International Marketing
Communication in
Mobile Phone Industry
---Application of
IMC and Consumer Behavior Theory

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study orients to the discussion of the applicability of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) in Chinese market, typically in the music mobile phone industry which occupies the noticeable proportion of contribution to the overall market share within the whole product category. As IMC is aiming at realizing the effective and efficient brand marketing communication basing on the target consumers’ needs and wants, the Consumer Behavioral Characteristics (CBC) in local market is necessary to be summarized.

The author carries through the discussion starting from the literature review of consumer behavior science and relevant IMC theories. Basing on the theories, the questionnaire investigating in the consumer behavioral tendency and responses to the current adopted marketing strategy is carried out. Then grounding on the analysis of the questionnaire results as well as the concerned theoretical sources, performance of IMC in its target market is evaluated as the main goal of this study.

As Kevin Lane Keller, Brian Sternthal, & Alice Tybout state in their research of brand positioning, companies need to figure out and construct the brand value according to three prerequisites, establishing a frame, leveraging points of parity and convincing the points of difference to be compelling. No matter which points of difference the brand grounds on as its competitive advantages, the information should be delivered, consistent with the overall brand strategy, to the target consumers through brand marketing communication to influence on their recognition and attitude. This is the first step of realizing the essence of marketing and what IMC basically aims at. Summarizing and evaluating the characters of IMC in its application in the local market is essential for the brand marketing communication strategy especially in mobile phone industry. It needs to be based on the local circumstance that leads and helps form the consumer behavioral traits. This paper endeavors in contributing to the analysis of the local CBC in the process of purchase decision making as well as shaping long-term attitude towards mobile phone brands, in order to establish the practical foundation for its discussion in the effectiveness of the objective marketing strategy and the application of the relevant theories in the brand marketing strategy.

However, besides the previous studies upon the practicality of IMC connecting with the local factors, there is still much space for the future work to dig into the influence of specific adaptation and restriction elements on the application of the marketing theories, since e.g. the proportion within the previous researches, having measured the real outcome of IMC reflected in financial accountability or other quantitative method, is not very high. How to make the communication carriers consistent with each other to “speak in one voice” and how to make the diffused information effective in shaping the expected consumers’ beliefs and attitudes and establishing the long-term brand loyalty are still requiring the further elaboration of the influential factors and scientific ways of estimation of the marketing communication strategy.
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ABBREVIATION

IMC--- Integrated Marketing Communication
MMP--- Music Mobile Phone
CBC--- Consumer Behavioral Characteristics
BMC--- Brand Marketing Communication
SE--- Sony-Ericsson
BBS--- Bulleting Board System
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the research

1.1.1 Situation of the present music mobile phone market in China

Since the first type of music mobile phone (MMP) was published in 2003, large mobile phone producers have been devoting into introducing the conception of MMP so as to make it become the noticeable excellence integrating multiple functions of mobile phone products and gradually grow up onto the increasing point of profit (simultaneously with the intelligent and game mobile phone).

Due to the considerable prospect of MMP, large number of producers had opened out the competition in this field, meantime, the great attention of consumers also become the stimuli of its prosperity in Chinese market. Up to July of 2005, the accumulative total of the categories of MMP in the market was 145, accounting for 13% of the whole types. Then in 2006, the market share of MMP increases from 30.98% in January to 44.42% in August (Wang Jingying, 2007). And during April of 2007, the mobile phones with music function have taken the proportion of around 50% within the total sales. There still has space for expanding for MMP because the market will be saturated when the market share arrives 65% due to the estimation of the expert group of the annual report. (Deng Kuibing, 2006)

Now there are 31 companies having joined into the competition of MMP in China while the international brands obtained obviously higher attention degree with its strength in brand influence and technology. In the end of 2005, the brand attention degree in Chinese MMP market showed that NOKIA, Sony-Ericsson, Motorola and Samsung have occupied the top four places, with the rate respectively 31.9% and 19.4% for the first two brands (Wang Jingying, 2007).

1.1.2 The brand marketing communication strategies of the current participants

Since most large international participants as well as the local brands have realized the finite size of the targeted group which is though growing considerably, efficient brand marketing strategy which, on one dimension, should integrate various managerial tools basing on the cultural and psychological point of view therefore is highly required. Meantime, several of them have adopted graceful tactics to maintain or strive for the loyal groups, for instance, as the overall environment of marketing is developing to entertaining direction, large companies have noticed the importance for applying entertainment marketing for making best use of their brand influence and
simultaneously building their favorable public relations. E.g. 1) NOKIA has taken various ways of marketing communication to promote its strategy in music onto brand marketing level through the paths such as activities for exhuming and cultivating the music talents among the youth groups who are the main targeted users of the products, and the charity activity for the deaf children who are disable to share the music, etc.; 2) Motorola, cooperating with Apple in putting out Itunes, has publicized the new series of MMP, mostly based on the existing brand influence of iPod in music market (Although it has decided to enter Chinese market next summer, there still has chances for obtaining the non-users or shifted users from the competitors due to the combination of the resources of the two brands’ loyalty.), and it uses the pop stars to be its MMP prolocutor as well as establishing the Moto-City connecting with the local circumstance including the traditional Chinese architecture presenting its brand culture. 3) The local brands, having certain advantages in the aspects of the close relationship with the terminal distributors including the electric retailers, the prompter reaction to the market reflecting in some promotion activities, also utilize the marketing tactics from cultural angle including sponsoring in the charity issues, emphasize in its local attributes that are likely to move the consumers in their national emotions, etc.

Estimating whether a brand is competitive and capable to obtain the long-term brand loyalty is not purely determined by the technical or physical difference, but rather by the cultural connotation basis, therefore, while integrating all the available marketing channels, taking advantage of the brand cultural marketing communication, including entertainment marketing and sports marketing that are components of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) strategies, to some extent, is the most effective way of casting off the homogenous contest, keeping the disparity comparing with the competitors and increasing the plus value of the products. Accordingly, participants, under this circumstance, are paying more concentration in digging into the characteristics of consumer behavior and psychology, synthesizing the usage of various influential communication channels, and excavating the resources and effect on a deeper level typically reflecting in guiding the consumers’ linking beliefs and attitudes, and establishing the long-term relations with the targeted consumers.

1.1.3 Current State of the Marketing Communication Strategy of the Researched Brand

One of the few brands who have claimed its brand strategy mainly targeting music and video function is Sony-Ericsson (SE), possessing the noticeable entertainment resources from its parent company. Its accomplishment achieved in the last highly-increasing years mostly owes to its brand positioning at MMP and the assistant integrated marketing strategy. It has the intention of maintaining this ascendancy in the coming period, according to the presentation of the vice marketing president of Chinese branch, Wang Shaniqi, in the 5th telecommunication forum in China, by consummating the online music service flat as well as strengthening the product line through publishing several types of Walkman MMP (Recorded by China Telecom, Ltd,
For its sake of maintaining predominance and winning more market share, popularizing the brand image and solidifying the relations with consumers, the company has actualized and is continue insisting on the function of IMC, especially in entertaining marketing aspect in which it is accomplished. In the past years, typically when aiming at MMP field, SE has utilized the advantageous resource condition of its parent company, spending relatively less expenditure but gaining excellent performance in film marketing as well as extensive responses from the consumers, not only reflected in the increasing sale, but also the propaganda and shaped impression of its brand positioning among the targeted young consumers. Meantime, other entertainment activities and sports competitions also have been sponsored to assist publicizing the brand culture and positioning; moreover, the cooperation with the external marketing main bodies also performs favorably in the current strategy, e.g. SE has become to be one of the three cooperators of the biggest monopoly mobile operation company in China in developing and publicizing MMP in the forthcoming years (China Mobile, Ltd, 2006). In another aspect, the addressee its marketing unit affirms the crucial position of buzz marketing in its marketing communication strategy since this marketing tool, including word-of-mouth, especially the credible and authorized information sources, e.g. experts, professional agencies, opinion leaders in user community and so on, has obvious impact on the purchase decisions in mobile phone industry. Similar as the main competitors, supporting the specific brand forum, the company is guiding the product perception and demand of the consumers, and pursuing the consumer preference and tendency through the long-range communication and interaction, and cultivating the emotional sympathy with brand of its users. To sum up, besides enlarging the width which can be understood as the influential extension, the brand pitches in communicating with its consumers on the cultural level, making use of its specific brand resources, to maximize the benefits of IMC.

1.2 Research Objectives & Methods

1.2.1 Problems and Purposes

Due to the widely adoption of the conception of IMC in Chinese market, the main purpose of this study is to evaluate the performance of IMC in present Chinese MMP industry, including the discussion on the current position of the adopted brand marketing strategy. And to fulfill this purpose, another task should be realized first, the summarization of the consumer behavioral characteristics in marketing communication which are concluded basing on the relevant theories and the questionnaire. Therefore, the launched questionnaire serves as the basis both for the estimation of the applicability of IMC and for the relatively objective conclusion of the consumer behavior.

Consumer behavior characteristics in brand marketing communication
Because of the role that consumer behavior plays in the whole process of brand marketing, most of the marketing communication tools are developed basing on the study in the characters represented in their decision making course, so does IMC, which claims to orient to consumer demand and traits as the kernel starting point of its strategy and the basic element for evaluating the effectiveness. The purpose of this study, first of all, is to review the psychological and behavioral traits that consumers represent in the process of responding to the provided marketing communication, shown as the preference of communication channels and connotation, capacity of information transaction, and social attribute-based attitudes, etc. Consequently, the further conclusion about the performance of the current strategy and application of IMC can be inferred.

Applicability of IMC in Chinese MMP market (Effectiveness of the current strategy)

Grounding on the literature and investigation of the consumer preference and behavioral tendency in the process of information transaction and purchase decision making, the researched brand marketing communication (BMC) strategy can be evaluated in its efficiency and effectiveness. Due to the important position and high practicality of IMC in MMP market, this industry is cited as the main research case. In virtue of the attention paid on the profundity and consistency of the content of the diffused information and on building relations with consumers in the BMC process, much importance is attached to the cultural and emotional factors in the aspect of framing message context and selecting the communicating channels. Thereby, IMC can be sufficiently applied and developed in this space. This study mainly takes up with the corresponding comparison between the present adopted BMC strategy and the requirements of the factual consumer demand from the literature and investigation. As a result, the applicability of IMC in Chinese market typically in the researched MMP market is discussed; ulteriorly its advantages and limitations in localization process will be concluded.

1.2.2 Main Research Methods & the Logic Disposition

Aiming at the main research purposes, fulfilling the above-mentioned tasks requires the review of the conception, levels, and stages, etc. of IMC, as well as packing up the theories related to consumer behavior characteristics. Thereby, the method of literature review in this study is regarded as the fundamental section.

Additionally, due to the necessity of combining the abstract consumer behavioral preference with practice, that is, processing the actual demonstration in evaluating the effectiveness of BMC, besides consulting the open data including the interview record news of the concerned principals and the year report of the industry issued by official agency, the more direct communication with the targeted consumers within possible range is highly needed. The design of the investigation basing on the related theories and factual situation and the direct feedback recalled in the possibly shortest duration and with certain number of answerers contribute greatly to the discussion of the actual situation.

The structure of the entire study is designed following this consecution. In detail,
firstly it summarizes the currently adopted BMC strategy of the researched brand, then a series of studies in IMC and Consumer Behavioral Characteristics (CBC) are reviewed on different dimensions. Secondly, the statistics of the questionnaire results is compared with the goals of the brand strategy and the related researches so as to arrive in the effectiveness-validation of the communication activities. Finally, analysis of the role of IMC in this brand strategy containing the limitation as well is carried through in order to reach the conclusion on the concrete characters of IMC in the local market and the possible opportunities of improvement.

1.3 Significance of the Research

1.3.1 Expected Results of the Research

The author carries through the review of the BMC strategy the company presently processes, the expatiation of the consuming behavior of the target group\(^1\) with growing uptrend in China, and the contrastive analysis between the brand communication and the feedback from the consumers. Sequentially the paper discusses the horizontal consistency of the communicative carriers and the cultivation of loyalty from the vertical direction in this field so as to validate the applicability of IMC in Chinese MMP market.

The expected outcome of the research should be the clear summarization of CBC serving for the strategy orientation; and estimation of the interaction between the brand and consumers through literature review and analysis of the questionnaire results. Then the conclusion of the applicability of IMC is capable to be validated, referring to the previous research in this field.

1.3.2 Limitations

**Finiteness of the theories**

Theories on consumer behavior have certain logics and instructive function; however, it is difficult to make everything the literature describes be consistent with the requirements of the practical operation due to the environmental diversities. Furthermore, during the process of making purchase decision or forming attitude, and of interacting with the companies, consumers hold plenty of uncertain and unstable psychological parameters as stated in the theories. As a result, bare review on those references and the questionnaire cannot assure that the educed conclusion is completely in accordance with the fact, in other words, relying on the responses from the consumers and the subjective calculation has the possibility of leading to illegibility of the conclusion. Therefore, this piece of study can but base on the cited literatures to solve the research questions in rough aspect through basic investigation.

**Finiteness of the research foundation**

\(^1\)The target group in this paper means the main consumers that the marketing activities of MMP brands orient to.
The limitation here mostly indicates the process of obtaining the empirical data which runs through the study all along. Parts of the related materials have relatively low accessibility, therefore requiring compiling the separated information as well as necessary discussion and speculation. Additionally, evaluating the effectiveness of the marketing communication activities, to some extent, needs the comparable financial data that cannot be publicly provided by any official sources. And some of the other sorts of concerned data that is sophisticated to be referenced are extremely limited as well. Consequently some of the discursions have certain subjectivity that needs further consummation.

_Finiteness in extension_

Solving the research objectives is possible to contribute to the discussion of the application of IMC in prospective Chinese mobile phone market, whereas to some extent the research questions themselves are parochial. Firstly, the consumer behavioral tendency and traits concluded basing on the theoretical foundation and related investigation is just one slice of the reference factors in applying IMC strategy, of which the whole system has to be analyzed regarding to the supply chain, and technical factors in the marketing channels, etc. Secondly, brand marketing in mobile phone market does not adopt simply one sort of conception such as IMC, since the defined IMC is exclusive of relationship marketing, service marketing, and internal marketing (orienting to the stakeholders and employees). Hence, IMC itself cannot comprise the entire marketing communication activities the researched brand currently takes.
CHAPTER 2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Questionnaire Investigation

2.1.1 Design of the questionnaire

The components of the design
It is mainly composed by three segments in this investigation, which besides the background information that includes the personality characteristics and intelligence information about mobile phone products and brands, involves the communication situation between the target and the brand focusing on two parts as information of attitude and behavior characteristics and the expected ways of communication, and the already acquired information from SonyEricsson which is the only open-ended part.

The structure of these three parts is moving towards deeper connotation from the basic preference of the consumers to the feedback of the contents and channels of the brand marketing to carry through the relatively comprehensive survey.

The logic of the design based on related theories
This questionnaire serves for the research in the validity of the content and modes of the brand marketing communication, that is, the contrastive analysis between the integrated marketing communication of the brand and the tendentious selection among the diffused information as well as the reaction to and filtration of the information concerned of the targeted consumers.

1) In the first part, the basis information of the target, the questionnaire has put up the partition of the group with more refined extension so as to make the analysis of the behavioral preference more scientifically. Despite that the increasing trend of MMP is still keeping on, the producers need to propagandize, foster and support the conception and functions of MMP and the conveyed cultural sense to diffuse the deeper information concerning the brand advantageous resources and brand culture, etc. As a result, the investigation of the knowledge structure, viewpoints and comprehension about MMP of the targeted group can provide more reliable analytical foundation for marketing communication strategy.

2) The principal part is the second segment, which is concentrating on the interactive situation of the brand marketing strategy and the target consumers. It is indispensable for the participants in the MMP market under dog-eat-dog competition to set down and implement the marketing communication strategy which is acceptable and preferred by the consumers. Sony-Ericsson, the object of this research, has noticeable advantageous resources and brand recognition, and the certain degree of loyalty in Chinese market, whereas, the powerful competitors are simultaneously utilizing the
established influential force in the local region and the applicable IMC, for the MMP field, involving entertainment marketing. In this way, the necessary analysis of the feedback from the consumers and the verification of its own communication pattern have become the crucial work for S-E before consummating its brand marketing strategy at this moment of truth.

In the first place, this part investigates in the brand image in the impression of the target group, and the affective factors on and the preferences of the factors of the consumers in the process of receiving the information pertaining to the products and the brands. And the outcome will provide the summarization and reference of the sources and the assistant elements in the channels of the brand marketing information for this brand. While the actual strategy contains the tended paths and sources of the consumers, it has ignored or insufficiently brought into effect in some aspects which will be elaborated in the following chapter of questionnaire analysis.

Secondly, it is designed for figuring out the reaction and acceptance of the consumers about the information of the product and brand marketing communication, and the selection of the approaches of information transmission. The theoretical base for this design is the consumer behavior and decision making psychology in general sense, the design that work over the feedback of the young group about the current information communication.

3) The last part has been worked out to be the open-ended questions which are the few questions with summarizing characteristics that can provide the answerers more flexible space to make their comments. It is made up of the description of the brand image of the research object, and the positive and repulsive portions they consider among the brand information. The design of this part also serves for verifying the performance of mutual interaction between the information and impacts the brand marketing attempts to deliver and the actual reply of the targeted consumer group, meanwhile settle the foundation of empirical data for the next-step discussion.

2.1.2 Sample selection of the questionnaire

The targeted consumer group of MMP mainly distribute among the youth of the age between twenty to thirty-five, according to the reason that most of the users of MMP uphold the fashionable and individualized lifestyles, and are pleased to attempt and experience on the fangles and technology; their estimation standard of the mobile phone sometimes more often focuses on its design, function, and certainly the brand; at the same time, they are the individuals who are more sensitive to the information impacting on them and more likely to give the feedback. Therefore, while the brand marketing communication aiming at them need s smoother channels, it has to confront the more particular and stricter test. Selecting the group that can be representative turns out to be another important step beside the design of the questionnaire.

Components of the sample and the selection principle:
The sample of this questionnaire is composed by three partitions, the graduate students of the age between 22 and 26, the undergraduate student between 20 and 23, and the
white collar employees between 25 and 35, from the profession of telecommunication, education, mechanism, architectural design, and press, etc. The principles for choosing these three partitions as the main body of the sample are as follows.

1) In virtue of the distribution of the targeted consumer group of MMP, mainly converging in the group that can be defined as “mainstream youth” (as described in the questionnaire they are the youth more reasonable but pursuing for fashion and group-complied) and the “experience-oriented youth” (reliable adult holding consuming capability, favoring the new products, and often experiencing new technologies due to the business reason), the brand can regard these population are mostly among the college students and young white collar office workers whose consuming behavior are more partial to the characteristics mentioned above;

2) The author doesn’t choose the sample from other extension in respect that, among the fashionable consumers, the people who more obviously ascertain their rational preference and the recognition of the brands are from the majority of the well-educated group; and people from different vacations hold different consuming view, different requirement upon the functions of the products, and different manners of acquiring knowledge. And the selected samples that are from the vacation of press, architectural design, law, medicine, and finance, etc. have the more sensitive realization of the brands, and compile the information about the new things more initiatively, in this way, the evaluation of the marketing communication of the brand can be more resultful.

3) For ensuring the convenience and the reclaiming rate of the questionnaire diffused, the majority of the objects selected pertain to the certain groups like familiairs or of the other relations of the author, so as to better convey the principles and requirements of the questionnaire, improve the degree of recognition of the answerers and receive the feedback on schedule, meeting the appropriate quantity.

Size of the sample:
The capacity of the sample contains around 150 individuals, and the reclaimed quantity is 130, with the reclaiming rate of 90%. The reasons explaining for the questionnaire not gathered back are: few objects cannot be contacted by email in time due to the casual change of the job arrangement during the process of the survey; few deny filling the questionnaire blindly considering that they do not acquaint themselves with the MMP field; and few reply relatively late that the answers had not been figured in the analysis of the questionnaire.

Methods for submission of the questionnaire and the supervision to collect the feedback
The questionnaire is submitted mainly through the way of e-mail, assisted with phone call contact with the representative of the answerers, who are responsible for sending over the questionnaire to the objects within their companies and universities. The author primarily contacts and communicates with the representatives during the process of submitting and reclaiming to run it more efficiently.
2.1.3 Limitation of the questionnaire

Limitation of representativeness of the sample
Choosing this sort of sample has its definite limitation. First, the targeted consumer group of MMP contains the consumers of the age between 35 and 45, who are parts of the experience-oriented youth mentioned previously. This group behaves more stably in its consuming ability and rational preference, and holds more mature brand loyalty. Yet, the proportion of this age interval accounts for very little in this questionnaire and mainly concentrates in the profession of press and architectural design. As a result, it makes the sample of this questionnaire serving for the research analysis more lean to the mainstream and pioneer youth as described above who are relatively from the group of the age between 20 to 30, and with the consuming capability and opinion that cannot completely represent for the characteristics of the marketing target of MMP.

Furthermore, the source of the sample is focusing on the well-educated group from megalopolis and relatively bigger areas such that the choice has overlooked the cities and areas of smaller scale and the group of the similar age interval but not college students or white collar. However, according to the traits of the distribution of Chinese population, there are a large number of people from the area in mini-nature having the kindred characteristics fitting the claimed targeted consumer group of MMP. They possess the same consuming attitude and brand cognition, while varied preference in the aspects of the contents and paths of the communicated information, as afterwards, this choice will to some extent impact on the analysis of the sample. Also, the not highly educated group who has not been selected includes the fashionable youth group as well, whereas, due to the limited social network and research duration, these individuals have not been gathered into the questionnaire object.

Limitation of the way of submission and gathering
The way of submitting and collecting the feedback of the questionnaire is mainly by single email, which is able to save time increasing the efficiency, but brings some inconvenience for the individuals who are not used to fill the questions online but rather prefer the physical copies. This manner causes uncomfortableness during the responding procedure, moreover result in that some of them cannot keep their minds on the questions but fill the boxes hastily. Additionally, some emails sent out by the above mentioned representatives have been left in the basket because they cannot assure “supervising” every object to finish the paper and send back so that the recall rate is impacted a little.

2.2 Literature Review

2.2.1 Introduction of the theoretical sources
According to the emphasis of this research, the brand marketing communication, the author mainly select from and use for reference the theories on Integrated Marketing Communication and Consumer Behavioral Science. In the first place, it is preceded
with the aspect of the product and brand side, which contains the brand positioning strategy, identifying the target consumer group, and the establishment and unification of the communicative channels. Furthermore, it discusses the consumer behavior and preference psychology to summarize the feedback and make the evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of the researched brand marketing adoptions.

*Integrated marketing communication*

Integrated marketing communication (IMC), as defined by American Association of Advertising Agencies, is the conception of marketing communication planning that recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of a variety of communications disciplines, e.g. general advertising, direct response, sales promotion and public relations—and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency and maximum communication impact. It attaches importance to the comprehensive consistency and degree of the influence of the involved communication channels carrying the message of the brand, and discusses from several levels of integration, including vertical objectives integration, horizontal/functional integration, marketing mix integration, and communication mix integration, etc. The relevance of this conception, which will be evaluated in its applicability in the researched industry, with this piece of research can essentially be considered as the basis for discussing the strategies of constructing effective communication of the brand messages orienting the target consumers.

*Consumer behavioral science*

Consumer behavior is the study of human responses to the products, services, and the marketing of products and services (Frank R. Kardes, 2001). For assisting with the research in the brand marketing communication, the knowledge has been divided into some logical segments similar with what were elaborated in Frank’s book, which is the discussion following the chain from consumer response, attention, memory, judgment, and choice, to message learning approaches and social influence principles, and so forth. The questionnaire is designed mostly relying on this series of conceptions, connected with IMC and the factual position of the company’s marketing strategy. Therefore, consumer behavior in this research serves primarily for summarizing the main characteristics of the target consumer group and comparing with the current adopted strategy.

*Other auxiliary conceptions*

For more scrupulously establishing the foundation of the analysis, the closely related theories have been cited in the research as well, such as the consumer's black box initiated by Phillip Kotler, the brand positioning principles by Kevin Lane Keller, customer portfolio by David Ford, etc. which are not included in the presentation of the main two theoretical parts, IMC and CBC.

### 2.2.2 Selection principles
MMP has been noticeably emphasized in the brand strategy of S-E, while it is the inevitable direction leaded by its advantageous resources and characteristics of its loyal consumer group. Simultaneously, the fierce competition in this field of honor has brought the threat of dispersing target groups and the market frame to the existing participants. In order to make the knowledge and attitude of the target be consistent with the company’s expectation, it is necessary to utilize various channels of communication which can be integrated together to unite the spirit and personality diffused out with messages, to effectively make the related information of the brand understood which is accordant with the demand and preference of the target consuming group, and to take full advantage of the possessed resources and the designed strategic predominance to avoid from being buried under the complicated and even chaotic communication environment. Consequently, the discussion and adoption of IMC for SE is the stress as well as a necessity of its brand marketing. With the research and summarization of the theory and combination with the actual situation of the brand presently, the analysis and evaluation of the marketing communication strategy of SE in MMP market can be provided with favorable foundation and guidance.

At the same time, building the efficient integration of the resources from every aspect primarily needs to start with the consumers who are the set-down target of the brand strategy. Only if the influential factors like characteristics, decision procedure, tendency stimuli, etc. have been studied, it is possible to reach the responding feedback and the result of the evaluation of the effectiveness of the current communication tactics, and to make the communication process become to be the mutually interactive course, rather than considering simply from the company’s point of view. Thereby, the essential part of the complementary that this research provides for the combination between characters of every stage of IMC and of the target group, is based on the reference of consumer behavioral psychology and their decision making process.

2.3 Limitation of the Methodology

2.3.1 Significance and restrictiveness of the questionnaire

It is difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the brand marketing strategy particularly when the conclusion denoted with concrete statistics is demanded, therefore, mere questionnaire collected from the representatives of the target group and the designed experiments are insufficient to some extent. Ordinarily, the telling method includes comparing past sales with past advertising expenditures and so on; however, due to the obstacles for accessing into the financial database, it is not possible to completely carry through the discussion founded on the actual performance of the company. The conclusion of the questionnaire has certain reliability and scientific significance because of its direct interaction with the researched objectives and firsthand information of feedback, so it is capable to reach the veritable analysis of the
two-sided conditions of the current strategy, and good reflection of the reasonability of the marketing communication paths and the effectiveness of the outcome. Meanwhile, due to its oneness and incomprehensiveness to some extent, there is a possibility to arrive at the relatively parochial conclusion interfered by the factors such as the questionnaire design, exact circumstances for answering the paper, etc, so that the persuasiveness is likely to be decreased as well.

2.3.2 Applicability of the theories

IMC has been introduced into Chinese marketing field at the beginning of 1990s, which can be regarded as the conclusion founding on a series of case analysis contemporaneously or previously, as a result, it inevitably carries some posteriority. Meanwhile, there is a limitation for its application in the local market definitely. During the process of international marketing, one of the most crucial considered points is the discrepancy of the economic system, cultural environment, concrete supply chain, and the cooperative condition for the information communication channels, etc. It has been a period of time for IMC to acclimatize itself to the elements in the objective area. Although the theory has been exerted considerably in some different fields, for MMP, the relatively newly prosperous market, its applicability still needs further expansion. For the video and music mobile phone which pertain to the sort of products that require the way of cultural communication to infect the target consumers, integrated marketing becomes the must-endure road. Whereas, the conclusion referred to this theory is incapable to explain every aspect, since it can but only carry through the discussion based on the integration of the channels to the horizontal direction and the extension of the content and influence vertically, rather than discussing about the suggestion for the concrete establishment of the channels. Therefore, the analysis grounded on it needs further discussion in the application point of view.
CHAPTER 3 THEORY ELABORATION

3.1 Integrated Marketing Communication

3.1.1 Conception of IMC

Definition of IMC
As mentioned in the previous chapter, integrated marketing communication is equal to the marketing communication planning recognizing and combining the communication disciplines to cause the communicative positive impact. It is the concept under which a company carefully integrates and coordinates its many communications channels to deliver a clear, consistent, and compelling message about the organization and its products (Phillip Kotler, *Principles of Marketing*, 4th ed., 2005). Therefore, the process of integrating the marketing communication strategy means to utilize all sorts of information touch points including brand as the communication channels, starting with the target consumers and aiming at influencing their behavior both directly and indirectly. It is not a simple kind of expression or voice, but rather a composition with an effective, efficient, and interactive communicative process.

Referring to Smith et al. (1999), this system has been provided with three definitions as:
1) Management and control of all market communications;
2) Ensuring that the brand positioning, personality and messages are delivered from a single consistent strategy;
3) The strategy analysis, choice, implementation and control of all elements of marketing communications which efficiently (best use of resources), economically (minimum costs) and effectively (maximum results) influence transactions between an organization and its existing and potential customers, consumers and clients.

Consequently, IMC can be understood mainly as the adjustment of the strategies and objectives capable to adapt the change of the marketing and communication realities as well as the whole framework of the company’s plan (Olof Holm, 2006), the integration of all selected communication channels, and the extension of its depth which can effectively influence on the target on its attitude and behavior by generating the sympathy and can be raised onto the strategic level being consistent with the comprehensive tone.

Levels of IMC
Since IMC is required to meet the strategic conditions, it cannot merely mean to combine all of the available communicative paths working together in the right time and place, with the right content, but rather, it is necessary to be expanded to a larger
scope including the mix of the conceptions at higher levels. Olof Holm has concluded with several detailed levels of integration which explain deeply for the meaning of this system.

1) Vertical objectives integration, which means the communication objectives fit with the marketing and overall objectives. The whole brand marketing communication should be made congruent with the strategic plan of the company, effectively and efficiently, which is as essential as fitting with the consumers’ knowledge and preference. The latter is the necessary guarantee and crucial foundation for the validity of the marketing communication which, to another extent, reflects the vertical connotation that is different from the grading partition interiorly but rather interacting with the external environment.

2) Horizontal/functional integration. The level calls for the activities to fit well with the other business functions of operations, HR, etc, and the cooperation among the units involved is concerned here.

3) Marketing mix integration, the concourse of the product, price and place decisions consistent with the promotion decision, e.g. with the required communications messages. The promotion strategy is implied to be the primary reference for the other elements in marketing process, and the required communications messages taken for instance holds the similar meaning as the consumer knowledge and preference mentioned above, which shows the real effectiveness of interaction of the marketing communication.

4) Communication mix integration. It is using all of the communications tools to guide the customers, consumers, and clients through each stage of the buying process and all of them portray a consistent message. From the tactics point of view, the mixture of the communication channels is regarded as the most important possession of the integration of the brand marketing communication, and it also fits with the outcome of the survey Olof Holm put forth, that is the education programs of the leading marketing communications schools contain more than 90 percent aimed at communication theory, various techniques, advertising, art, copy and account executive training, and that is also the regular areas of the application of IMC in most of the company brand marketing communication strategies.

5) Moreover, the researcher has come up with several other levels of the integration which are directing to the creative decision, internal departments and external agencies, and financial budget.

In a word, both some of the previous and recent studies on IMC claim for the comprehensive conception of the real marketing communication, ranging from corporate cooperation to interior adjustment, and from up-and-down interaction to the mix of all meaningful tools. Thereunder, this research concentrates on marketing mix integration & communication mix integration, primarily discussing the channel integration, interaction between the distributor and receiver, and extension upon the level of profundity of the communication, etc. within the process of the brand marketing communication in current mobile phone market.

*Stages of communication*
As it is focused on the process and outcome of communication, the tasks in each step during this process are necessary to be discussed. Phillip Kotler has concluded the five stages with their own characters as follows.

1) Identifying the target audience. The possible components of the audience are the current or potential users who make the purchase decisions or who influence on the decisions. And the marketers should make their strategy of what to be said to whom through which paths to what extent, being affected by the audiences’ attitude, beliefs, and other personality.

2) Determining the communication objectives. At this step the goals of the marketing communication must be clarified so that the response sought from the consumers or other targets can lead the communication principles. Here we need to discuss about the buyer readiness stages upon which the communication strategy should be based targeted to every single section.

These five steps are passed through by the consumers on their way to making a purchase, and, according to Kotler’s definition, another expression of this process is “hierarchy of consumer response stages”. Consumers started from name recognition from simple messages repetition, passing through the courses including 1) obtaining deeper information about the product and the brand which can help shape their overall view; 2) developing the favorable feelings about the brand; 3) building the preference being attracted by the attributes of the brand such as quality, value and other features comparing with the other alternatives who are often the competitors of this certain brand; 4) confirming themselves about the benefits and the specific features of the brand offers usually stressed by the press releases and public relations activities, and 5) making the final buying decision after waiting for more information, being motivated by the special promotion activities, direct contact of the salespeople, or the further recommendation from others through word-of-mouth.

The author considers that there are three prospective behaviors after the final
purchase at this time. One possibility is to deviate from this circulation after the buying process, while other potential behaviors influenced by the built relationships contain two sorts of reflections. A kind of relation, considered as the second option, may be established between the consumers and the brand including brand loyalty, such that under the prospective conceivable conditions, the consumers might repeat their purchase for the products with the targeted brand categories, as a result, they will probably be affected by the information about their preferred brand and move into the next round of decision flow, starting producing the awareness of the new information and continue then. The third option is to diffuse the loyalty through indirect dissemination and recommendation (buzz marketing), to influence on others’ touch and recognition of the brand and the final purchase decision. Therefore, in the discussion of the buyer readiness stages in the goals of brand marketing communication, it cannot be called off just at the point of finishing this round of purchase, but rather, to build a long term consumer relationship with which the process does not have the terminal but has to be periodic to form a circle chain if the brand stands on the long term point of view. This process will be connected with the next section where the consumer behavior characteristics are discussed.

3) Designing a message. This is the crucial section after designing the overall framework of the audience response process and which can be based as the foundation of effective communication since what the brand diffuses to the target requires investigating their specific characteristics and demand, and, to a certain extent, directly determines the contents of the signals the target receive in their considering course. To form a sensible message, it is necessary to put the message content, structure and format into the consideration set.

First of all, the marketer needs to figure out a theme representing their brand conception or product attributes which can produce the expected responses from the consumers. Meantime, whether rational or emotional themes, or appeals, are selected needs to be decided. Rational appeals are defined as the messages relating to the audience’s self-interest and confirm that the product will provide the claimed benefits, that is to say, it is attracting the audience by its concrete functions or advantages. However, it is significant as well of the emotional appeals which motivate purchase through stirring up either positive or negative emotions (for mobile phone industry positive aspect is more available). Under most situations, emotional marketing which conveys messages touching emotions more deeply is highly required in the industries where the brand image means much more than the exact functions or attributes of the products, or the activities like sales promotion. It finally can lead to the view of how the consumers and non-consumers see the company and its competitors (Phillip Kotler, 2003).

Secondly, the structure of the message has to be selected, being divided into several categories, providing conclusions or leaving some considering spaces for the consumers, presenting all of the strengths the brand possesses or combining the negative information as well, and presenting the most significant arguments first or last.

Message format, which can be understood as the touch point of the brand orienting
to the consumers as well, in the author’s opinion, includes various communication paths both of direct experiencing or obtaining from the advertisers, and so on.

4) Choosing media. Personal and non-personal communication channels are discussed here. While in most cases in the mobile phone industry, the personal communication channels are effective for its merit in personal addressing and receiving the feedback, especially reflected in the aspects of word-of-mouth influence, and buzz marketing which cultivates the “opinion leaders” and will be discussed in the following chapters, the non-personal communication channels are as important as the former ways. It is carrying the messages through media, atmospheres and events, etc, and needs the marketers to carefully choose the right message source which is effective and credible to the targeted consumers.

5) Collecting feedback. The feedback for the communication is the most scientific basis for evaluating the whole process and can be taken as reference for the future survey and strategy. It involves investigating the target audiences on whether they remember the message, how many times they saw it, what points they recall, how they felt about the message, their past and present attitudes towards the product and company, and whether they have talked or recommended to others about it, etc. In IMC point of view, at its vertical level, the feedback is the most essential guarantee for the brand to confirm whether it has reached the deeper spirit of brand marketing communication by producing resonance with the consumers.

**Marketing communications system**

![Marketing communications system diagram]

A: Company;   B: Intermediaries;   C: Consumers;   D: Publics;  
Set 1 & 2: Advertising, Personal Selling, Sales, Promotion, Public Relations, Direct Marketing;  
Set 3: Word-of-mouth.

**Figure 3.2 The marketing communication system**


In this section, the company’s total marketing communications mix, also called promotion mix is elaborated. It consists of various tools, advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations and direct marketing tools satisfying the company to pursue it oriented groups. The aspects of advertising and public relations (PR), and
even sales promotion sometimes, are more effective in MMP brand marketing and as a result mainly cited in this research, typically PR which means building good relations with the company’s publics by obtaining favorable publicity, building good brand image, and handling with two-sided events (claiming its advantages as well as finding the solutions of dealing with the competitions of the attributes that the competitors are more proficient in). Companies, consumers and the public environment (communities, or of other relations) they live in, in this system, shaped the mutual interaction but through various paths that convey the consistent signals. The communication between the initial sender (the company) and its target consumers is more likely to be realized with the marketing tools that are different from the ones applied in the further stage, in which loyal as well as influential consumers become to be the potential marketers to spread the confirming information, from their experiences or benefits, to the public.

3.1.2 Role of IMC in Chinese mobile phone market

Performance of IMC in Chinese mobile phone market

Referring to the ranking initiated by T. Schultz and ANHOLT in UK, China is one of the top twelve countries who are among the list of high proportion of brand value within GDP; however, the average of the value per person is far below those of the competitors. Bringing huge potential opportunities for the local brands’ development, this provides large expansion space and obvious advantages for the international companies who have already established favorable brand images. The same happens in MMP industry. IMC is extremely crucial for the competition in this field.

Since it was formed in Northwestern University in U.S. at the beginning of 1990s, IMC has grown into the stage possessing the objective foundation that has been practically validated. There are numbers of enterprises adopting this theory into their marketing strategy and ulteriorly consummating, such as IBM, 3M, Federal Express, and recently Microsoft, etc. It is pursuing for perfecting the durativity and the message-learning process.

It has been near upon twenty years since IMC was introduced into China. The reason for explaining why IMC, agreed by the marketing professionals, is the suitable brand marketing theory for Chinese market, mostly is rooted in the eastern culture which is all along paying attention to the whole, and the mutual relation and cooperation between one another. These characteristics afford the integrated theories solid soil in the local area. Meanwhile, the business administration in China attaches much importance to the scientific elements (like technology, financial assessment) such that, in some certain sense, this would cause the impact on the development and decrease in creation in emotional aspect, but the derived scrupulousness, cautiousness, special consuming habits, different expectation of the products and brands, and the stimuli caused by the increasing consuming ability can support as the environmental assurance for IMC in Chinese market to be more reasonable and effective which means to utilize the available resources efficiently arriving at the desired communication results.
IMC has been recognized by most of the international and local brands in Chinese mobile phone industry, typically in MMP market, due to its difference from the low-price or business mobile phones of which the marketing strategies carry out the goals through the draught of the terminal retailers or personal selling or else, rather, it specifically requires the integrated marketing with the cultural communication, infecting the consumers and realizing the effective interaction through multi-channels contact and long-term loyal relationship. Consumers presently become holding much more information technologies so that the importance of the traditional marketing system is likely to be weakened. The essence of IMC is conforming and reforming the marketing communication activities in order to provide the consistent messages to the consumers through various information channels, to strengthen the coherence and integrality of the brand appeals, and to implement united configuration of the information resources as well as raising the utility rate of the resources. According to the researched industry and brand, the coherence and high efficiency just mentioned has important purport for building brand advantages in current competition, and the effect that IMC has performed in this area also proves the trend and potential of development.

Significance of public relations in Chinese brand marketing communication
Public relation (PR), as one of the key components of IMC system, is defined as realizing the marketing communication by “obtaining favorable publicity, building up a good ‘corporate image’, and handling or heading off unfavorable stories and events”. According to the investigation of American Association of Advertising Agencies, the proportion that public relations and sponsorships take has continuously increasing onto 15.4 percent in 2003 within the brand marketing strategy in the overall market (with media advertising and sales promotion at the higher levels). The economical and cultural environment of China has high request upon PR, and the degree of recognition of the publicity towards the social image of the brand and the social estimation on themselves is good illumination. The companies in MMP market pursuing for establishing credible and attractive brand image have to figure out the opportunities for the target consumers to contact with the brands through information with high quality and suitable quantity, and has better support multi-events and charity project as sponsorship and invest in the industries like film and sports, etc. These aspects will be discussed in detail in the following chapter analyzing the marketing strategy and questionnaire.

3.2 Consumer Behavior

3.2.1 Consumer characteristics in the process of acquiring, remembering, and using the brand message

Consumer awareness and response
Consumers learn about products and acquire product knowledge through
first/secondhand experiences in most situations. The secondhand experience, more indirect and seems to be less persuasive for some products that especially require direct trial, provides marketers with affluent ways of explaining great deal of information about their products to the target consumers. It consists of the mass media including television, radio, newspapers, magazines and internet, brochures of the new products, and the other sources of information which are less susceptible to managerial control of the company, such as articles on the consumer magazines, reports from government agencies, and word-of-mouth communications from acquaintances, etc.

There is too much information exposing to consumers who have to filter out from every piece of product-related message during their whole decision process, while the consumers have the limits of attention, that is to say, people always attend to a very small fraction of the marketing communications to which they are exposed and that is available in the marketplace. (Frank R. Kardes, 2001) Therefore, due to the consumers’ concentration on some parts of information, the marketers should figure out the factors that guide the selective attention explaining the reason why the consumers focus on these certain marketing stimuli and are interested in some sorts of ads, and which kinds of persuasive or motivate sources impact on the consumers’ tendency to attend to, and so on.

The relation between the consumers and the brands or the effect of the communication starts from the consumer awareness of the communicated information and their foremost reaction to the messages they are exposed to, which can be named as consumer responses consisting of affective responses (feelings and emotions we experience when reading about, hearing about, or using the products), cognitive responses (beliefs and attitudes toward the brands or the products), and behavioral responses (purchase actions or the influence on others’ decision through recommendation or persuasion). Marketers who want to draw the selective attention from the target need to dig into the factors influencing on the attention and comprehension of the communication messages such as novelty which is changing, moving and intense, vividness drawing attention automatically across contexts, concreteness helping with directly picturing and considering the attributes of the products, and so on.

Consumer judgment---inferences of the information resources

Basing on the long-term memory stored as the quarry of the attitude and beliefs of the brands and most of which comes from the relearning of the product knowledge, the consumers will be likely to form the views and opinions that can help them evaluate the brand equity or, the relation equity, the consumer’s reluctance to go elsewhere because of learning curves, user-community benefits, or other considerations. (Roland T. Rust, Valarie A. Zeithaml, and Katherine N. Lemon, Customer-Centered Brand Management, 2004) People have finite time to devote into searching and learning the data pertaining to the products, therefore preferring to shape their preference judgment according to the most accessible and lifestyle-congruent information, and to the membership of them within certain categories, taking user-community for instance.
As a result, communicators need to base the marketing messages they want to diffuse out on the consumers’ characteristics including the personal factors like occupation, age, role and status, personality, initials of motivation, etc., and the tended information inferences based on the correlated presented information (e.g. the inertia belief between high quality and high price), the evaluation referring to the overall impression of the brand, the prior knowledge which is basic and common about the product or becomes common after certain period of communicating and experiencing time, and the organized knowledge structure as well.

Furthermore, in order to form a general or concrete view of the brand or the products likeable to them, consumers intend to reach their judgment which can be divided into attribute-based and attitude-based preferences. The former means comparing the attributes under two or more brands while the latter is to shape the overall attitude towards two or more products. And to Frank’s opinion, these two different preferences are determined by the long-term memory and comparison performance. Consumers having the previous knowledge and attitude toward the brands in their memory will most likely go for the attitude orientation, structuring an overall impression of the brands. In contrast, sometimes the unique attributes of the focal brand are favorable and easier to produce the preference when the uniqueness are noticeable out of the compared objectives which can explain well for why most brands eager to make themselves specified. The author also agree that under some circumstances, these two sorts can combine together to arrive at the final preference, or the attribute basis can be moved to attitude level, that is to say, consumers also have the possibility to hold the whole impression of one brand by focusing and remembering its certain advantageous attributes which simultaneously help avoid the too wide image of the brand while ignoring the concentration on certain functions of the brand strategy.

**Consumer choice**

With the attention and perceptions drawn, memory stored, and attitude shaped, questions like what products or brands are considered for purchase, what information is used to detect differences among considered alternatives, and how this information is used will be come up with by the marketers since the consumers will make the consideration set of the alternatives before making the purchase decisions. Still, the quantity of the information about the considered options is too large to be dealt with, and the access of the information is limited so that it cannot reach the target at the right time when the purchase decision is made. Therefore, one main task for the marketers to complete is to reduce the size of the consideration set down to the affordable degree. Using the solutions such as part-list cuing and compromise effect, etc.( Frank R. Kardes, 2001), the brand becomes capable to recall the consumers about its image and service. But referring to the consumers who are knowledgeable about the product category and have formed their own subcategories (for their specific beliefs and lifestyles), part-list cuing is not available, same as the ignorance of the moderate price-orientation when the consumers attach much importance to the functions of the product or have high brand loyalty. However, the idea of reducing the
number of the alternatives in the consideration is applicable in most cases.

Secondly, the accessibility of the brand information should be increased. The accessibility-diagnosticity model puts forward that the consumer choice is decided by the accessibility of the brand information, the accessibility of the alternative information, and the perceived relevance of the information. Marketers need to attempt to kick out the blocks of accessing the sources of related information of their brands while luring the consumers not to be attracted by their competitors’ way of providing information as well as to analyze the knowledge structure of the consumers that will form their opinions of relevance of the alternative brands in the set. Meantime, it is necessary to realize that the consumers often choose their favorite brand without extensive information gathering and analyzing if the brand involvement is low, which means there is a possibility of using the choice heuristics when the quick decision is made. For the products which are high purchase involvement implying the high accountability for the purchase decision, it is still sensible to remember offering the related and desired information as conveniently, easily, less time-consuming as possible.

Then the consumers might move into the phased strategies which divide their decisions into two different orientations. One is using the heuristic to simply cut the number of the alternatives, while another adopts more detailed principles to make the choice among the best alternatives by weighing all relevant information pertaining to the brands. Referring to the industry in this research, the latter manner will be considered for the majority of the target consumers.

Buyer’s black box
The process of the consumers’ purchase decision is influenced and even restricted by the environment they live in, the personality reflected as the sight of regarding values, lifestyles, and occupations, the tendency of receiving and comprehending information, and the condition of the communication channels between the demanded products or the prospectively purchased products. These factors compose the decision system of the buyers’ own which is called buyer’s black box in Kotler’s research.

According to the model below, consumers are guided by various factors micro or macro before they arrive at their own knowledge and attitude structure. What this research focuses, as the sections mentioned above, is the stages apiece in the micro marketing procedure and the cultural background, etc. And the activities after finishing shaping the black box are the direct interaction between the consumers and the products, or to say, the visible interaction reflected in the selection of the brand, product, supplier, and even purchase timing. However, the invisible part, the activities including the initiatively or passively searching for, and recognition and comprehension of the information that can guide their attitude, which are the indispensable basis and research objectives for IMC process pursuing for consistent messages of every channel, and realizing the depth of the communication to achieve the really effect. The previously discussed consumer awareness, response, judgment, and choice, etc. are also the detailed elaboration of each of the sections and their characteristics in this process.
### Table 3.3 Marketing stimuli and Other stimuli

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marketing stimuli</th>
<th>Other stimuli</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Product</td>
<td>Economic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>Political</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place</td>
<td>Cultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>Technological</td>
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### Figure 3.3 Model of buying behavior

Source: Citation from the research of Philip Kotler, Principles of Marketing, 4th European ed. 2005, P255, P279

#### 3.2.2 Persuasion process (preference on means and contents of marketing communication)

**Message-learning approach---Basic stages involved in the persuasive communication process & Influential factors of the psychological process**

The leader of Yale University psychologists group, Professor Carl Hovland, has suggested the indispensable elements for effective persuasion in the marketing communication process with his colleagues. To capture the expected outcome of the communication, the messages diffused need to be attention-drawing, comprehensible, convincing as well as memorable that form the four basic stages of the consumers’ reaction in an effective communication process (Shown as Figure 3.4). In turn, the first stage should be “attention”, as described in the previous section, the awareness attracted by the related or desired information which has to be salient, vivid, or novel. Consumers normally have their automatic exposure control system which help prevent them from the unwanted messages, meanwhile, they are deliberately filter out the sources sending out the information on which they would like to rely, and as a result, marketers usually focus on publishing their communication messages through
the efficient sources which is either credible or attractive, or both. The credibility of the source includes the reputation and the consistency between the diffuser and the message, e.g. the consumer magazine claims about the service of the brand and the consumer feedback of the product, while the attractiveness is obtained through the ways of presentational style, the physical appearance, and the similarity to the recipients which means the resonance and shared point of view with the consumers, etc. The more trustworthy and expert the message sources are, the more effective the persuasion communication can be.

Then the “comprehension” and “yielding” stages come to be the main tasks. There are several influential variables working in the above psychological process, besides the sources factors, including the message, recipient and medium factors. Firstly, within the comprehension stage, the complexity and the emotional/rational appeals of the message is highly concerned. For the high-tech as well as fashionable products, both emotional and rational appeals are required that can combine the factual and useful details about the products’ attributes and the encouraging messages together to serve for the recipients who are highly in need for cognition and enjoy pursuing and thinking about the desired information. Secondly, referring to the medium aspect, there are basically two sorts of source of medium according to the discussion, audio visual and written context. Both of them compose the communication channels for the recipient to acquire information including the Ads and news from television, radio, and internet video orienting to the simple and recapitulative communication, and internet forum, newspaper, magazine, and exhibition diffusing the more complex, professional, and compound message. Both of the simple and complex ways the chosen medium uses to publish the marketing information are necessary in the whole persuasive process because consumers are exposed to different communication channels and are not absolutely influenced by either only simple or professional sources of information. But the marketers should understand the differences between them in order to catch the right forms through the right medium in each stage of the persuasion process, following the integrated communication which will discussed in the chapters afterwards where the recipient factors will be elaborated as well.

![Figure 3.4 Persuasive Communication Process](image)

Source: The author’s interpretation basing on the research of Frank R. Kardes, Consumer Behavior and Managerial Decision Making, 2\textsuperscript{nd} ed., 2001

Finally, the process will probably end in the retention stage which is aiming at helping storing the memory about the convincing and compelling brand/product information they have yielded out. Certainly, the memory might be the memory that can lead to the potential purchase actions or the long-term impression by which the prospective purchase, recommendation, or transferring to the other product within this brand category are guided. As a result, marketers in most cases are designing their
marketing communication strategy adopting the suitable sources, medium, and content of the messages to pursue for these kinds of retention both bringing benefits for now and for the future larger groups.

**Theories of comparative judgment**

1) **Frame of reference (Points of parity & difference) & Adaptation level**

Brand positioning starts with establishing a frame of reference, which signals to consumers the goals they can expect to achieve by using a brand...It indicates the types of associations that will function as points of parity and points of difference. (Kevin Lane Keller, Brian Sernthal, and Alice Tybout, 2002) This is the basic information that consumers will consider about a competing brand which needs to stand at the points of parity which implies the minimum requirements for playing the game. Comparing to the new brands, the established brands often lead the reference but still need to reassess it over time since the attributes that once were points of difference can become the minimum line as points of parity. Consumers’ adaptation level to a brand is increasing from time to time due to the technical innovation, acceleration of consuming capability, and broadened knowledge of brands through more complicated communication paths. Therefore, extending the difference from the basic line of the certain product category as well as initiating creative and clear points of parity to become the trend leader within the category is the two crucial strategies a brand should attach importance to, aiming at forming the consumers’ frame of reference as the brand expects.

2) **Influencing consumers’ reference points**

Since many kinds of reference points are used when the consumers form their judgment, such as adaptation level, the consumers’ own attitudes pertaining to the social judgment, etc., the marketers need to figure out the exact one the people use in particular situations. Under most circumstances, brands are shown among several similar alternatives so that the brands which can be accessible from memory due to their recent activation, frequent activation or elaborative processing that take effortful thinking and comparing have the obvious effect on the pointes of reference. Therefore, the marketers should realize the necessity of keeping the appropriate frequency and publishing time of the accessible information which will prospectively be used as the sources of reference.

**Social influence (related to PR)**

1) **Social validation principles**

In some cases, consumers tend to follow or be influenced by the social mainstream, either reflected by the number of people who support the idea or by the authority or reputation of the supporters. This is called social validation principle which works mostly as the proof by numbers. (Frank R. Karaes, 2001) People are more likely to regard the opinions of other members in certain environment as the evidence or guarantee of the claimed attributes of one objective due to their normative and informative demand so that the information senders had better figure out the properly popular convergent sources of their advocates to assist the information dissemination.
inside their communities as well as utilizing the publicizing influence towards the external environment, taking advantage of the public quantity or the prestige of the publishers to guide the consumers who have difficulty in acquiring or are uncertain about the related information.

2) Reference group
As mentioned above, individuals have certain demand of the feeling of attribution to certain groups and the tendency of conforming to the majority. Even the ones who pursue for individuality still belong to the communities, living scope, and occupation of their own which can cause them to perform with the specific characteristics pertaining to the groups, and to hold the needs of being confirmed by others out of the groups. Reference group is a good explanation. The beliefs, attitudes, values, and norms of a reference group can be used as the standards for the formation of the view and behavior of an individual. The members within this group is the leaders of the pop opinion trend who are influenced by the internal attitude, convention, and manner as well as influencing on the external adherents being regarded as the main factors of reference. Thereby, the information communication orienting to the mainstream communities and opinion leaders is the significant strategy running through the whole effective communication process.

3.2.3 Consumer segmentation

Psychological bases
Different characteristics of the consumers are dependent on different dimensions which can be based on to divide the market under various ways. Psychological and behavioral base are the main categories orienting to this research. The psychological factors are usually represented as personality traits, beliefs and attitudes, lifestyles, interests and opinions. According to the model established by Riche (1989), consumers can be segmented due to their feedback to several statements about values and lifestyles. Status oriented and action oriented consumers including achievers, strivers, experiencers and makers can be regarded as the main sources of the target consumer groups of the researched objective. Achievers and strivers try to impress others but the former have more of the resources to reach the goal, while experiencers and makers have active lifestyles with the former possessing more resources who are relatively young and highly interested in new products and services. These four varieties form the main components of the group pursuing for the individualism and fashion while more likely to access into the related information and with high brand involvement (the typical MMP users).

Behavioral bases (light users)
Frank suggests the behavioral segmentation to be based on the usage situation and frequency, as a result dividing the consumers into three parts, nonusers, light users, and heavy users. The tasks respectively emphasize in, 1) drawing the awareness and educating the consumers about the product knowledge, 2) changing the attitude towards the benefits the brand offers and positioning the brand more effectively, and 3)
retaining the favorable memory and increasing the accessibility of the brand and its benefits from memory.

Besides those two bases, geography and demography are included in the segmentation principles. Marketers should base their brand positioning as well as brand marketing communication strategy on the consumers segmentation which can serve for choosing the most available and effective contents and channels of the communication.

### 3.2.4 4C and 5R

The primary relationship between these theories and the significance of connecting them is reflected, from one certain angle, in the model of 4C and 5R (Zhang Xiuhua, 2004), which obviously explains the points of connecting the customer/consumer preference and value with the company’s brand positioning and marketing communication strategies.

4C refers to consumer needs and wants, costs to consumer, convenience, and communication. This composition reflects the strategic process of brand marketing which bases on the consumer demand and extends to the mutual interaction.

5R contains **relevance** of the products and service subservient for customer\(^d\) demand, **receptivity** (when and through which channels do the customers tend to acquaint themselves with the brands), **responsive** of the company reflected in the rectification after obtaining the replies from the objectives, **recognition** as the reputation and position in the market, and **relationship** which is the long-term interaction between brand and customers. As described above, this model shows the necessary connection between BMC theories and researches on consumer behavioral characteristics which play important role in forming the communication strategies.

### 3.2.5 Relation with the questionnaire design

To sum up, the consumer behavior characteristics and the psychological factors in the process of making purchase decision determine the responses to the brand marketing communication and furthermore of which the consistency with the expectation of the company determines the evaluation of the brand strategy. It is difficult to deal with the research of consumer behavior characteristics due to the differences of their cultural background, expressing manners, view of value and consuming, extent of accepting and understanding the messages sent out by varied sources. Being desirous to grasp these differences of the target consumer group systematically and establish the long-term communication structure with them is the primary mission of the brand strategy of the company as well as the theme running through the overall cycle. IMC has gained certain harvest, basing on which the questionnaire afterwards is designed, simultaneously on the Customer Behavior theories, especially the latter because it is essential for providing the fundamental functions and verifying the replies from the consumers. Most of the questions in the investigation are grounded on the consumer

\(^d\) Conception of customer in this research refers to the consumers who take the purchase action.
behavioral characteristics and tendency, product and brand knowledge structure, and the process of filtering and selecting the information sources and the content of the information itself, etc. The young consumers that MMP aims at, typically the young fashionable groups in this research, have the given traits so that the reasonability and reliability of this questionnaire which discusses the effectiveness and potential of IMC strategy in this specific market grounding on the concepts, principle and methods in the theories of Consumer Behavior can be increased to some extent.
CHAPTER 4 IMPLICATION OF ANALYSIS

4.1 Results of the questionnaire

4.1.1 Statistics and reflection of the reclaimed questionnaire

Basic information about the answerers
As related in the previous chapter of methodology, the objectives of the launched investigation are selected according to the principles for the target consumers claimed by the marketing unit of Sony-Ericsson, Chinese region, and the year report of investigation in MMP market in 2006. Due to the certain universality of those descriptions, the author also basically carries through the design and analysis work basing on the certain factors stated in the report and the interview (articles recording the interview of the executive of marketing unit of the researched brand by IT168 forum, the biggest official online BBS of this brand), including the aspects of the age, region, education background, earnings, primary ways of receiving information, preference of the information sources, degree of being influenced by the mainstream social culture and overall evaluation, sensitivity towards brand, knowledge structure of mobile phone products and brands, extent of the demand for the entertainment function of mobile phones, and the reaction to the entertainment marketing, etc.

Firstly, among the 140 answerers (the reclaimed number), 98 percent are within the age interval between eighteen to thirty-five, of which 69 percent hold the graduate degree and 19% undergraduate correspondingly. The disparity of the education background is able to influence the way of acquiring the information and the partiality of the information content. It is certainly not absolute axiom because the young consumers commonly have the similar choice of the information sources, and are impressed by the certain culture and habit; as a result, the chosen samples are capable to have certain representativeness. Moreover, the occupations they engage in (for employees) or their specialties belong to (for students) are mostly in the fields of finance, law, news & press, architecture, telecommunication, medicine, mechanics, government, trade, insurance and liberal vocation, etc., covering relatively extensive range. Nevertheless, owing to the limitation of the number of the individuals and time, it cannot absolutely be confirmed that the selected specific samples from each occupation can completely used for explaining the behavioral characteristics of the young consumers in this area but rather reflect the essence of the problem to some extent.

The majority of the investigation objectives, around 79 percent, row themselves into the mainstream youth category, who normally displays the personalities as reasonability and compliance to the majority in the consuming process even aiming at the products for entertainment. They think much of the fashionable ingredients while not extremely attaching importance to the attempt in the fresh fields and expressing
the individual personality as the pioneer youth as well as taking more opportunities and convenient conditions to sample the new products as the experiencing youth described in the questionnaire. Rather, they are more likely to become the adherents or followers of fangles, meantime prefer the reasonable consuming activities within their capability. There is also a group of people choosing the fourth option, rather than pioneer, mainstream, and experiencing youth, the ones who emphasize mostly in concrete functions or are locating in between such as being restricted by the consuming ability.

Young consumers pertaining to these components, not only regard the entertaining functions of the products much to acclimatize themselves to the social main trend, but also more positively gather the related information about the products and brands. Therefore, the brand marketing communication orienting to them might have more choices in the channels, manners, and contents. Certainly it is not claiming that the more varieties the channels have and the more affluent the contents are, definitely the more effective the communication outcome will be. What is more crucial is whether it is capable to make the information and symbols diffused by the sorts of carriers produce the resonance with the target consumers, and simultaneously help make the information-receiving process and information itself be effective as well. It is possible to build the brand preference influencing on their purchase decision and long-term brand loyalty according to the precise information transferred by the appropriate communication channels.

![knowledge of the product attribute](image)

**Figure 4.1 MMP-related knowledge structure of the responses**

Note: the total sum of the responses for this question is 129. The four proportions in this figure are:
1) Yes: I know a lot about its characters and functions; 2) Not very: I have certain ideas about its basis characters and am attempting to know more basing on my demand; 3) No: not enough, I only realize that it has the function of MP 3; 4) Not at all: I have no idea.

The product-related knowledge structure of the consumers, the understanding of MMP, and realization of the involved brands, are also contained in the background information of the consumers (see Figure 4.1). The related knowledge is not professional but more general and common. The feedback of these questions portrays
the basic comprehension of the researched products of the target consumers, because under most circumstances, the product’s brand marketing communication needs to primarily establish the related knowledge structure, in other words, marketers should necessarily guide and cultivate the target consumers to provide them clear points of reference with more realization of the attributes and more demand towards the attributes, and offer the considering foundation of their purchase decisions. Basing on the built knowledge, there is a possibility to be provided with the prerequisites of strengthening the demand of the products and producing the preference to the brand offering the service.

**The disparity between the expectation and the factual feedback**

1) Knowledge foundation for building the points of parity.

As mentioned above, the first problem is the MMP-related knowledge structure. The investigation shows that 51 and 29 percent of the consumers respectively think that they do not have much (basically enough for analyzing in their purchase decisions) and have insufficient (providing them with basic principles for their consideration) realization of the products’ brands and attributes, while other few people hold good comprehension or completely zero concern. In total, consumers within the proportion of 51 percent are assisted with relatively scientific ground for their brand option due to the un-blindness in their evaluation of the attributes, brand image and individual requirement. However, when answering the questions concerning the MMP knowledge, highly 38 percent know a little or little, just taking for its MP3 function as the whole and realize its limits of storage capacity. 54 percent of consumers state that they understand certain aspects and admit having the desire of trying to reach more. This confirms their demand or potential demand for the attributes in this field. The entertainment and music resources that the researched brand stresses to communicate through entertainment marketing and sports marketing (similar with public relations establishment) need to be supported by the consumers’ adequate mastery in the product attributes, brand knowledge and the strategic focus due to the reason that these knowledge can ensure the formation of the preference to the brand and attribute basing on proper quantity and on the objective cognition. Therefore it is able to arrive at deeper meaning of the information through broader extension.

2) The realization of the brand performance in China and its local strategy.

SE has regarded China as the crucial strategic region and set two of the R&D centers in the major cities. The products designed mainly according to the preference of the local consumers come down to the types from the initial business and low-priced to the advanced varieties including the current MMP series. The intention is to get closer to the consumer tendency and requirement, building the brand affinity, however, the result of the investigation reveals that 34 percent of the answerers have no clear impression of the brands and series even though they know that several international producers have located their R&D centers in the local area as well as put forward the specifically designed products. As a matter of fact, there might be a kind of contradiction existing within the attitude itself since the result is claimed that the most concerned disadvantage in the brand marketing communication strategy is
failing to make the target consumers realize the local-targeted design while others say that they are indifferent with this specific orientation. Two reasons can explain for that. Firstly the consumers have not completely reached the objective summarization of their preference and attitude, that is, even if the concerned attributes they state include the local design, they still have not realized the impact (which is also the limitation of the significance of the questionnaire). Secondly, the strategic disposition and structuring the producers rack their brains in scheming has not been transferred to the target consumers to let them know that they are the objects the brand is serving for. Marketers need to avoid this kind of resource waste, to some extent.

3) Understanding of the advantageous resources of the researched brand.

There is a sort of confliction shown in the investigation. Individuals acquainting with the music advantage of the researched brand do not have high demand for this function, while the ones attach much importance to the music and entertainment functions have not received the signals showing the brand predominance. Owing to the age and occupation factors, individuals, even who are parts of young group, have not formed the high demand for MMP as the producers expect, or the reason can be, in another aspect, their limited knowledge on this category of product and attribute rather than the light desire. In such situation, the task of guiding and educating the consumers in the process of marketing communication becomes considerably important. Referring to the group that finished acquiring the knowledge of and forming preference towards MMP, the effect of the brand marketing needs further exertion since it has not completely make the consumers figure out the specific aspects this brand devote in and what should be the main reasons for preference, comparing to the other strong international brands and numbers of local brands which are more based on the cultural and experiencing habits. Messages about brand positioning must be consistent with the overall strategy grounding on the resources that are utilized in serving for the target (Smith et. al, 1999) to eliminate the consumers’ confusion as well as highlighting the competitive points.

![Motivating factors of MMP product](image)

**Figure 4.2: Main motivating factors of MMP product**

Note: The other sources include quality, technology, convenience, etc.
What needs to be noticed is that the attention on the entertainment functions requires the basic capabilities as the foundation (see Figure 4.2); therefore the deficiency in the mutual communication in the aspects of function, price, and quality, etc. is obviously shown in the investigation. Meanwhile, it also lead to another sort of extremity, that is, when mentioning this brand, some answerers know little about its other characteristics but only have a overall image of the music focus, on the other hand, in contrast, some affirm the integrated quality but do not have any impression about the music aspect which will cause the difficulty in figuring out the reasons for establishing the brand preference in their decision process. The vague words such as “good”, “probably I need”, etc. cannot bring noticeable effect in the real purchase decision.

4) Receiving and accepting the communicated information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ads in specific fields</th>
<th>Proportion of strongest support (5&amp;6)</th>
<th>Proportion of weakest support (1&amp;2)</th>
<th>Weighted average</th>
<th>Effectiveness (interpreted)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ads in film</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Above average (Influential)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ads in entertaining activities</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>3 (3.4)</td>
<td>Below average (Less influential)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorship in sports competition</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>3 (2.8)</td>
<td>Below average (Less influential)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.1 Effectiveness of the ads in specific fields measured by Likert Scale**

Source: Calculated and interpreted according to the questionnaire results and referring to the research of Frank R. Karaes, Judgment Scale---Likert Scale (Agree-Disagree Scale), Consumer Behavior and Managerial Decision Making, 2nd ed., 2001.

Note: Degree increases from 1 to 6.

The main manners the researched brand chooses are performing in the areas of film, music and other entertaining activities, and sports competitions (see Table 4.1). In the eye of SE of Chinese region, it has the special convenient terms brought by its parent company typically in film and music fields. First of all, there is various relationship network which support utilizing these resources; furthermore, the brand marketing in these fields especially referring to the fashionable consuming goods primarily for entertaining such as MMP can find relatively broader coverage and stronger influence. 56 percent consumers are paying attention to the mobile phone advertisement in the popular films and acknowledge being infected in their brand preference; entertaining activities get 49 percent supporters with less stronger promotion function for brand propaganda; and for the sponsorship of sports competition, around 47 percent consumers can keep general impression of the advertisements without memorizing the...
specific brands’ names, and even 40 percent state that they do not notice who have invested in the competition in the whole process. The same as the other paths, the expenditure of sports marketing is not low, except the sports enthusiasts and the young group that have high information sensitivity and memorizing ability (who take 13 percent and admit being moderately influenced), which is made to show obvious disparity comparing to the other paths of communication. Certainly, the reaction of the relatively smaller group is also meaningful for the marketing communication. From the long-term point of view, it is the strategy of building long-range relationship with the cooperators, and the potential consumers (consumers being attracted by the ads in these fields) who will be impacted in their prospective decision or influence on the others within their communities and relation network.

Moreover, referring to the other tactics in the brand marketing communication strategy, the internet Bulletin Board System (BBS) pertaining to this brand, and attitudes and evaluation principles of the experts and other opinion leaders of the professional magazines, the answerers admit being influenced to some certain degree in their brand attitude and the knowledge upon certain attributes. In fact, the researched brand concentrates much in cultivating the online marketing communication typically in MMP field considering that the target consumers are influenced by the information spread on internet relatively more. And the internet opinion leaders such as the experts and enthusiasts are considered as the main communicators for the credible and persuasive information. As a result, the secondhand information is regarded as the cultivating emphasis of the effective brand communication. The replies of the consumers to these ways of communication can be divided into two levels for discussion. Firstly, they mainly prefer to their own direct experiences (43%) and professional internet BBS (34%), and professional magazines, advertisement and recommendations from acquaintances in the next place. Secondly, some of them do not hold absolutely affirmative attitude towards the persuasive force of the BBS opinion leaders but rather admit being guided under certain conditions which is showing that most of the consumers are motivated but also able to elaborate on a message (who are especially sensitive and responsible to factual information and logical arguments). (Kotler, 2005) They have the tendency to pay attention to the information sent out by the credible sources taking it as reference, whereas on which they do not completely rely, but more likely to integrate all sources of messages including the firsthand experiences obtained at the terminal retailers or through other paths, to finally arrive at their decisions consistent with their own positions.

IMC cannot but emphasize in the direct experience provided by the retailers and the exhibition within certain time segment offering consumers with more touch points with the firsthand information. 43 percent consumers think comparing to the secondhand information which include advertisement through mass medium, propaganda brochures, professional websites and forums, and the reports and articles from governmental agencies, etc. (54 percent go for secondhand information), they are more like to rely on their feelings of direct sense touch. Thereby cooperative marketing with the terminal retailers becomes one of the crucial brand marketing communication strategies necessarily.
5) Particularly stressed once again, the fact that even the young consuming group attaches much importance to the practicality of the products cannot be ignored such that the marketing of MMP needs to insist or remain the information of the practicality as guarantee, in addition to which the other forms such as design, entertainment or other resources should be. Contrarily, the current content of the marketing communication has not been completely consistent with the focal points of the consumers. It is not applicable to publicizing the core competitive strength that the brand takes for granted while overlooking the characters the target consumers really care about, rather, a long-term cooperation among the emphasis, groundwork, and essence of the communication contents.

4.1.2 Situation of the communication between the brand and the target consumers

Consumers’ responses to the brand marketing strategy (According to Persuasive communication process and Buyer decision process)
1) Diffusion of the information.

As reflected by the investigation results, there are relatively varieties of communication channels providing comprehensive options, and most of which can pass the meaningful information to the targets, such as ads on TV, radio, newspaper and magazines, and in retailing place, sponsorship in special fields, investment in public affairs typically in cultivating the user communities and publicizing reports from professional agencies. At the same time, similar as the other brands, several channels such as e-mail, direct posted brochures with unsuitable quantity, and unattractive persuasion of the sales persons are excluded. But in a word, MMP market now is in the stage of reaching mature and high developing, therefore both of the contents and channels pertaining to the propaganda of its brands and attributes are continuously broadened horizontally and extended vertically, and the consumer acceptance is strengthened as well. The current strategy, to some extent, has established favorable foundation for the communication of the related knowledge and the advantageous resources of the brand.

2) Attention and Comprehension.

The researched brand has brought the effect to building the brand image as it expects and describes such as “the conception sponsor of MMP”. This is specifically oriented but obviously not comprehensive (not comprehensive to guide and motivate the consumers). In the first place, only a few people have this belief therefore the coverage proportion is restricted within the target group, reflected by the truth that 68 percent of the answerers do not have much knowledge about the music and video resources of this brand (some of whom have less information about the course and details of the cooperation between its two parent companies), but considering the factors of price, age and occupations, product quality and convenience, their demands of the music and video functions of mobile phone are favorably high. However, they have not received enough information proving and confirming this point. Secondly, people having realized the advantageous resource have not produced the objective and comprehensive knowledge about the brand but rather focusing some certain
characteristics, which probably are the focal points of the brand competitive capability but cannot generalize the all, especially under the specific market environment in this research where the consumers are sensitive of the factual functions and price, etc. It is difficult to build long-term brand loyalty and alternative preference in and after the process of the purchase decision, in other words, the developing space might be narrowed, basing on the brand image lacking of the above-mentioned aspects.

3) Yielding.

Expounding in the aspects of concrete attributes and assurance of quality is insufficient in the researched marketing communication, thereby, as stated above, the marketing aiming at the young consumers in this market seems to be framed on the unsubstantial base which result in the condition of lacking in safeguard for the entertaining, music, and video functions over and above the basic requirements. Even though the product of the researched brand itself does not have those problems or the situation has not gone seriously, however, under the fiercely environment competing with the strong opponents, diffusing the brand information without those basic foundation, the effectiveness of the expression of the brand characteristics is decreased definitely. The majority deliver the appreciation towards the entertaining functions, the appearance design, price of some series, inner-installed facility for the storage capacity, and the corporate culture and brand positioning such as fashionableness, and consistency with young consumers, etc. Simultaneously, some of them are leaded to the impression of magnificence without factual characters due to the handicap of obtaining the compelling and convincing information for its quality and consumer-oriented design. This un-objective but evitable impression gives birth to the restriction to the brand marketing communication in Chinese market.

4) Retention.

Last but not least, besides the above described factors and channels, the power of word-of-mouth is noticeable in the brand preference formation. There are respectively 12 and 55 percent of consumers acknowledging that the word-of-mouth influences much or relatively much on their present and prospective purchase decisions. The performance of this manner does not illustrate that the brand marketing will be weakened, oppositely, it is necessary for brand marketing communication to take full advantage of this resource so as to cultivate the potential users and induct their future purchase action, or establish their brand loyalty to indirectly assist the communication of the brand advantages. The details of this function will be elaborated in the following section.

Behavioral tendency in communication process

1) Though the age composition of the chief consumers of MMP and other “fashionable products” in Chinese market is relatively young, this group displays even more reasonability in their selection process than the middle-aged or people with more stable earnings. These characters are caused by the difference in the channels of and attitudes in acquiring information, the cognition of the brand conceptions, and the demand of the new products and contents of technology, beside which the aspects of quality, function, and price is considered much. Some of the answerers say that they
dislike the brand which is only focusing on the product appearance and simply emphasizing in entertainment, and they tend to collect the price-related information even when purchasing the generally so-called costly products, therefore sales promotion has more attractive impact on them. Among the main factors of evaluating the mobile phone brands, 36 percent prefer to regard quality, and 20, 19, and 14 percent in the next places respectively to price, brand image and functions. Thus it can be seen that, referring to the attitude-based and attribute-based preference, while young consumers make their decisions according to the brands’ overall impression, the specific functions and other factors in their consideration set are also focused so that the decision process is more cautious and sensible.

2) As summarized in the section of disparity between the expectation and the factual feedback, the main channels of communicating the brand marketing launched by the producer and its cooperators such as terminal retailers and mobile operators, which are the main paths for the consumers to acquire the related information, can be discussed by separated into the following levels. Firstly, for the product attributes and brand-related message, there are personal direct experience, internet, magazine, recommendation from acquaintance, and introduction of the sales person, etc. Secondly, referring to brand propaganda, media ads, exhibited board in retailing or other public place, e-mail, films, drama, and sponsored sports competitions, and direct post and brochures, etc. are applied. Consumers’ preference, on the former level, is focusing on personal experience and professional websites, and relatively less on media ads, publicized board and sponsoring in the entertaining activities. The forms of e-mail ads and direct posts are excluded. It is normal that the attitude towards advertisement is usually double-sided, but the ads more likely to be repulsed are the ones containing too exaggerated and unrelated information. These disturbing factors can cause negative impact so that, in consideration of the limits attention of the consumers, marketers need to raise the accessibility of the preferred channels as well as reduce the number of the unfavorable ways and of the unnecessary alternatives in the consideration set.

Furthermore, when mentioning the information source, besides the experts and professional agencies that have authority and credibility, the opinions of the coevals are preferred by 87 percent of the young consumers. There will be further discussions later in the section pertaining to the membership within certain categories and user community in customer behavior part in this chapter.

3) The partiality of the communication capacity and evaluation of communication effectiveness.

Consistent with the related theories, the characteristics of consumer memory and judgment reflected by the feedback generally conform to the widespread conception. According to the literature (Frank R. Kardes, 2001), people tend to store around 7 pieces (from -2 to +2) of messages including ads within same category every time when they receive information, same as shown in the result of the questionnaire that 69 percent of them think that there are around 5 alternatives stored in their memory out of the related ads they receive in one day or what they come across at the retailing place. And during the process of their purchase decision making, 53 and 34 percent
consumers are capable to put respectively 3 and 5 alternatives, the brands, in their consideration set.

The estimation of the channels for acquiring brand-related information in present market converges to the statement in which the communication channels are claimed to work effectively, while containing excessively complicated information and being interfered by the junk message in the decision process. The number of consumers, competitors and cooperators in Chinese market is huge therefore the capacity of the information carriers has to be awfully high. Meantime, the filtering process that consumers need to confront is intractable due to the quantity and complexity of the involved signals. Besides figuring out the most accessible and favorable channels, it is necessary to structure the transferred contents to make them effectively work, so as to deliver the information that is infectious and consistent with the brand culture and the brand characteristics.

4) Role of public relations & word of mouth (Buzz marketing)

Public relations has been discussed on the surface level in the investigation, since PR involved in the marketing communication strategies adopted by several brands in the present market have not been subdivided orienting to the specific series or function, but rather to the overall brand social image. The author has explained in the previous chapter that within the Chinese consuming market, PR has strong influence in the aspect of establishing brand image and brand value since people are more likely to be guided by the social comprehensive evaluation, submit to the authorized information, and positively accommodate to the main trend. Moreover, the corporate culture and spirit the brand expects to convey in the process of building public relations can infect its target consumers more vividly.

In the same way, word-of-mouth has been mentioned previously as well, of which the impact makes the brand necessarily realize the importance of the potential users who are not only referring to the prospective possible buyers, but also the objectives that can be cultivated to build long-term loyal relationship and initiatively influence on others by diffusing the message they confirm and agree. Buzz marketing, the further extension of and derived from word-of-mouth, is widely adopted in its initial developing stage while also cause pressure onto the marketing and brand management faculties due to the credibility that is possibly difficult to retain in the consumers’ attitude. Both of these two tools are all along the toughest field to grasp which are considerably crucial as well. Consumers hold obvious preference to the information got from their friends, colleagues, families, and so on who transfer their beliefs and attitudes by recommendation, explanation, and encouragement, etc, especially referring to the mobile phone product for which consumers are sensitive of both firsthand and secondhand information. The necessary work in this aspect for the marketers to carry out is to focus on cultivating the opinion leaders, deliver the brand information to the organizations such as user-community through credible channels, and make the content infiltrate gradually from narrow to wide extension, at the appropriate degree so as to retain the credibility. (Details see Appendix II presenting the influential degree of word-of-mouth and opinion leaders in user-community)
4.2 Significance of Applying the Theories

This research is carried through mainly basing on the theories of IMC and Consumer Behavioral Characteristics, which two are mutually interacting with each other. Consumer Behavior is taken advantage of as the basis of IMC strategy to put through its design, implement, operation and adjustment according to the feedback overtime; IMC, in contrast, plays as the way of realizing the combination between the CBC and brand marketing.

The application of the theories in the factual situation in Chinese market and specifically the MMP industry is still under discussion in both of the academic and enterprise fields. This piece of work mainly focus on two purposes, as stated in the previous chapter, the investigation in CBC in MMP industry basing on the relevant theories and the current position of IMC in the researched company’s brand marketing strategy, to discuss about its effectiveness and possible aspects for improvement. Thereby, the analysis proportion will be deployed as this collocation basing on the statistics of the questionnaire.

4.2.1 Application of IMC in Brand Marketing in Mobile Phone Market

4.2.1.1 Contribution of IMC

---Application in general mobile phone market and the researched brand

1) Application in the present marketing communication strategy

In Schultz’s point of view, one of the initiators of IMC, the present marketing communication in China adapts more to the conception of integration, according to the cultural impress of regarding conformity and harmony as purposes and the characters of concentrating on science and mathematical models, etc. in enterprise management. The highest level of marketing, as stresses in the theory, is utilizing the advanced marketing tools and upstanding mutual communication with consumers to build brand loyalty and develop the relationship marketing orienting to the targeted group. To realize those goals, combination IMC with CRM, internal marketing, and service marketing is required, that is to say, it is necessary to accommodate to the local consuming market as well as the employment market to transfer the brand culture, products and service which are designed orienting to the consumers, by assorting and consolidating the internal and external marketing resources. Marketing communication in MMP market has its specific characters. It has to be established in the cultural infection to influence on the current and potential users by mobilizing all the benefit partakers (e.g. the employees, the cooperators, etc.) by diffusing the congruent message from integrated channels. The competition participators have devoted much effort in improving the marketing scope, profundity and frequency, and many of them have obtained influential force in ads, public relations mainly by entertaining marketing, and sales promotion. For instance, the charity activities help add points to the brand culture, reputation and credibility; merits in high accommodating capability to the consumer lifestyles of the local brands make them...
more competent in combining cultural elements with the communication process. The brands have been developing under the overall circumstance with the integrated conception so that IMC is able to influence on their basic communication strategy, sticking on the spoken-in-one-voice and ceaseless diffusion of the communication content.

Since SE pitches its brand strategy in the advantages in entertainment and music, IMC which pays much attention to cultural and emotional connotation can be provided with relatively large developing space in this field. Its main communication methods are focused on entertaining marketing, sports marketing, the cooperative marketing with the terminal retailers including mobile operators, and the continuously enhanced buzz marketing which concentrates on potential users motivated in user community and guided by the reference group. The strategy makes the communication channels gradually integrate with consummated contents, and realize the effective interaction and persuasion.

Numbers of brands in Chinese market have seen into the essence of IMC which should be regarded as a sort of investment, according to the 4C theories, basing on which the brand positioning and marketing deployment is determined. And 5R, which is mentioned in the theoretical part, is considered as the strategic mission and even the primary purpose of the overall process of IMC. Analyzing and inducing the consumer behavioral characteristics reasonably and carrying it out in the brand marketing strategy is beneficial for realizing IMC not only in its latitudinal integration level but also extending vertically with deeper impact.

2) Advantages of IMC
IMC has been regarded as the most significant example of the development in the marketing discipline (Kitchen, 2003), and promoted by the allocation of communication budgets away from mass media and traditional advertising in its recognition and importance for effective marketing (Olof Holm, 2006). As the author came up with when summarizing the literature, the levels of IMC has developed into mature stage that cover broader and deeper extension for the communication content and means by which the consumers obtain the knowledge about the brands or products. At present, it is still performing the advanced significance typically in the brand marketing where cultural factors, connotation of the information, relationship management and loyalty establishment are highly required, the mobile phone industry for instance.

Under the guidance and incentives from IMC in the local market where barely traditional marketing methods were becoming incapable to meet the requirements of the complicated information communications, the situation of integrated marketing turns out to be more efficient and effective in the overall marketing communication environment.

● The previous sightless marketing combination starts to transfer into integration, as compared by some researchers, which is like the football game that needs each communication tool to complete its duty on its guard as well as cooperate with each other all along. Highly diversification of the dispersed media causes the chaos in consumer decision making and the volume expenditure in advertisement resources
such that the thorough innovation in ads channels is inevitably necessary to bring more effect to marketing activities with more scientific communication tools that are consistent with the consumer psychology as well as purchase traits.

- Furthermore, cooperation between producers and retailers becomes to be one of the strategic themes so that the concert is valued more and gaining support to make the sales and communication channels smoothly work.

- Relations were absent between internal departments since the ads, public relations, sales promotion, and personal sales, etc. have been developed separately. IMC is applied to integrate all kinds of communication activities with consistent pace so that the concerned main receivers can comprehend the information and interacting more to minimize the unnecessary waste. E.g. as shown in the investigation, consumers’ capacity in receiving and remembering the related information should be strong signals for all the concerned departments to adjust the ways and volumes of diffusion.

It is not just the conception of entertainment marketing that IMC brings to SE, but rather the scientific basis for the whole setup of its brand marketing strategy. It strengthens in the extension of the coverage and increases the efficiency and consistency; and it unifies the overall brand positioning strategy down to each touch point of the brand to transmit congruent messages that are established on the analysis of consumer demand and preference. In the aspect of profundity, the messages content is deepened, connecting with the local cultural characters, beliefs and lifestyles of the target young consumers, with whom the brand culture can share the same value and for whom the brand is endeavoring in forming the clear impression of its positioning. In addition, the order of the content and methods is disposed harmoniously, for instance, it attaches importance to entertainment, to the potential users (young consumers are the main consuming force of MMP), to the cultivation of user-community which is most likely to influence on the potential consumers such as internet BBS, and to the buzz marketing. In a word, IMC provides solid theoretical basis for SE in its brand construction including framing brand image, guiding the consumer cognition and final attitude as well as motivating the purchase actions, which can be reflected in the promptly increased market share of SE relying on MMP products, and to some extent, the built brand image which is reliable and able to appeal emotions.

4.2.1.2 Limitation of IMC

1) Practicality in Chinese environment

Actualizing this series of theories requires the attitude of critically inheriting and pondering connecting with the factual condition. In this point, there are some maladjustments existing between IMC and the realism in the local market, in other words, market partakers have disparity in comprehending and applying the related theories in the real operation. Two main reasons can be concluded. First of all it is the difference in marketing intermedia tools. The advertisements in the cradle of IMC, US, emerged in a complete free competition market, in which every source of medium had been improving for sake of advertising income to maximize its target market. It is this strong marketing stimulus that leads the American advertisement industry to come
through the stages from newspaper marketing, TV marketing, and internet marketing which are continuously becoming more fractionized to stimulate the trend of IMC. However, the characters of Chinese media are different in some aspects, since these communication tools have stronger political connotation. Though there are changes that make the standards of media design orient more to market demand, nevertheless, the basic attributes cannot be fluctuated. Under this situation, when meeting the requirements of the fractioned companies and consumers, the intermedia needs to strive for the social propaganda effect. Companies and media, within the dilemma, have to figure out the solutions of how to assort the relationship between those two aspects (simultaneously companies’ construction of public relations is influenced), as the mass media cannot entirely serve for and be consistent with the marketing strategy of the companies.

Secondly, it is restricted by the underdevelopment and incompleteness of the local market economics. What is concealing behind the fractioned media is the degree of social economic development and consumer segmentation. One American communication scholar had come up with the conception of “split consciousness” basing on the conclusion that the spring for the fractioning trend of the American media is the consumer segmentation caused by economic progress. Consumers are segmented into more detailed proportions according to their lifestyles and points in value so that the phenomenon of information deluge orienting to them takes place. As a result, IMC emerges as the times requires. In contrast, to some extent, marketing communication is still in the stage of mass marketing in most areas of China especially in the un-coastal regions where MMP target consumers are distributed as well. IMC, the tool that produced with the American specific environment cannot thoroughly adapt to the areas and industries where the consumer segmentation is not clear and mature.

2) Accommodating to the MMP market
In respect of the macro environment, mobile phone industry is confronting similar confusions upon the application of IMC of which the kernel traits are consumer characters being established in, conformity of traditional and modern marketing modes, and cultural based communication that will be based on to discuss as below.

● Oriented consumer characters of IMC.
According to the year report of Chinese MMP market in 2006, the targeted consumers of MMP are mainly the three types of youths that are contained in the questionnaire. In fact, as shown in the feedback of the investigation, consumers do not obviously and definitely pertain to any groups, or absolutely behave as the characters descriptions. Therefore, this kind of segmentation causes resistance to comprehending the consumer behavioral traits, and certainly the communication strategy orienting to them cannot be in focus but possibly leading to disputation. Moreover, the environment for the consumers to dispose the related information contains huge complication. It stresses in the functions of word-of-mouth and social validation while excluding channels such as e-mails and direct post so that difficulties take place the integration between traditional and modern means (See Figure 4.3 and Table 1 in Appendix II).
Communication Mix Integration---Mix of traditional and modern modes, and profundity of the messages.

Traditional marketing measures still seize on relatively large proportion, of which the situation brings considerable restriction to the implementation of the integrated scheme sparked by IMC. Some of the new-fashioned marketing channels are leaned by consumers but still need to be combined with the traditional means, e.g. the advantages of internet community and sponsoring in the entertaining activities, etc. necessarily require the support of mass media to be brought into play (See Chart 6, Tendency in Communication Channels, in Appendix II).

Furthermore, consumers call for information with deep connotation of the information that can transmit cultural and emotional meanings. Thereby, besides the consistency that IMC claims, establishing the resonance with consumers on the emotional level beyond the concrete demand for the products is indispensable.

Cultural Communication---Entertaining marketing, emotional infect.

Cultural communication is the emphasis and even the soul of IMC, to some extent, which endeavors in building strong relations with consumers by the deep linkage of the brand, utilizing the emotional elements such as social identity, life and occupation scope, preferred information sources, etc. Entertaining marketing and sports marketing are able to provide favorable information touch points, however, referring to the statistics in the investigation, the performance of some of these sorts of communication, in short period of time, is not very satisfying and cannot become the entire mainstream tools to keep out the other forms. Continuous extension in these social influences (strengthening the recognition of the new types of marketing means, e.g. sports marketing, to increase their impact force) is necessary and connection with other tools is prerequisite.

4.2.2 Role of consumer behavior

Research of Consumer behavior in Chinese MMP market---Impact on IMC

Information is not just an input for making better decisions, but also a marketing asset that gives competitive advantage of strategic importance (Kotler, 2005), and acts as consumer data in brand marketing strategy. The strategy has to be designed upon the collection and analysis of various interest partakers such as consumers, clients, and stakeholders, etc. and of the competitors, so as to consummate the positioning and tactics using the information resources (consumers) as competitive advantage. Since consumers have become the dominator of the whole environment, brand positioning and brand marketing strategy need to orient to the consumer wants, and as a result, analysis of consumer behavior characteristics, consumer segment, and consumer insight association displays great importance and become the prerequisite and guidance of the marketing actions. For obtaining enough competitive advantage and affirmation from consumers, acquiring and establishing information database of the target consumers is the most crucial reference running through the overall brand strategy’s constitution, implementation and evaluation (e.g. besides the company-interior statistics, gathering specific replies and inducing the consumer
preference in its online communities in terms of its close connection with reference group, buzz marketing and social validation that show great influence).

This study puts up the analysis of CBC and its influence on the effect of marketing communication established in accordance with the principles of IMC by analyzing the recalled feedback of the questionnaire and answering the research questions. Here are three aspects for explaining the characters of this theory displaying in Chinese market.

1) Consumer segment. Taking SE for instance, this is the starting point of IMC. The product development and brand marketing of mobile phone are based on the different partition in types of functions, business, low-price, video and game, and music series, which are determined by the consumer segmentation according to the psychological and behavioral factors influenced by age, occupation, region, etc. Those traits will lead to different respective beliefs, product knowledge, brand recognition, consuming habits and communication tendency. Consequently, brand segmentation, attribute segmentation and respective strategy segmentation are designed. The principles and situation for consumer segmentation are different due to different stages of market and product development. As in MMP market, the young consumer should prefer to the functions of entertainment and music, have higher capacity in acquiring and understanding the related knowledge with diversified acquisition manners (leaning to internet) and ways of comprehending information, and are more susceptible to entertainment and sports marketing means that are more accessible and considering much of fashionable elements. However, as shown in the feedback of the questionnaire, for the reasons of being influenced by the economical and cultural factors within the environmental stimulus categories (see Figure 3.3), there is no definite boundary of consumer category. What considerations are included in the buyer’s black box are more complicated than the brand expects. They have their own understanding about the brand attributes, and consumers in certain proportion do not realize the music advantage of this brand while having the needs in the music function, or vice versa (holding the knowledge but without need). Moreover, not as stated in some researches, consumers are unlikely to devote the resources necessary to process multiple brand attributes and benefits at one time (Kevin Lane Keller, Brian Sternthal, and Alice Tybout, 2002), but rather, when considering the entertaining functions, they attach much importance to the practical attributes typically to price, capacity and quality simultaneously. Yet due to the rising consuming ability and continuous change in consumer demand, increasing interest and preference in entertaining functions of photograph and music, etc. emerge. Therefore, related information containing these aspects is needed, however, attributes that are not noticeable differentiated from other brands (probably including information confirming the quality and design) are considered by come consumers as overlapped repetition which will make the value of information decrease. Hence, the immature fractioned market and consuming habits determines the high difficulty in marketing communication orienting to the target consumers.

On the other hand, according to the distinct degree of brand loyalty and behavioral tendency, consumers can be divided into categories of single users, multiple users, and non-users (Subir, Michael Martell, 2007). Attractive information renewed about
product attributes is more like to keep their retention. However, nonusers do not consider a given brand for reasons such as non-availability of the brand in their market or lack of awareness of the brand, while some of them are potential users. Therefore, the work that marketers should complete for this group is to establish channels that provide more touch points for the product attributes related information so as to build the environment for being compared with the competitors and recognized with its extrusive characters.

2) Brand positioning. As Roland T. Rust states, for sake of effective communication of vivid brand information, brand positioning should be as narrow as possible, because a tighter focus can only enhance the clarity and value of the brand in customers’ eyes. This point of view is similar as the requirement of multiple brand attributes mentioned above. According to the conclusion of Roland, the size of brand extension is determined by the consumer demand as well as the tendency of the social validation. Here inducing and building the frame of reference and user-community to form a sort of identity of membership and social needs is of high benefit. Focusing on the demand direction of the members in the communities especially the opinion leaders, the brand has more chance to reach the reasonable positioning and solid foundation more the marketing communication afterwards.

Taking MMP product of SE for instance, its brand positioning and communication focus is in the music and entertaining resource. Then import manners of how to deliver this message to the target consumers and influence on their brand preference and purchase decision should be transmitting the right content of its brand strategy emphasis in the right time through credible sources to prompt the social validation principles (see Figure 4.3) to go into effect, at the same time, as presented by the marketing manager of SE’s Chinese branch in the year book, internet space becomes the most crucial factors in cultivating user-community and the involved opinion leaders therefore the main component of the adopted source factor in marketing communication strategy.

![Figure 4.3: Response to social validation](image)

Note: 1) “Yes” stands for being susceptible to social validation influence; “no” for insisting on the function and brand preference as formed previously no matter how they perform in Chinese market and how the others judge; 2) 11,42 and 77 respectively represent the number of the responses (total: 130).
3) Consumer insight association. As Kevin states, consumer insight associations are generally used when a brand’s performance and imagery don’t differ enough from those of the competition. Therefore if the other measures are equal, a brand can show consumers it has insight into their problems and make them believe that the brand itself is the solution.

In some cases the brand preference of mobile phone product is appended with much emotional ingredient. Due to the eagerness of the competitors in the prosperous MMP market, the shortening developing cycle and the high imitability of the technology, the functions and design in some cases are not attractive enough for forming the stable recognition and preference. Hence, the diffusion of the brand information with emotional appeals is able to build the bridge for the sensibilities communication. But the consumer insight cannot be relied thoroughly since it is also easily followed and shared with the other brands. Consumers are possible to be interested in not only the corporate culture or brand attributes of one certain brand so that some consumers do not lean to any single brand with the definite loyalty but having the large scope in selecting among the group of international brands. Therefore, under some situations, companies have to deal effectively with events that are influenced by probability or chance. Meantime, it is the reason why SE specifically needs to construct the strategy concentrating on different attributes and clarify the emphasis of its marketing manners to combine the attitude-based and attribute-based preference together, which is the process of connecting brand performance and imagery association and consumer insight association.

4) Message characters. Confirming the brand communication paths also need to refer to the information acceptance and comprehension capability of the consumers which are impacted by the characters of the message itself, e.g. message complexity and content of emotional appeals, of which the former one reveals the different sources that simple and complex message require. MMP product is the fashionable consumable as well as the product integrating with technical component, so that both of the professional validation (information from the reference group such as reports of professional agencies, expert research, and analysis from the opinion leaders, etc.) which contains the logical and scientific demonstrating process and taking advantage of the rallying point of the pop stars are effective if they are employed cooperatively.

4.2.2.2 Contribution of consumer behavior research to this work

1) The impact and restriction of the macro economical environment and consumer behavioral characteristics for the application of IMC is discussed in the previous sections. In a sense, the conclusion approves the dominating function of consumer psychology, needs and wants, and behavior, etc. The constitution and implementation of any marketing strategy has to be based on the consumer characteristics as its main reference system, so does the further evaluation of the effect and the prospective improvement. This study carries through the summarization and discussion of the embranchment researches under Consumer Behavior, with the tenet of demonstrating the meaning of applying IMC in Chinese market, and narrowed-down MMP market, to conclude the consumer behavioral traits in the specific industry and discuss about
the development and applicability of IMC in local market as well as the effect of the brand marketing communication that applies IMC conception.
2) The selected object area for this research is aiming at the young consumers and influencing on the target to actualize the integrated communication effect mainly with the infection of the cultural factors. Similar as the automobile industry, the application of IMC in this field is relatively sufficient and mature, even though there are still numbers of shortcomings to be refined. Because all of the marketing activities in IMC strategy regard consumers as the centre of the circle, the questionnaire and its analysis looks crucial to evaluating the communication effect. Basically, both of the design of the investigation and the analysis of its outcome follow Frank’s Consumer Behavior & Managerial Decision Making theory, and his relevant researches in consumer psychology.

4.3 Overall Evaluation of the brand marketing strategy

4.3.1 Consumer reactions to the marketing communication strategy reflected by the investigation

According to buyer decision process (Figure 3.4), consumer responses to integrated marketing in most cases experience four stages from being attracted by the related information to framing the final affirmative attitude and long-term support towards the brand.
1) Attention. Basing on the exposure control system, consumers filter out and react to the information that is answering for their needs and lifestyles which will produce the resonant linkage with the brand, and in another aspect the brand obtains certain attention from the target. As shown in the investigation, among the different related information of MMP, besides the visible factors such as the logo and appearance design, what is invisible such as brand reputation, signals about the product attributes and users’ replies from the influential people, information about sales promotion, etc. can relatively be more salient and vivid with more effect.
2) Comprehension.
After confirming their attention or their inclination to pay attention to the brand related information, they step into the stage of recognizing and understanding the real connotation of the message to produce the affirmative beliefs and attitudes. Comprehending the brand positioning of the target consumers, price, and region helps eliminate the confusion of the overall brand image. Meantime, explanation of the company itself also makes sense. For instance, the main resources that SE, incorporated by the two forces concordantly playing their respective roles, possesses when it claims its brand positioning is necessary to be stated to avoid the swift of the loyal consumers by ignoring any single force of the combination (related to the consumers’ certain cultural background).

Numbers of young consumers do not acquaint themselves with the comprehensive benefits and competition pattern of MMP which is opportunity as well as obstacle for
the participators. It is possible to grasp this chance to create points of difference that will become the points of parity or levels of adaptation, however, the earlier the interaction between the consumers and the brand in the aspects of the knowledge of the product and brand, the more probability of shortening the distance to the target to stimulate their preference will take place. In a word, it is indispensable to establish the solid foundation by cultivating the brand-related knowledge structure of the consumers, including the competitive advantages, brand culture and product attributes, before diffusing more profound brand messages which will be made best of instead of becoming the innocent waste.

3) Yielding.

Then the consumers come to the step of analyzing and validating the obtained information from various channels and arriving at the deeper understanding of the brand attributes, reputation and even emotional linkage, basing on the product information recommended by the credible source they take for granted, firsthand experience that is more direct, and social judgment. At the same time, the characters of each alternative in their consideration set will be compared one by one in this stage so as to come up with the convincing and compelling messages supporting their preference.

In so far as the MMP brands, consumers pay attention to the entertaining functions including the entertaining resources, technology including the support for timbre, storage capacity, and overall attributes, quality and price. Being capable to provide the first three services, the brand possesses noticeable professional advantage; as for the latter factors, they are not the attractive stimulus from the angle of MMP, but if it comes to the bigger extension as the whole mobile phone category, consumers would obviously think much of the factors backward. Although the emphasis of SE is not the durability and low price, it is sensible to make the consumers know that it is not concentrating on the competitive advantage by sacrificing the other attributes so as to build a trusting relationship, help form the concrete attribute-based beliefs as well as the overall attitude-based impression. These are the aspects that consumers should beat out in the yielding stage and the key points in the communication contents.

4) Retention.

Retention is emphasizing in the final attitude and memory during and after the purchase decision making and leads to the terminal consuming behavior or motivate certain lasting knowledge or consciousness including brand loyalty. The responses within the expectation of the researched marketing communication are mainly reflected in the primary reaction of “initiator of MMP”, orientation to young consumers in its design, function development and communication measures, and reasonable character-price-rate. To strengthen the extent of the retention, the solid after service should be provided simultaneously so that the reasonable cycle can be shaped. However, due to the immaturely market fractions, the characteristics the target consumers show in the process of making purchase decision vary therefore not all of them can be rowed into the main consumer group such that the IMC based on the general behavioral traits, to some extent, has certain variance that needs to be adjusted according to the factual local conditions.
4.3.2 Effectiveness of the researched brand marketing communication

Condition of the communication (Model of marketing communications’ feedback)

According to the discussions of Consumer Behavioral Characteristics and the analysis of the questionnaire, the author constructs the model below to further indicate the relations between application of IMC and the present situation of the brand marketing communication strategy (see Figure 4.4).

![Diagram showing the model of marketing communications]

- Reached audience → Reaching rate + Information recognition / memory
  - Brand linkage

- Improving brand → Pushing purchase + Increasing brand value

  - Increasing trial (sample) purchase
  - Increasing purchase tendency
  - Increasing purchase frequency

- Reputation
  - Likeability / preference
  - Recommendation

- Quality
  - Pertinence
  - Difference
  - Acquaintance
  - Prevalence

**Figure 4.4 Feedback of Marketing Communications**

Source: constructed by the author.

The information is transmitted to the audience through the relevant paths and the accepted part indeed which will lead to the real effect that needs to be actualized by the reaching rate, the brand linkage (connection with the specific demand), and the recognition of the advertisements. Furthermore, the impelling functions the communication activities bring to the brand can be reflected in several aspects such as motivating purchase and increasing brand value.

1) It is necessary to construct the information communication process to influence on the target, reflected in the information coverage scope, efficiency of the adopted channels, comprehension of the messages, and the content consistent with the consumers. As stated above, the main channels in MMP marketing communication are ads on TV, radio, newspaper and magazines, and in retailing place, sponsorship in special fields, investment in public affairs typically in cultivating the user communities and publicizing reports from professional agencies, meanwhile the email, introduction from the sales person, and distributed brochures, etc. According to the statistics shown in the investigation, the media ads, reports of professional agencies, magazines, and forums and the sponsored activities in certain fields are more
welcome to the MMP consumers. Moreover, the majority of the answerers have limited capacity of accepting the messages within the similar category (around five pieces which fit the conclusion Kevin arrives that is seven plus or minus two), and the number of the alternatives in the consideration set is finite as well in the process of purchase decision making. Therefore, only if the ocular, auditory and emotional impact brought by the related information is strengthened, the information coverage can be extended and the usage efficiency can be increased. On the other hand, if the comprehension, confirmation and storing in the consideration set of the content is desired, besides the limitation of the information quantity, what the information implies should be consistent with the consumer needs and preference. Establishing the harmonious information with brand linkage is one part of the essence of communication.

SE needs to keep the favorable memory in its consumers’ head explaining the advantage in entertainment and music and the brand positioning as well as the oriented users to make the resources become the real points in their consideration, meantime, other characters that motivate the liking impression such as quality and practicality, etc. should be disseminated as well.

2) Influence on the overall brand consists of increasing purchase and establishing long-term brand image. The terminal goal of communication is to serve for the brand establishment and consummation, for which two dimensions can be concluded. Firstly is the visible buying action which includes the one-option purchase reflected in the brand loyalty of the consumers with strong attitudinal loyalty and the constrained purchase of the weaker users. Those actions will solidify the prospective purchase tendency and keep its users from shifting to the competitors. Motivated consumers will increase their buying frequency. Certainly MMP is not the frequently replaced product yet the continuous popularized attribute related information is able to lead to relatively more frequent actions within one category (brand). The other dimension is the brand health condition which requires longer devoted time while holding deeper influence. It is composed by two aspects, brand quality (brand equity) and brand image. Brand quality, represented as brand recognition, social evaluation, extent for the loyal users to indirectly to act as marketers recommending to others, is combined with the brand image, the overall impression conveyed to the consumers and the involved circumstance including the relevance with the social demand, competitive points of difference, stable relationship with target consumers and prevailing degree, etc. to structure for the brand a comprehensive value and long-term condition in the view of its consumers.

The obtained achievement of SE in MMP market can prove the established advantage for the brand as the conception initiator (builder of points of parity), however, to make the competency more specific and gain more stable linkage with the consumers, devotion into the analysis of consumer behavior and figure out the ways in line with IMC is necessary.

Managerial implications --- Discussion of the possible improvement of the strategy
1) Establishment of channels
--- since in the aspects of quality, price, and obtained loyal consumers, the competitors (international brands that rank in top three in market share and the local ones which have strong cultural links) have already gained certain predominance and influence, hence, emphasizing in music and entertainment as well as the corresponding marketing measures is the inevitable choice for SE. This method of ladderling up can help deepen the meanings associated with one brand, provide evidence for the linkage with the consumers’ goals, and motivate the preference and purchase.

--- Buzz marketing. As shown in the investigation result, besides experts and other opinion leaders in the internet forum and other communities, the preference of information source leans to friends, colleagues, and especially the contemporary (same age group). This affirms that the function of buzz marketing which includes the word-of-mouth and is adopted in mobile phone marketing, containing the support to the professional forum and community, inducting the demand of membership of the consumers according to their occupations and lifestyles and their tendency of being infected by social evaluation which should be assisted with publicizing the obtained achievements.

--- Public Relations. In order to cultivate the brand linkage, it is necessary not only to carry through entertaining and sports marketing in accordance with the fashionable characters of MMP but also to convey the brand culture that is connected with the local traits. In respect that during the process of selecting brand or disposing messages the Chinese consumers in most cases tend to emphasize in the connotation which means that it can provide the meaningful experience from the background of the chosen object. Public relations stressed here consist of cooperation with every partaker in the supplying chain, collaboration with the media that disseminate the information about the competitive advantage, and investment in public issues, e.g. charity activities NOKIA and Motorola carry through. These comportments add more value to the brand image meanwhile increasing the reputation, respect and credibility.

2) Content design.

--- Segmenting the consumer groups and improving the structure of the product knowledge of the target consumers can make the marketing communication activities more effective, meantime, the key advantage of the product in its content resources that the brand mainly introduces will be provided with solid basis if the media ads, professional explanation and buzz marketing reach the purpose of cultivating and educating consumers with comprehension of brand knowledge.

--- Emphasizing the advantageous resources must be combined with the content of basic attributes which although have become the fundamental requirement on adaptation level for consumers while still having noticeable impact in constructing the brand image and stimulating the purchase action.

--- To increase the information coverage and the scope of the reached consumers, the company needs to assist the related information to be accessible to the consumers with eagerness and to make the communication channels convey the consistent message indicating the overall brand attributes.
3) Collaboration.
---Other than acquiring information from the media and internet positively, the consumers also prefer to the sensible explanation of the sales people in the retailing place, containing the information about price as well. Cooperating with the right terminal retailers can help broaden the influential scope as well provide more opportunities for buyers with firsthand experience. At present, collaboration between SE and one of the leading mobile operators has or is going to bring considerable benefits for its brand marketing, within the crucial step of marketing communication.
CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS OF ANALYSIS

5.1 Summaries and Findings
In conclusion, the main purpose of this study is not, and cannot be due to the research limitation, to estimate that the researched object is successful or not, rather, it is basing on the case of MMP industry to carry through the discussion aiming at figuring out the consuming environment and consume behavior characteristics in order to summarize the traits of brand marketing communication of fashionable consumables and the limitation of the widely adopted marketing theory, IMC, in the local market. And the original intention with certain conclusions has been fulfilled according to the literature review and discussion of the investigation results.

5.1.1 Consumer behavioral characteristics in replying to brand marketing communication

The author puts up the discussion in the aspects of consumer related knowledge structure, categories of brand recognition, and manners and capacity of information transaction. The relevant theories, to some certain extent, represent the foundations for the design of brand marketing scheme and the effect of the current communication strategy (IMC), grounding on the analysis of those above-mentioned characters. Several specific points in the researched market can be reached.

1) Quantity of the information in the local market is huge, therefore frequency and manners of delivering the brand’s advantages and characters but be allocated reasonably with salient and credible content. Furthermore according to the importance attached to public relations and the applicability of buzz-marketing in MMP field, the strategy of BMC needs to conform to the existing trend.

2) Social validation. Consumers in this market highly rely on the social evaluation in the process of yielding their attitude and forming purchase decision. Hence, e.g. delivering the information of the brand’s performance presently can impact on the target positively.

3) Buzz Marketing. Similar as the above aspect, influence of buzz marketing especially opinion leaders in user-community or experts is noticeable. Cultivating the credible and influential force needs to be carried through further typically on internet.

4) Recognition of elements of quality and price. Even the young fashionable consumers regard the basic attributes such as quality, price, and functions as the most essential factors when they consider about MMP brands. Lack of communication in confirming thesis attributes is the main deficiency shown in the questionnaire.

5) High requirement in brand connotation. Consumers consider much of the cultural and emotional elements that a brand can convey, especially in the fashionable consumables. Entertaining marketing as well as establishing public relations, etc. are the efficient paths for expressing and confirming the emotion and reputation of the brand

6) Immatureness of the consumer segmentation due to the limitation of the
product-related knowledge and marketing environment.

### 5.1.2 Performance of IMC in Chinese MMP market

As the focused object of this study, IMC has been widely applied in the researched brand marketing strategy. Discussions on the applicability of this theory under certain circumstance have been processed but still with few number and restricted extension in China. Basing on the literature and previous researches, this study packs up the conceptions in different dimensions of IMC and the relevant strategy deployment, and the logic links between the deployment and the consumer characteristics. Therefore, the previously explained CBC in the process of marketing communication has been upgraded onto the practical level. IMC has been diffusely used by the researched brand and in this certain industry and presented several deficiencies that need to be improved (See the Application of IMC in Brand Marketing in Mobile Phone Market in 4.2.1 that contains both of the contribution and limitation of IMC, and the Managerial Implications in 4.3.2). Therefore, this study, besides discussing the merits of IMC in its application (integration of communication carriers, connection with target consumers, etc), has also focused on the limitation in its localization. In a word, the advantages of this conception reflect in its integrative function while the restriction in its exact content of the communicative information that should be closely connected to the local elements.

Furthermore, comparison and evaluation of the relevant theories and actual brand marketing strategy contributes to this study by providing the basis for discussing the applicability of IMC in local market. Basing on the above-summarized consumer characteristics, potential improving space can be reflected mainly as follows.

1) Latitudinal integration (covering scope in attention stage) which implies the consistency and efficiency of the communication carriers (e.g. the emphasis in entertainment marketing, and the general ROI\(^{III}\) of sports marketing comparing with the effectiveness of the films and entertaining activities);

2) Longitudinal integration (reached audience in comprehension and yielding stage) which means the degree of matching between the consumers' comprehension as well as confirmation and the information content,

   - Information based on and containing the product and brand-related knowledge of the consumers which is used for guiding and motivating the demand;
   - Information that are salient enough to be figured out in the complicated marketing environment and retained as effective impression (information content that represents the competitive advantage and contain the influential attributes serving as the foil, e.g. quality and post-sale service);
   - Information that brings the social validation effect through stressing in the present performance and establishing favorable public relations (e.g. through emotional communication such as charity activities);

3) Internal and external integration indicating the collaboration with the external

\(^{III}\) ROI: Return of Investment, which has not been measured mathematically in this paper but evaluated in the questionnaire that uses the Likert Scale method.
5.2 Limitation of the Research Outcome

5.2.1 Reliability of the conclusion

The financial accountability
The problem of how to trade off strategic marketing initiatives needs to be clarified basing on the financial impact of the marketing investments. As Roland R. Rust stated in his research (2004), companies should achieve the financial accountability by considering the effect of the strategic marketing expenditures on their customer equity IV, or brand equity V, and by relating the improvement in customer equity to the expenditure required to achieve it. This piece of work, however, in one aspect, has not been able to access all of the related financial statistics; on the other hand, it does not dig into the marketing strategy basing on CLV VI (Customer Lifetime Value) and customer equity. In contrast, it is basically orienting to the available responses of the target consumers and making the comparison between CBC and the position of the theory’s application in marketing communication strategy, therefore, there is, to some extent, possibly a lack of financial reliability in some parts of the conclusions.

Limitation of the questionnaire
Furthermore, in the questionnaire which includes the questions with points-scale design measuring the attitudes toward source factors, efficiency of the adopted channels, etc., 6-point Likert scale has been used. But regarding to the fact that, 1) questions themselves are the restriction for providing absolute answers, e.g. the conclusion of how they measure the influence of word-of-mouth on their purchase decision making; 2) people always tend to choose the moderate answers though the number of the alternatives is even such that the assessment of the beliefs and attitude is impossible to arrive in clear result, e.g. in measuring the general impact of entertaining marketing and sports marketing, hence, the Likert Scale method cannot assure the authenticity and reliability of the answerers’ responses.

5.2.2 Suggestion for the future research

This work may be considered as the summarization or even further extension of the discussion on the applicability of IMC in the target market. International brand marketing has become one of the main themes in constructing a brand and spreading the brand culture; and research focusing on the disparities in different target market is the pivotal assignment that BMC must complete in the original stage and maintain through the whole process. The study commits itself to the argumentation on the

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IV Customer Equity: The sum of the lifetime values of all the firm’s customers, across all the firm’s brands. (Roland T. Rust, Valarie A. Zeithaml, and Katherine N. Lemon, 2004)
V Brand Equity: The sum of customers’ assessment of a brand’s intangible qualities, positive or negative. (Roland T. Rust, Valarie A. Zeithaml, and Katherine N. Lemon, 2004)
VI CLV: CLV is the current value of the likely future income stream generated by an individual purchaser (Retailindustry.com)
application and development of IMC in China and specifically in the mobile phone industry starting from the conclusion of the CBC representing the social economical and cultural traits in the local environment. Several researches have provided the framework for evaluating the return of marketing in the quantitative measures (Roland T. Rust, Katherine N. Lemon, & Valarie A. Zeithaml, 2004, Blattberg, Robert C. & John Deighton, 1996, etc.). There is an opportunity to further relate CBC with the actual marketing communication strategy and to put effort in applying the financial measurement in the evaluation of the IMC activities to nail down the return of the input in the integrated paths that have been widely regarded as the indispensable investment for the brand development.
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APPENDIX I---MAINBODY OF QUESTIONNAIRE

1. The basic information about the target:

1.1 Demographic information

1.1.1 Your age:
   A. 18-25;  B. 25-35;  C. 35-45

1.1.2 Your educational background:
   A. High school;  B. Junior College;  C. Undergraduate;
   D. Master;  E. above master.

1.1.3 Your occupation/prospective occupation:
   A. Finance; B. Architecture; C. Law; D. Media and press; E. Mechanics;
   F. Telecommunication; G. Education; H. Medicine;
   I. Other, please note:_______

1.1.4 The current brand of your mobile phone:
   A. NOKIA;  B. Samsung;  C. Motorola;  D. Sony-Ericsson;
   E. Other, please note here: _____

1.2 Personality characteristics information

1.2.1 Which young consumer group will you partition yourself in:
   A. pioneer youth (recognizing the material satisfaction with higher level than
   the average value, pursuing for the communicated excitement, freedom and
   activeness by the brand, and being the attempter of new fields but
   sometimes consuming blindly);
   B. mainstream youth (being more reason able and group-complied, regarding
   fashion but not creating the main trend);
   C. experience-oriented youth (reliable adult holding consuming capability,
   favoring the new products, and often experiencing new technologies due to
   the business reason);
   D. other

1.2.2 Will you bring those characteristics into the process of selecting brand,
   design, and function of the mobile phone in order to maintain your overall
   image?
   A. Yes. I prefer the product that can present fashion and technology;
   B. No. I only need the practicality;
   C. Uncertain but depending on the price.

1.3 Intelligence information about mobile phones products and brands (related
   knowledge and opinions):

1.3.1 Do you have much knowledge about mobile phone and its attributes?
   A. Yes, and capable to guide the others or recommend for them.
   B. Not very, but enough for analyzing in purchase decision making process.
   C. Not enough. Just follow some guidance I believe only in the purchase
   process.
   D. Not at all, and I am indifferent with it.

1.3.2 Do you have much knowledge about the attributes of music mobile phone?
   A. Yes, I know a lot about its characters and functions;
B. Not very, I have certain ideas about its basis characters and am attempting to know more basing on my demand;
C. No, not enough, I only realize that it has the function of MP 3;
D. Not at all, I have no idea.

1.3.3 Where have you obtained that knowledge?
A. Firsthand experience;
B. Professional magazines;
C. Internet forums;
D. Other (Please note).

1.3.4 1) The main factors you consider about for a mobile phone brand:
A. Brand; B. Quality; C. Design; D. Price; E. Function;
F. Advertisement currently. G. Other (Please note)
2) Do you pay attention to some certain attributes, or the performance of the overall brand?
A. Attributes (e.g. quality, camera, music, game, size of screen, convenience, etc);
B. Attitude of the overall brand.

1.3.5 1) Do you have knowledge about the competition situation of the mobile phone and the rankings of the brands in China presently?
A. Yes. B. A little. C. No.
2) Will the outcome of the ranking influence on your option of brand?
A. Yes, I am susceptible to the social validation.
B. No. I will insist on the function and brand preference as I had formed previously no matter how they perform in Chinese market.
C. Uncertain.
3) Do you know that large international mobile phone producers like Sony-Ericsson have set R&D centre in China and already developed out new local series oriented to the Chinese users?
A. Yes. I have good knowledge on the R&D of these brands, and I care much about the local design of the product;
B. Yes, but I am not sure about the exact brands and series, and I am not sensitive of the local design;
C. No. I don’t care about whether it is designed orienting to Chinese consumers or not, but rather care about the other attributes;
D. No. I prefer the pure imported design which shows that my product is more internationalized.

1.3.6 Will you care about the judgment of others toward the product you use? Choose 1-6

2. The situation of the communication between the target and brand
2.1 Attitude information
2.1.1 1) Do you absolutely pay attention to the brands with noticeable music and video function? Choose from 1 to 6.
2) Or under what circumstances will you attach importance to these functions?

3) Do you have the idea of the solid music and film resources of Sony-Ericsson?
   A. Yes;     B. No.

2.1.2 1) Have you noticed the advertisements of the mobile phone producers shown during the process of film propaganda and displaying?
   A. Yes;     B. No.

2) If so, have they impacted on you?
   Please choose from 1-6

3) Did you notice the advertisement of the sponsor in the music activities?
   A. Yes;     B. No.

4) If so, has it impacted on your brand preference?
   Please choose from 1-6.

5) Did you notice exactly which mobile phone producers have invested in the sports competitions?
   A. I notice the sponsor of the competition all the time and can keep the memory of the name of the brand.
   B. I just realize that when I watched the competition but haven’t kept memory of the brand after it finished.
   C. No, I often don’t care and notice who exactly invest the game.

6) And does it have the communicative influence on your future purchase decision? Choose from 1 to 6.

2.1.3 1) What is the overall impression does Sony-Ericsson catch in your mind?
   A. The exquisite design;
   B. The powerful resources and technology for music and video function;
   C. The final technology of mobile telecommunication;
   D. Appropriate price.
   E. The others.

2) Where have you obtained this information?
   A. Medium;   B. Firsthand experience.   C. Recommendation from others.
   D. Others (Please note_____).

2.1.4 Which group or individual sources distributing the information do you consider as the main factors for reference?
   A. the contemporary (same age, or same background);
   B. the eldership;
   C. the idol (celebrity);
   D. the experts

2.1.5 1) How much do you consider the effect of word-of-mouth way of communication shaping your current or prospect purchase decision or attitude toward the brands?
   Choose from 1 to 6: ______

2) And how much do you consider the effect of the opinion leader shaping your current or prospect purchase decision or attitude toward the brands (in internet forum, the governmental experts, and celebrity like pop stars, etc.)?
Choose from 1 to 6:

2.2 Behavioral characteristics of information communication:

2.2.1 1) What do you think the suitable amount of the information of one brand or brands in one category that can be stored in your impression at one time is? (e.g. Among the received mobile phone advertisements within one day, how many brands would you keep in your memory? Or, after receiving some promotion information in the retailing stores, how many brands would you keep in your memory?)
   A. Around 5 pieces;
   B. Around 7 pieces;
   C. Around 9 pieces;
   D. Other, please note here: __.

2) During the process of making purchase decision of mobile phone, how many kinds of brand in your considering set at one time?
   A. Around 3;
   B. Around 5;
   C. Around 7;
   D. Other, please note here: __________

2.2.2 Do you think the accessibility of the mobile phone information is high enough in Chinese market?
   A. Very good;
   B. Good but with some trashy information;
   C. Moderate;
   D. Not good because of the lack of channels and information;
   E. Bad with a lot of trashy information.

2.2.3 1) Which kinds of channels communication the information do you intend to receive?
   2) And which do you exclude?
   A. Advertisement on TV, Radio, Internet repeatedly;
   B. Emails with propaganda information;
   C. Exhibition board in the retailing store and other public places;
   D. Advertisement in some certain areas, such as movie, drama, sports competition, etc.
   E. The posted brochures.
   F. Other, please note here: __________

2.2.6 1) What sources of information do you prefer, regarding to the sender?
   2) And what do you tend to ignore?
   A. Salespersons;
   B. expert/professional agencies;
   C. friends;
   D. the Opinion leader in BBs (forum)
   E. Other, please note here: __________
2.2.7 Which kind of information do you attach more importance to?
   A. The firsthand experience (the direct experience in the terminal retailing places, or the few mobile phone exhibition, etc);
   B. The secondhand information (from the advertisement on TV, Radio, magazine, newspaper, and internet, the brochures, the FAQs and estimation on professional websites and forums, the reports form governmental agencies, and the word-of-mouth, which is the reference from others including the celebrity);
   C. Other___

3. The expected ways of communication, and the already acquired information from Sony-Ericsson
3.1 What kind of image has Sony-Ericsson formed in your realization by its communicated information? Describe with maximum 20 words.
   Answer: When the brand of Sony-Ericsson comes across my head, the first impression is:

3.2 Among the information Sony-Ericsson has transferred to you, which do you think are unwanted? And what is the information it is lack of communicating? Describe with maximum 50 words.
   Among the information from S-E, I think the redundant parts are: Among the information from S-E, I think the scant parts are: Or I think the similar as the other international mobile phone producers; S-E has the same deficiency in its brand marketing communication as follows.
APPENDIX II---MAIN RESULTS OF QUESTIONNAIRE

Basic information
1. Age.

Chart 1: Age information of responses

Note: The total sum of the responses of the age information is 136, with 65 people within the interval between 18 and 25, 68 between 26 and 35, and 3 between 36 and 45.

2. Education background.

Chart 2: Education Information of the responses

Note: The total sum of the responses for the education background is 127.

3. Occupation.

Chart 3: Occupation Information of the responses
Attitude information

1. Likert Scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>Total sum of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3.6 Will you care about the judgment of others toward the product you use?</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.2 2) Impact of the ads in film on you.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.2 4) Impact of the ads in the entertainment activities.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.2 6) Impact of the sponsorship in the sports competition</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.5 1) Influence of word-of-mouth in purchase decision process of mobile phone product</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.5 2) Influence of the opinion leaders in the process of forming attitude towards brands</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Attitude towards the communication channels and means

Note: Degree increases as the number goes from 1 to 6, with 1 stands for the least influence and 6 for the strongest.

2. Opinion-Influential factors.
3. Tendency in information transaction
1) Source factors of brand image and related knowledge

Chart 4: Opinion-Influential source factors
Note: The other source factors include friends, proficient users, etc.

Chart 5: Source Factors in forming impression of brands
2) Communication channels

Chart 6: Tendency in Communication Channels

Note: the preferred channels imply the paths the consumers tend to receive and accept the information about brands and products, while the excluded channels are vice versa.

Consideration set.

1. Main considered factors of estimating mobile phone product.
2. Main motivating factors of recognizing MMP product (As Figure 4.2)

Note: The other sources include quality, technology, convenience, etc.