineteenth century, the liberal chancellor of Britain exchequer, Sir George Lewis, noted that the market would promote those papers "enjoying the preference of the advertising public". The advertiser choices influence media selection, coverage and framing of news (therefore advertisement). The advertiser is the piper who calls the tune in the media industry. The advertisement goes beyond placing an ad in the media.

The media content, programming, selection, and framing are affected by choice and table of the advertisers who pay the bills for the media industry, since media exports are alternately dependent on sponsors for advertising. It means that the media are endeared not only to advertising, but to the large corporate. Research has found out that media companies are sharply constrained in coverage during the time that certain companies are sponsors o major advertisers of media

consumers product normality by showing less interest in that particular line. The bottom line is that the power over the media content stems from that they buy and pay for the content; they provide the media subsidiary. Thus the media compete for advertising patronage developing the content to serve their needs and the needs of the consumer.

The media is drawn into complex relationship with the sources of information (advertisement are to economic and strategic interests) for its survival. Corporate sources have a greater merit of being recognized as credibility. The bigger they are, the more credible they are. The media concentrates its source where significant news may break out, where regular conferences are held, whereby big corporation are recognized.

Safaricom, like many others corporate organizations, does not only rely on print and electronic media outlets for above the line advertising. The most common and steadily noticeable media is outdoor advertising. Outdoor advertising in Kenya is estimated to be worth Kshs. 1.25 billion annually. Using vinyl stickers and flexi face it is easier to change messages. Since its inception/ launch in the country, Safaricom outdoor advertising, whose timing is dead on, delivers views from a number of points, through this computer printed vinyl messages allows for virtually seamless images thus attractive.

Fig 1-Place of advertising

Out of Home	The Prints & Outdoor			Non–Traditional
	Street Furniture	**Billboards/Sky**	**Signs**	
TV	**Alternative**	**Outdoor**		**Place Base**
Schools	Bus Shelters	Bulletins	Rest Area	
Airports	Bus Benches	Spectacular	Recreational	Pick-hats
Sports Bars	News Stand	Wall Murals	Stadium	T–Shirts
	News Paper	Poster		
Radio	News Rack			
Drive Time	Public Telephone	**Transit**		
In Office	Shopping Mall	Vehicles		

Prospects identify with the outdoor advertising as part of its surrounding hence the products as belonging to them. Thus is presumed the offer a national strategies with local strength. It intercepts consumer where they live, work, shop, play to deliver a recent and consistent advertising message as they travel throughout the course of daily life. With repeated familiarity, exposure and retention, prospect are taught that a brand, store or service is a good choice.

As efficiency comparison are made for various media.

2.5 Advertising vis-à-vis other imagery mix: critique

Advertising agencies make their money out of creating advertising for mass market products and services. They have therefore developed

considerable expertise around one of the corporations target audiences the final consumer. But they have never needed to learn much about other target groups, let alone matters to do with design or behavioral. They are inflexible, inappropriate and expensive when used outside their normal area of activity. If you push them a little its possible to persuade advertising agencies to direct their activities at the trade, the financial community and other opinion farmers, and even recruits. But they have no interest or experience in dealing with internal audience, and have only a superficial understanding of corporate images process.

The conventional branded goods advertising activity mature and there isn't much growth in it. Corporate communications in which advertising plays a part, sometimes dominate one, is growing quickly. So a number of advertising agencies are plunging into this business, buying recruitment, business- to- business and financial advertising agencies and expanding into other areas of communication activities such as public relations and design, which they see as subsuming corporate image. These new business enable the advertising agencies to deal with much wider range of target audience that the corporation now considers important.

A few advertising agencies are even going beyond this into boardroom consultancy. They recognize that they need to deal with the top level

of their clients and that advertising isn't always the best rout in. boardroom consultancy, which deals with both internal corporate issues and external will un-culturally lead them directly into the whole corporate image process.

Quite a few advertising agencies will find it difficult to make the necessary adjustments required to asses the corporate image and communication needs from a strategic rather than a tactical point of view.

Some corporations, wary, perhaps, of the bias that advertising agencies display towards paid advertising tended to use public relations companies to advise them on what are often called image issues. The base from which public relations companies operate is wider and more flexible than that of advertising agencies. They deal with a broader spectrum of external and internal audiences using different media, although their knowledge and understanding of the power of design may seem limited.

Nevertheless some of the most lively and for-sighted independently own PR consultancies are mutating into corporate communications businesses as fast as they can. They are buying into or starting up advertising agencies and design companies, especially those that specialize in corporate imagery, and they are tailoring their existing lines of activities in investor relations, internal communications, trade

relations, so that they can fit the corporate communications needs of their clients.

A few advertising agencies are even going a step further into boardroom consultancy. They recognize that they need to deal with the top level of their clients and that advertising isn't always the best rout in. boardroom consultancy, which deals with both internal corporate issues and external will un-culturally lead them directly into the whole corporate image process. With their financial strength, their excellent client contacts their intelligence and their reputations there is little doubt that a number of major advertising agencies will success fully mutate into corporate communications consultants and some of these may move further into the handling of major corporate image programmes in all its aspects, including design and behavior. Quite a few advertising agencies will find it difficult to make the necessary adjustments required to asses the corporate image and communication needs from a strategic rather than a tactical point of view.

Some corporations, wary, perhaps, of the bias that advertising agencies display towards paid advertising tended to use public relations companies to advise them on what are often called image issues. The base from which public relations companies operate is wider and more flexible than that of advertising agencies. They deal with a broader spectrum of external and internal audiences using

different media, although their knowledge and understanding of the power of design may seem limited. Despite this, they have a real chance to develop into credible advisers on a wide range of issues relating to image and communications. Within the public relations business, there are a number of highly sophisticated and thoughtful practitioners. These individuals are quite capable of advising major corporations on long-term imagery programmes and on the communications programmes that derive from them. For one reason or other public relations people have been relatively slow, generally speaking to see the power of design in industry. It is possible that, as a result, they will fall to grasp all the opportunities presented. The PR business that its strategic position warrants. Nevertheless some of the most lively and for-sighted independently own PR consultancies are mutating into corporate communications businesses as fast as they can. They are buying into or starting up advertising agencies and design companies, especially those that specialize in corporate imagery, and they are tailoring their existing lines of activities in investor relations, internal communications, trade relations, so that they can fit the corporate communications needs of their clients.

Awareness among corporations of corporate identity as a discipline also seems to be growing very quickly, although it varies greatly by country and industrial sector. The power of suggestion and desire for emulation are very strong. In one industry after another air lines, chemicals, oil, financial services – corporate identify programmes instituted by one major player are followed by pothers. In some cases

they are carried out superficially and badly, in others, thoroughly and well. But it is clear that the corporation is beginning, tentatively to see the potential for this newest manifestation of an ancient resource. The corporation is struggling, just as it did with information technology, to understand and gear itself up to handle this resource in an effective way. Strictly demarcated functions like marketing, product design and advertising are beginning to look increasingly inadequate. The organization is experimenting with new management concepts in which some kind of matrix is established between conflicting and overlapping areas. As it gropes away internally to end an appropriate structure, the corporation experiments with some of its traditional outside suppliers and some new ones as well, in order to work out an effective way of handling the power of the new discovered identify and corporate communications resource.

2.6 Public Relations

Corporate advertising can be used to establish a company's identity or to change an image held by its various publics (Engel, *et al.* 1991). A public is any group that has an actual or potential interest in or impact on a company's ability to achieve its objectives. Public relations involve a variety of programs designed to promote or protect a company's damage image or its individual products (Kotler and Keller, 2007). The wise company takes concrete steps to manage successful relations with its key publics. Most companies have a public relations department that monitors the attitudes of the

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organization's publics and distributes information and communications to build goodwill.

The best PR departments spend time counseling top management to adopt positive programs and to eliminate questionable practices so that negative publicity does not arise in the first place. They perform the following five functions. They present information about the organization in the most positive light. They sponsor efforts to publicize specific products. In addition, they promote understanding of the organization through internal and external communications. They also deal with legislators and government officials to promote or defeat legislation and regulation and advise management about public issues and company positions and image during good and bad times.

OPERATIONALIZATION

For purposes of this study, the following terminologies will be used as follows:

PR Activities

Organizational initiatives aimed at improving mutual friendship between an organization and its publics.

Employer- Employee Relations

Strategic activities used to improve ways in which junior staff, senior staff and management ensure fulfillment of organizational goals and objectives.

Financial Relations

Strategies for creating and maintaining investor confidence.

Industrial Relations

Deliberate attempts for promoting corporate relations between different organizations in the industry.

Fund Raising

Strategic methods for sourcing and attracting donor funding whenever necessary.

Negative Publicity

Any information put in the public domain that portrays an organization in negative perspective or negative light.

Corporate Communications

Activities aimed at building and maintaining the corporate image and identity and integrity of the organization. They specifically include public relations, marketing, advertising and customer relations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study was a descriptive survey seeking to determine the contribution of corporate communication to Safaricom's corporate image. A descriptive study is undertaken in order to ascertain and to describe the characteristics of variables in a situation. A descriptive study describes why things are the way they are; showing clearly how variables are related. The objective of a descriptive study is to learn who, what, when, where, and how of a topic (Cooper and Emory, 1995) and given that this study was aimed at determining how interpersonal communication, publicity, advertising and other PR activities contributes to the growth of Safaricom's subscriber base, it fits descriptive study appropriately.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population of interest in this study consisted of users of mobile telephone services within Nairobi. This was purposively chosen since Nairobi's population comprises the busiest users of Safaricom as a mobile phone network. Previous customer relations surveys carried out by Safaricom have also revealed that Nairobi has the most informed Safaricom subscribers – those who would readily recognize appreciate and understand the network's PR activities. Subscribers to Safaricom limited residing in the City of Nairobi therefore formed the population of the study. The subscribers selected in the sample were

found from Safaricom's customer care centers within the Central Business District.

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Method

Sampling means selecting a given number of objects from a defined population as a representative of that population. Respondents were identified through purposive and simple random sampling. For reasons already articulated in 3.2. above, all respondents were selected from Nairobi – from Safaricom customer care centers. Purposive sampling is a non probability method of selecting objects of study in a way that is convenient to the researcher while simple random sampling involves picking a particular number of respondents from the population at random. For this case a total of 200 subscribers were then selected from these centers. They were randomly selected by the computer. For this reason, the researcher was convinced that every customer who has visited the customer care center had an equal chance of selection. It is also worth noting that those who visit Safaricom's customer care centers are those who have knowledge that they can receive customer related assistance which are always PR activities deliberately designed to improve the image of Safaricom and consequently retain and attract customers.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

This study made use of both primary and secondary methods of collecting data. Self administered Questionnaires (see attachment 1) were used to collect primary data. The questions were deliberately

designed to extract information that would reveal the attitudes, opinions, and perceptions on Safaricom's PR activities. The Self administered questionnaire was viewed to be more effective in extracting information from the customers since they are more interactive than the mailed questionnaire. Secondary data was collected using a myriad of sources which included:

(a) Reference Books

(b) Encyclopedias

(c) Dictionaries

(d) Almanacs

(e) Journals

(f) Diaries

(g) Past Studies on Corporate Communications

(h) Newspapers and Magazines

(i) The Internet

(j) Corporate Reports from Safaricom

(k) Brochures and Pamphlets

(l) Television Reports

(m)   Radio Reports

(n) Film Reports

3.5 Data Analysis Methods

Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics presents findings of the study using measures of dispersion, frequencies and measures of central tendency. These measures

include frequencies, percentages, mean scores, standard deviation and variance. General information was analyzed using frequencies and percentages. Mean scores were used to determine the extent to which mass media and interpersonal communication contributes to Safaricom's image building. Standard deviations were used to determine the varying degrees of the difference in which mass media and interpersonal communication influence Safaricom's image building.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the study, and their actual interpretations. Discussions of the results are also presented alongside the objectives of the study. The results are presented in three sections. The sample consisted of 200 respondents but only 109 were successfully interviewed resulting to a response rate of 55%. Low response rate was as a result of terminated interviews due to varied circumstance such as respondents being in a hurry to leave the service centre in the middle of the interview to attend to other urgent things. Customer relations records at Safaricom reveal that approximately 1000 customers are served at the customer service centers on a daily basis. The response of 109 customers therefore reflects a percentage of over 10% which is fairly representative. Trends in communication research have revealed that in the USA for example with over 240 million persons, during opinion polls or other survey research initiatives, the sample size usually averages around 2000 persons. Based against this background, the sample size that was eventually evaluated is fairly representative.

4.2 Respondents' personal profiles

Table 1: Respondents' age

Age	Frequency	Percent
Below 18 years	4	3.7
18 - 40 yrs	97	89.0
41 yrs and above	8	7.3
Total	**109**	**100.0**

Most respondents (89%) were aged between 18 years to 40 years. Only a paltry number of respondents were under 18 years. This implies that most subscribers are adults and only a small number of subscribers are below the majority age.

Table 2: Highest education level

Level of education	Frequency	Percent
Primary	5	4.6
Secondary	36	33.0
Diploma	22	20.2
Degree	39	35.8
Postgraduate	7	6.4
Total	**109**	**100.0**

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Results in table 2 above shows that respondents had varied levels of education. Those with secondary level of education were represented by 33% while those with degree were represented by 36%. Diploma holders were represented by 20% and only a small representation (7%) of the respondents had primary level of education.

Table 3: Employment status

Employment status	Frequency	Percent
Formally employed	80	73.4
Self employed	17	15.6
Unemployed	12	11.0
Total	**109**	**100.0**

Majority of the respondents (73.4%) were formally employed as shown in table 3 above while those without employment were represented by 11%. These results indicate that most subscribers are salaried and have predictable incomes.

4.3 Awareness about Safaricom's corporate communication

Results in table 4 below indicate that more than half (55%) of the respondents first heard about Safaricom 5 years ago. Despite the fact that the company was established ten years ago (in 1997), results

indicate that most people became aware of it only 5 years ago. However, more than one third (36.7%) of those interviewed indicated that they encountered Safaricom for the first time 10 years ago.

Table 4: Respondents first encounter with Safaricom

Year of encounter	Frequency	Percent
10 yrs ago	40	36.7
5 yrs ago	60	55.0
In the last 4 yrs	5	4.6
In the last 3 years	1	.9
In the last 2 yrs	3	2.8
Total	**109**	**100.0**

Table 5: Sources of awareness about Safaricom

Source of awareness	Frequency	Percent
Mass media	76	69.7
Family members	14	12.8
Friends	14	12.8
Safaricom dealer	5	4.6
Total	**109**	**100.0**

Results shown on table 5 above indicate that mass media was the leading source of awareness among respondents. Mass media was represented by 69.7% as compared to family members (12.8%) and friends (12.8%). The findings indicate that family members and friends play equal roles inn creating awareness. However, the representation of mass media emphasizes its inevitable role in creating awareness and leading to subsequent actions such as purchase and customer loyalty. It also indicates that the mass media plays crucial role in shaping the company's corporate image.

Respondents were asked to indicate their awareness status about Safaricom's public relations activities. Results presented in table 6 indicate that 76% were aware while 24% were not aware of the public relations activities. Those who were aware highlighted advertisements run by Safaricom and the company's corporate social responsibility as examples of public relations activities.

Table 6: Awareness about Safaricom's public relations activities

Awareness status	Frequency	Percent
Yes	83	76.1
No	26	23.9
Total	109	100.0

It was found as shown in table 7 hereunder, that 73% of the respondents had both television and radio while 17% had radio only. Respondents without both radio and television were represented by 9%. It is evident from results presented in table 6 and table 7 that those with both radio and television had greater opportunity of being aware about the company's public relations activities. This may be attributed to the benefits of audio visual presentation gained from television which has higher capacity of enhancing awareness among subscribers.

Table 7: Ownership of communication facilities

Communication facilities	Frequency	Percent
Television and Radio	80	73.4
Radio only	19	17.4
Neither TV nor Radio	10	9.2
Total	**109**	**100.0**

Even though Safaricom has been active in airing their public relations activities, observation counts are still low. Only 38.5% indicated that they observed public relations activities more than five times per week while 24% observed public relations activities only once per year.

Table 8: Safaricom public relations activities observed per week

No. of observations per week	Frequency	Percent
Once	26	23.9
Twice	17	15.6
3 times	14	12.8
5 times	10	9.2
More than 5 times	42	38.5
Total	109	100.0

4.4 Role of advertisement in corporate image building

Advertisement provides strong influence in building the company's image in the minds of subscribers. 92.7% of respondents showed that they listen to advertisement programmes sponsored by Safaricom. This indicates that the company has great potential in communicating its corporate identity and building its image through radio and TV adverts.

Table 9: Listenership to radio programmes sponsored by Safaricom

Listenership status	Frequency	Percent
Yes	101	92.7
No	8	7.3
Total	109	100.0

Assessment of adverts seen by respondents revealed that 96% watch adverts sponsored by Safaricom reinforcing the argument that the company can use both TV and radio to build their image.

Table 10: Safaricom sponsored advertisement seen by subscribers

Sponsored adverts seen	Frequency	Percent
Yes	105	96.3
No	4	3.7
Total	109	100.0

It emerged that besides seeing adverts, most respondents remember the advertisement. Most respondents (84%) assert they remember adverts carried out by Safaricom. Some of the features of adverts

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which boost respondents' memory were identified as company colour, background music, and themes in the adverts.

Table 11: Remembrance of adverts

Remembrance status	Frequency	Percent
Yes	92	84.4
No	17	15.6
Total	**109**	**100.0**

Many respondents (66%) indicated as shown in table 12 below indicated that most of their friends, relatives and associates subscribe to Safaricom while 30% of the respondents showed that all their friends, relatives and associates subscribe to Safaricom.

Table 12: Friends, relatives, colleagues who subscribe to Safaricom

Those who subscribe to Safaricom	Frequency	Percent
All friends, relatives and associates	33	30.3
Most friends, relatives and associates	72	66.1
Few friends, relatives and associates	4	3.7
Total	**109**	**100.0**

Results indicated that respondents subscribe to Safaricom for various reasons. However, 43% subscribed because their friends, relatives, and associates subscribe to the same network while 46% of the respondents subscribed to enjoy service quality. This show that service quality is ranked top by most subscribers and it would be prudent for Safaricom to improve and communicate their service quality to subscribers in their bid to build the company's corporate image.

Table 13: Reasons for subscribing to Safaricom

Reasons for subscribing to Safaricom	Frequency	Percent
friends, relatives and associates subscribe	47	43.1
to participate in promotions	2	1.8
service quality	50	45.9
Safaricom good corporate image	10	9.2
Total	**109**	**100.0**

Most respondents (88%) believe that Safaricom is the best service provider and as shown on table 15 above, 93% of the respondents recommend Safaricom to friends and associates. This implies that Safaricom enjoys good corporate image among subscribers. The good corporate image may be attributed to advertisements and service quality by Safaricom.

Table 14: Is Safaricom best service provider?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	96	88.1
No	13	11.9
Total	**109**	**100.0**

Table 15: Assessment of whether Safaricom is recommended to friends and associates

Recommendation status	Frequency	Percent
Yes	101	92.7
No	8	7.3
Total	**109**	**100.0**

4.5 Safaricom's publicity

The success of an organization depends on its publicity as perceived by its customers and other stakeholders. Organizations spend a lot of resources in building their publicity and positive publicity is an intangible asset enjoyed by corporates. Media plays a crucial role in building an organization's publicity.

4.5.1 Negative publicity

Negative publicity means that organizations are perceived badly by customers and other stakeholders. Negative publicity can be brought about by poor relations with the media or by organization delivering poor services to its customers. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they had encountered any negative publicity about Safaricom. Results in table 16 below indicate that more than half (59%) of the respondents had not encountered any such negative publicity while 41% indicated that they had encountered negative publicity about Safaricom. Those who indicated that they had encountered negative publicity highlighted network congestion and high rate for cross line calls.

Table 16: Assessment of Safaricom's negative publicity about Safaricom

Negative publicity encounter status	Frequency	Percent
Yes	45	41.3
No	64	58.7
Total	109	100.0

4.5.2 Positive publicity

Positive publicity assists organizations to build their corporate image in a way that reflects favorably on its products. Bill Gate's speeches and books have helped to create an innovative image for Microsoft Corporation (Kotler and Keller, 2007). Results of the study indicate that Safaricom have been strong in building its image through publicity as it is evidenced by 88% of respondents which indicated that they had come across positive publicity about Safaricom.

Table 17: Ever encountered positive publicity about Safaricom

Positive publicity encounter status	Frequency	Percent
Yes	96	88.1
No	13	11.9
Total	**109**	**100.0**

4.6 Significance of advertising in corporate image building of Safaricom

Kotler and Keller (2007) observe that advertising can be used to build up a long – term image for a product. A five point Likert scale was used to assess the significance of advertisement in corporate image building. A scale between 0 – 1.5 was considered as Very large extent, 1.6 – 2.5 = large extent, 2.6 – 3.5 = moderate extent, 3.6 – 4.5 = small

extent, and 4.6 – 5 = very small extent. Results in table 18 below indicate that advertising influences learning about new products from Safaricom to a large extent (mean = 1.9). Advertising influences purchase of Safaricom line to a large extent (mean = 2.1); and purchase of airtime to a large extent (mean = 2.3). This finding concurs with persuasion theory as advertising plays a key role in persuading subscribers to buy Safaricom's services. However, it was revealed that if Safaricom stopped advertising, its subscribers would switch to a competing service provider only to a very small extent (mean = 4.4); and loyalty to a moderate extent (mean = 3.1). These findings suggest that the role of advertising in attracting customers may not be ignored. It would therefore be important for firms to build a strong image through advertising. However, firms must watch out since advertising does not sustain corporate image and therefore more needs to be done alongside corporate communication to complement the role of advertising in corporate image building. The findings concur with the uses and gratification theory which postulates that media consumers have a free will to decide how they will use the media and how it will affect them.

Table 18: Significance of advertising in corporate image building

Statistics

	Extent to which ads lead to purchase of Safaricom line	Extent to which ads lead to airtime purchase	Extent of learning about new products from safaricom thro ads	Extent of influence of ads on frequency of airtime purchase	Extent to which ads contribute to loyalty	Extent to which ads influences learning about new offers	Extent to which advert stop would influence customer switching
Mean	2.1284	2.2569	1.8807	2.2936	3.0734	2.3853	4.4128
Median	2.0000	2.0000	1.0000	2.0000	3.0000	2.0000	5.0000
Mode	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	3.00(a)	1.00	5.00
Std. Deviation	1.10639	1.24278	1.14443	1.24946	1.39912	1.40045	1.05594

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the findings of the study as well as conclusion gathered from analysis of the data. Findings have been summarized in consideration to the objectives of the study, conclusions have been drawn and recommendations given.

5.2 Summary of findings

The findings derived from the results of the study can be summarized as follows:

(1) That the mass media plays an important role in creating awareness and shaping corporate image. More than 70% of the respondents revealed that they are made aware of Safaricom's PR activities through the mass media.

(2) That the most crucial channels through which Safaricom's customers are informed about the networks PR activities are Radio and Television. This is not strange being that the radio is the most effective media network in Kenya with reports from the African Council for Communication Education (ACCE) indicating that by 1999 there was at least a radio set in each and every Kenyan home. This means that Safaricom's PR messages conveyed via the electronic media have at least a 90% accessibility.

(3) That majority of Safaricom's customers aware of Safaricom's public relations activities. Safaricom experiences both positive and negative publicity. However, the positive publicity has a more significant effect on the target audience than the negative publicity.

(4) That advertising, to a large extent, influences learning about new products from Safaricom. More than 60% of the respondents learnt about the networks new products through advertising.

(5) That discontinuity of advertising or even negative publicity has less influence on subscribers' switching to a competing service provider. None of the respondents had considered changing to competing networks owing to negative publicity.

(6) That most of Safaricom's subscribers are aged between the ages of 18 – 40 are formally employed. This group represents people who are most active in accessing media information and are therefore bound to come into contact with Safaricom's messages from time to time.

(7) That Safaricom has very effective information that fulfill the ends of PR conveyed through the media as most subscribers

confessed encountering and recognizing Safaricom's PR messages at least five times every week through the media.

(8) That the networks PR activities are successful in reinforcing Safaricom's image as the country's most respected Cell Phone Company. 96% of the respondents strongly believe in this tradition.

(9) That the networks PR activities have successfully reinforced Safaricom's image as the pioneer network in the region since majority of the respondents only became aware of the networks existence five years ago but have since then grown to truly believe that it is the best network in the region.

5.3 Conclusion

From the findings and discussion, it has emerged that most people are aware about Safaricom's public relations activities. Most respondents remember the adverts seen. Advertising plays an indispensable role in communicating to people new products and services from Safaricom and building the company's corporate image. Communication therefore, is important in building corporate image of Safaricom, attracting customers and improving the company's financial performance. It is also worth noting that the mass media emerges to be a crucial tool through which communication intended to reach

mass audiences should be channeled through as demonstrated in this study that without it, more than 80% of Safaricom's subscribers would not be aware of its PR activities. Above all, the findings of the study also fulfill the basic postulates of uses and gratification theory which contend that media consumers use the media to fulfill a particular communicative desire. Indeed one desire that Safaricom's customers fulfill by accessing media information is constant persuasion through repeated PR related messages to stay with '*the better option*'.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends that Safaricom should:

(1) Continue using advertising and other public relations activities in building its corporate image. It should also consider using advertorials as opposed to raw adverts in its advertising campaigns.

(2) The network should however diversify its PR activities and not continue using the same strategies indefinitely. New strategies such as Employer Employee relations, Financial Relations, Industrial Relations and even Fund Raising are worthy areas of consideration to augment there already successful PR initiatives.

(3) The network should avoid negative advertising whereby they focus on emphasizing the weakness of their competitors as opposed to their own strengths as this may be viewed as engaging in a destructive competitive spirit by critical customers.

(4) The company should ensure that their PR activities are in tandem with the reality of the excellence of their service provision. Regular network congestions and destructive interferences are constant complaints raised by customers. Whereas the company still enjoys customer satisfaction, this may be short-lived if the recurring complaints are not promptly addressed. PR activities when such complaints become the order of the day may not be as effective. The network must therefore ensure excellence in their technical maintenance so that the PR initiatives don't contradict the reality on the ground.

(5) The company must maintain a proactive approach to its PR activities. Imitating PR activities launched by the networks competitors or merely reacting to corporate onslaughts may go a long way in discrediting the image of the network.

5.6 Areas for futher research

Based on the fruitful findings of this study, similar studies should be conducted in other similar areas such as:

(1) Investigate the link between corporate communications and Safaricom's financial performance – so as to ascertain whether Corporate Communications has a direct commercial value to organizations.

(2) Investigate the role of corporate communications in shaping corporate image in the entire telephone industry – so as to compare and contrast what actual effect corporate communications has on various organizations in the telephone industry.

(3) To investigate what PR activities would become most useful should other competitors to Safaricom be licensed in this market – so as to inform the organization on what PR initiatives they need to prepare to do more.

(4) To investigate what PR activities are most relevant to Safaricom and which ones are least relevant – so as to constantly evaluate the most valuable PR initiatives to Safaricom at a given time.

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APPENDICES:

APPENDIX 1: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

University of Nairobi,

School of Business,

P.O. BOX 30197,

Nairobi.

Dear Respondent,

RE: COLLECTION OF RESEARCH DATA

I am a postgraduate student in the above mentioned University undertaking a Research Project on **"Role of Corporate communication in image building of the firm: A case study of Safaricom Limited"**.

You are kindly requested to assist in data collection by responding to the questions in the accompanying Questionnaire. The information provided will exclusively be used for academic purposes only and will be treated with utmost confidence.

You will also be provided with a copy of the final report upon your request.

Your cooperation is highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Emily Okoth

APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE

Section A: Demographic Information

1. What is your age?

   ☐ Below 18yrs

   ☐ 18-40yrs

   ☐ 41yrs and above

2. What is your highest educational level?

   ☐ Primary

   ☐ Secondary

   ☐ Diploma

   ☐ Degree

   ☐ Postgraduate

3. What is your employment status?

   ☐ Formally employed

☐ Self employed

☐ Unemployed

Section B: Extent of exposure to Safaricom's Public Relation activities

1. When did you start hearing about Safaricom Ltd?

   ☐ Ten years ago.

   ☐ Five years ago

   ☐ In the last four years

   ☐ In the last three years

   ☐ In the last two years

   ☐ In the last one year.

2. From where did you first hear about Safaricom?

   ☐ Mass media

☐ Family members

☐ Friends

☐ Safaricom dealer

3. Are you aware about Safaricom's Public Relations activities?

☐ Yes

☐ No

3. If yes in Q5 above, mention Safaricom's Public Relations activities you are aware of?

....

....

....

....

....

....

4. Do you own any of the following?

☐ Television

☐ Radio

☐ None of the above

5. On average, how many times in a week do you observe

Safaricom's Public Relations activities on the TV?

☐ Once

☐ Twice

☐ 3 times

☐ 5 times

☐ More than 5 times

SECTION C: Role of Advertisement in Corporate image building of Safaricom Ltd.

1. Do you listen to radio/television programmes sponsored by

Safaricom Ltd in the media?

☐ Yes

☐ No

2. Have you seen adverts sponsored by Safaricom in the media?

☐ Yes

☐ No

3. Do you remember the adverts?

☐ Yes

☐ No

4. If yes, what is memorable about it?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. Do any of your friends, relatives, colleagues subscribe to Safaricom?

☐ All of my friends, relatives and associates

☐ Most of my friends, relatives and associates.

☐ Few of my friends, relatives and associates.

    6. Why do you subscribe to Safaricom?

☐ Because the government has a share.

☐ Most of my friends, relatives and associates also
subscribe to Safaricom.

☐ To participate in promotions.

☐ Quality of service.

☐ Recommended by a friend/relative.

☐ Because of Safaricom`s Good Corporate image.

7. Do you believe it is the best service provider in Kenya?

☐ Yes

☐ No

8. Have you ever recommended any of your friends /associates to
subscribe to Safaricom? Why?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Why?_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

9. Have you ever come across any negative publicity about

   Safaricom ltd in the media?

   ☐ Yes

   ☐ No

10.   Have you encountered any positive publicity about

   Safaricom?

   ☐ Yes

   ☐ No

If yes, briefly describe what it was

about_____

_____

SECTION D: Establish the contribution of advertisement in attracting and retaining subscribers.

11.   Please indicate the extent to which you agree to the following statements on a scale of 1 – 5 (*Tick on one box in each statement, where 5 = Very small extent; 4 = Small extent; 3 = Moderate extent; 2 = Large extent; and 1 = Very Large extent*)

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Advertisement leads to purchase of Safaricom line					
Advertisement influences purchase of airtime					
I learn about new products from Safaricom through adverts					
Advertisement influences the frequency of purchase of airtime					
I am loyal to Safaricom because of advertisement					
I learn about new offers from Safaricom through adverts					
If Safaricom stopped advertising, I will switch to					

either Celtel or Telkom

12. Have you ever participated in any activity run by or for Safaricom ltd in the media? Which one?

_____

_____

_____

13. Have you ever considered quitting Safaricom as a subscriber? Why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

14. Do you subscribe to any other mobile service provider? Which one?

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your cooperation.

APPENDIX 3: WORK PLAN

Day	Activity	Resources
Day 1 - 4	• Data collection • Field edit of data	• Questionnaires • Research assistants • Laptop • Transport
Day 5 - 6	Data entry	Laptop
Day 7	Analysis of data	Laptop
Day 8	Preparation of first draft report	• Laptop • Printer • Stationery
Day 9	Editing and preparation of final report	• Laptop • Printer • Stationery
Day 10	Presentation of research report	Transport