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ABSTRACT

John Andrew Canacott, M.B.A.

Exploring client and agency perceptions of the relative merits of alternative modes of IMC service provision.

The purpose of this research is to explore client and agency perceptions of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) and to interpret views on various alternative modes of IMC. Additionally, this research examines IMC implementation from both client and agency perspectives.

Several methodological contributions have been achieved through the adoption of a two stage approach incorporating semi structured interviews with client and agency representatives and a tripartite, participant observer, case study during IMC implementation. This study represents the first qualitative emic approach to address the specific phenomenon of IMC implementation.

Significant findings highlight the continued lack of a common definition of IMC and its content. Additionally findings illustrate differing views on the strategic role of IMC, coupled with an underestimation of IMC implementation issues. Findings uniquely identify the critical importance of boundary spanning roles and associated individual behaviour at inter and intra firm levels across and within the client and agency divide. Findings underscore a number of key issues that need to be considered such as trust, communication and credibility, in advance of planning and implementing IMC. Findings also identify sales as a potential component of an IMC offering in certain cases and reflect on the benefits this could have in revising some agency remuneration models.

Key practitioner findings illustrate requirements for greater IMC implementation planning, consideration of alignment of client and agency structures together with setting and communicating clear objectives to avoid trust and political issues arising later. Findings show that greater consideration needs to be given to management of intra/inter firm boundary spanning personnel suggesting that training and skills development of staff is important.

Overall, findings emphasise the company-wide nature of IMC and its implementation.

EXPLORING CLIENT AND AGENCY PERCEPTIONS OF THE RELATIVE MERITS OF ALTERNATIVE MODES OF IMC SERVICE PROVISION

A dissertation presented

by

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For the award of

Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA)

Durham University Business School

Durham University

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CHAPTER 1 – Introduction

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER

Having worked at board level on the agency side (i.e. working with and on behalf of clients) of the marketing communications sector in Ireland and internationally for over twenty five years, I have long been interested in the marketing communications sector, particularly its formation, structure, development and its future.

This business to business centred dissertation focuses on various outsourced services offered by entities such as, for example, advertising, direct marketing and digital agencies. This dissertation also focuses and extends theory on what is frequently referred to as "Integrated Marketing Communications" (IMC) and its associated management and implementation. I have adopted the IMC definition from Kliatchko (2008, p.140), "IMC is defined as an audience-driven business process of strategically managing stakeholders, content, channels and results of brand communication programs", as this implies multiple stakeholders, internally and externally. As we shall see later, there is great interest in the topic from practitioners and academics - the latter having produced a significant amount of literature on the topic. However there is a gap in existing studies examining client and agency perceptions of IMC and significantly, on the management issues that surround implementation of IMC. The primary research objective therefore is to explore client and agency perceptions of the relative merits of alternative modes of IMC service provision and associated management/implementation issues.

1.2 SECTOR BACKGROUND

Around twenty years ago, "full service" marketing agencies were considered to be the norm in Ireland. This meant offering outsourced advertising, media planning and buying, sales promotion and direct marketing services all from one company/agency or from "under one roof".

Full service agencies in the sense above have all but disappeared primarily due to media planning and buying increasingly becoming more of a scale/commodity business - with media buying agencies being able to pass on volume related bonuses (as a result of buying larger volumes of media time and space) to clients and operating separately to the creative agencies, (Schultz and Patti 2009, p.78-82). Many things drove this change, but it was largely made possible due to the ability of clients to separate in their minds the functions of media planning and buying from brand planning and creative strategy. Hence buying time and space for a TV advertisement had little to do with the

strategy behind its creation and production (which was the advertising agency's role), thus media buyers technically could buy the commodity of media for competing companies and brands.

Around the same time, direct marketing, sales promotion and other similar (but new at the time) service providers frequently set up and operated as stand alone, specialist companies. Hence specialists of various disciplines became predominant.

However, over the past decade in Ireland there have been new and significant developments, particularly (in common with much of the rest of the world) in digital technologies and media (Sicot 2012), which have helped spawn new categories and forms of organisation in the marketing communications agency sector (Campaign Magazine 2012). Hackley (2010, p.4) referred to this as a "second creative revolution."

Hackley (2010,loc. 1583) described the phrase "Integrated Marketing Communications" as "reflecting managerial interest in coordinating different media channels to optimise the effectiveness of brand marketing communications programmes." This description implies a management role in ensuring that coordination is delivered as efficiently and effectively as possible. Hackley (2010, loc.346) further commented that "the ideal of fully integrated marketing communication management is only partially realised". Both of these comments illustrate the desire and part of the challenge of implementing IMC effectively, a view supported by Laurie and Mortimer (2013). Additionally Hackley also refers to the challenge that an agency faces in not being able to be experts in all IMC services, and points to consequent structural considerations.

We currently see agency groups (such as WPP, Publicis and Ogilvy, for example) offering both specialist disciplines/companies that come together occasionally to offer clients integrated services when required, and "one stop shops" (a "generalist" company that offers a wide range of related services/disciplines under one roof) who deliver services via a single team/company. The ideal of delivering IMC requires management of either a single IMC agency (offering all the services), or of a number of related/unrelated agencies. This management task can rest either within the agency or with the client. Laurie and Mortimer (2011) and Parekh (Ad Age, 2012) refer to this agency facilitation as being from Integrated Marketing Communications organisations.

1.3 THE NEED FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

According to Brennan (2004) practitioners in marketing frequently do not read academic papers as they seem largely irrelevant to practice. A similar view is articulated by Starkey and Madan (2001) who also called for new ways to measure academic impact. The situation (I believe) persists

currently and therefore this, coupled with rapid changes in IMC content and offering, means that relevant and contemporary academic research that informs practice is required. The pace of change experienced in the IMC sector by groupings of specialists or one stop shops often means that so called IMC ”solutions” are being offered in absence of a clear understanding of the various options/modes of IMC service provision and particularly of the related implementation issues, viewed from both an organisational and individual level as discussed by Laurie and Mortimer (2013).

This research therefore centres on exploring client /agency perceptions of various forms of IMC service provision (meaning how IMC services are provided) and associated management / implementation issues. The issue of implementation was also referred to by (Bidlake 2011, p.3) where he stated “The debate has shifted from whether integration is a good thing to how to deliver it.” This research also builds upon that of Laurie and Mortimer (2013) (where they indicated that clients were aware of some of the issues surrounding IMC implementation), by studying implementation of IMC as it happens.

Whilst a comprehensive literature review appears in the next chapter, it is worth noting from an academic perspective that an apparent and continuing trend towards integrated marketing communications has been studied and documented (particularly in the USA) over many years by writers such as Novelli (1989-90), Schultz (1993, 1996), Duncan and Moriarty (1998), Schultz and kitchen (2000), Cornelissen and Lock (2000), Schultz and Patti (2009), Kliatchko (2005,2008,2009), Kim, Yoon and Lee, (2010), Laurie and Mortimer (2011, 2012, 2013) and many others, where they collectively concluded that a single agency may offer all, or at least some, of the various services to clients, as described above under a loosely defined banner of IMC. We shall see that such assertions and subsequent work would benefit from being updated to incorporate recent changes in the marketplace, and in particular issues surrounding management and implementation of IMC.

This business to business research incorporates a case study, conducted within a company setting, to examine some of the interpersonal and inter-organisational issues that arise as one specific alternative form of IMC is implemented for the first time, by a media group referred to throughout as Company A. This aspect of the research is significant in that such a case study has not previously been carried out in relation to IMC implementation, as evidenced in the next chapter, which summarises key IMC literature in this area.

Carrying out this research from a practitioner perspective, as detailed later, also helps to fill a void referenced by Cornelissen and Lock (2005) where they complained of a lack of input from a

practitioner perspective, as against “science centrist accounts” of academic theory in practice. Similar views were expressed by Ardley (2008) and Svensson (2010).

1.4 PRACTITIONER DEBATE

As mentioned earlier in this Introduction, I have been a senior practitioner in marketing communications for many years. Consequently I am aware of the practical issues surrounding both the creation and delivery of IMC - and of what I perceive as a gap in academic literature on the subject of management/implementation, using interpretive methodologies in particular. This gap has also recently been identified by Laurie and Mortimer (2013) where they discussed barriers to implementation of IMC.

The subject matter of this research is currently much discussed within the marketing services sector by both clients and agencies. A number of relevant trade press articles on the subject of IMC have appeared recently including IMJ (2011), Forbes Magazine (2012) and a multi page supplement in Campaign Magazine (2012). What is noticeable is that new IMC topics continue to emerge, such as attribution and measurement techniques, as referenced by Nichols (2013), as many of these techniques have become possible only in recent years, partly due to technological advances.

Hackley (2010, loc. 6323), in particular, discussed the practical issues of agency integration from both the client and agency side, and the purpose of this research is partly to focus on implementation issues. Hackley’s book referenced above and the trade articles (and many others like them) referred to, confirm that IMC is perhaps more relevant and widely debated amongst the practitioner community currently than at any time over the past decade.

1.5 CONTEMPORARY IMC TOPICS, CONSEQUENT AIMS, CORE RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

1.5.1 Contemporary IMC topics

There are a number of contemporary topics, as evidenced in Campaign Magazine (2012) and the European Journal of Marketing (2015), which are of specific interest to this research.

Whilst the definition of IMC has been discussed for many years it remains a contemporary issue, possibly at least partially due to significant changes in digital channels and media. These changes appear to have resulted in a much broader range of services (including sales) that could be considered to be part of IMC, and this may have implications for measurement and remuneration.

When viewing service offerings, it may be that IMC is context dependent with definitions therefore being lenient, as discussed by Pontikes and Hannan (2012).

In line with the views of Laurie and Mortimer (2013), this research recognises that IMC has also moved from conceptual discussions to issues surrounding its strategic importance (see figure 1) and implementation- these are currently seen as key (with the area of implementation largely un researched) issues for organisations on both the client and agency side.

1.5.2 Consequent Aims Emerging from these topics

The contemporary topics referred to above indicate that new research would be beneficial in a number of areas, in particular to assess client and agency definitions of IMC and to solicit and interpret views on IMC service content and the potential role of sales inclusion, which could have a significant impact on remuneration and measurement. Additionally, a significant opportunity exists to investigate views on IMC at a strategic level together with issues surrounding implementation, as called for by Laurie and Mortimer (2013)

1.5.3 Core research questions to achieve these aims

Below are the core research questions. Each question is expected to be explored in depth in order to gain key central and ancillary responses.

1. How is IMC defined by client and agency side senior personnel?
2. What are views on the inclusion of sales in the IMC mix?
3. What are the experiences and views on IMC measurement and is it linked to remuneration?
4. Is IMC seen as strategically important and if so what does this mean in practice?
5. How is implementation planned? What are the key issues in IMC implementation?

1.5.4 Methodological Approach

Taking a broadly interpretative approach, from a methodological perspective, a two stage empirical data gathering mechanism is adopted in order to gain informant views (in stage one) from a wide selection of client and agency side senior personnel on IMC related issues such as their understanding of IMC definitions, views on implementation, structure, credibility etc. These informant views are expected both to contribute to extant literature on contemporary IMC definitions, but more importantly for this research, to inform semi structured interview prompts

used in the following stage two participant observer case study. It is anticipated therefore that stage one (whilst contributing to literature in its own right) will help to inform stage two, whilst also recognising that stage two informant views may create entirely new themes surrounding implementation of IMC.

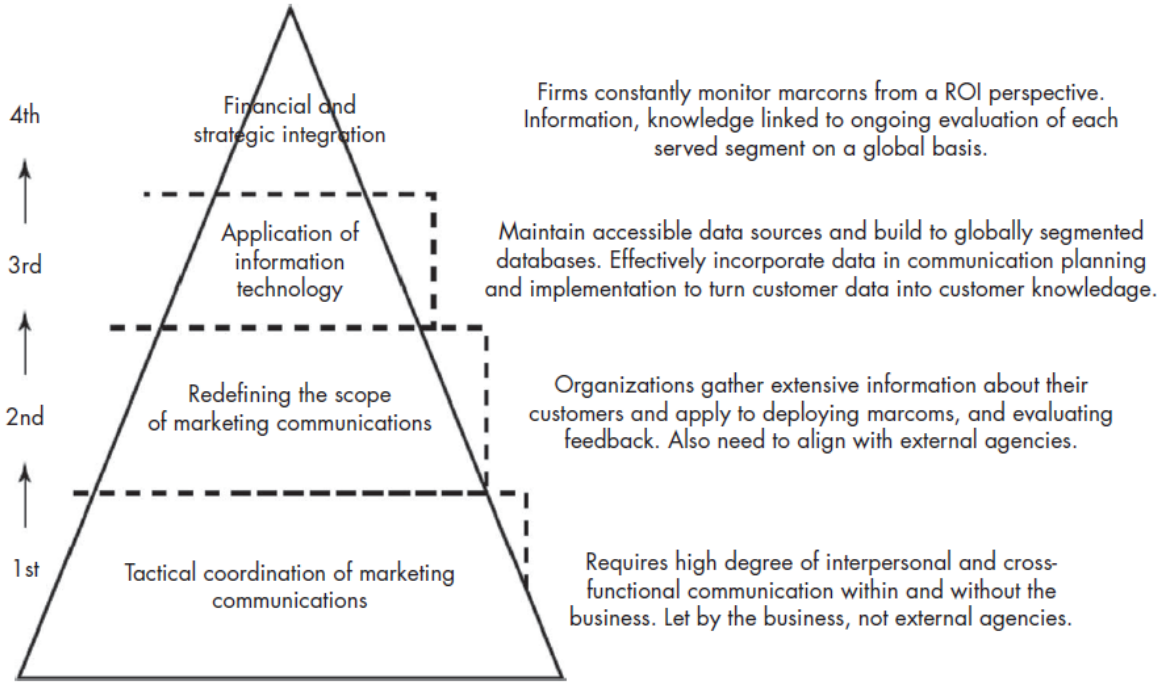


Figure 1 *Four Levels of Integration. (Kitchen and Schultz, 2001).*

1.6 DISSERTATION STRUCTURE

The balance of this dissertation is now broken down as follows:

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

The literature review examines papers concerning the foundation and development of Integrated Marketing Communications, commencing with a review of IMC definitions and their development. This is followed by a study of the relevant literature on the subjects of outsourcing and digital developments. Additionally, there is a review of existing literature concerning inter firm and inter personal relationships in relation to IMC implementation. Finally, a brief summary concludes with an exploration of the gap in extant literature in relation to IMC and its management, its significance and therefore, the research requirement.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

The previous chapter concludes with an outline of the business to business research requirement, followed by Chapter 3 which commences with distilled research objectives, which then form the basis of this research.

This is followed by a discussion of the theoretical contribution and contribution to practice and a comprehensive review of the various options from a methodological standpoint, culminating in details of the chosen methodology and supporting rationale. In addition this chapter covers sampling and data collection, ethical considerations, data sources and analysis methods.

Chapter 4 - Findings and Analysis

This chapter reports the results of this research and is broken into two related stages to coincide with the overall research approach. The latter stage incorporates a case study and associated reporting, including key emerged first and second phase themes, theme analysis, coupled with illustrative informant views.

Chapter 5 - Discussion and Conclusions

This chapter analyses the findings of this research and explores how the findings fit and extend extant theory on IMC and its implementation, together with new insights. The chapter revisits relevant literature from Chapter 2 and discusses new appropriate literature, adding depth to the interpretive analysis. Implications and recommendations for future academic research and the contribution to practice are discussed.

CHAPTER 2 - Literature Review

2.1 INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER

As outlined at the end of Chapter 1, the literature review contained in this chapter focuses on key areas that influence the structure and management / implementation of IMC.

This review commences with an examination of relevant literature relating to definitions of IMC and then examines outsourcing, an area that could be seen as the foundation on which external agency relationships are built. There follows an analysis of literature on relevant digital developments and this in turn leads into an examination of literature on the wider IMC debate. Finally there is a review of the literature surrounding organisational issues concerning inter firm and inter personal relationships that impact IMC effectiveness.

2.2 DEFINING IMC

As mentioned earlier, I have adopted the following IMC definition from Kliatchko (2008, p.140), "IMC is defined as an audience-driven business process of strategically managing stakeholders, content, channels and results of brand communication programs", as this implies multiple stakeholders both internally and externally. However, prior to analysing IMC and its associated management from a marketing communications point of view, it is worthwhile stepping further back and defining integration in business in general. Kahn (1996) described integration in terms of two key elements, namely a multi dimensional process comprising of collaboration, and a process of interaction. His studies showed that collaboration yielded positive effects on performance, whereas interaction did not. Collaboration was seen as a more informal unstructured process of working towards a common goal, whereas interaction assumed structural changes, perhaps forcing departments/teams to work together. Until this study, most of the definitions did not differentiate between the two areas and focused more on unity of effort. In a later study on the subject, Leenders and Wierenga (2002) took a slightly different view to Kahn but indicated that the development of structural cross functional teams (as against informal collaboration arrangements) impacted negatively on performance, which is in line with Kahn's findings. Leenders and Wierenga (2002) also pointed out that physical proximity and cross functional involvement in brainstorming was likely to add to the positive results of integration and it could be viewed that this is a form of collaboration. In effect Leenders and Wierenga (2002) pointed out that informal structures coupled with close proximity are effective tools - although perhaps it could be argued that the negative associations with structural integration were temporal as the studies were only analysed over a short period. This latter point regarding

temporal issues considers how individuals react to and perceive change in an organisational setting, and how functions and organisations relate to others - something that is investigated in depth in the next section of this literature review.

The ongoing development of IMC has been accompanied by evolving definitions, and from Table 1 below it can be seen that this development has seen IMC move from being defined as primarily about message integration in 1989, to it being seen as a strategically results driven process in 2005. The main difference between the definition of 2005 and Kliatchko's 2008 definition (which I use) relates to the involvement of stakeholder groups.

Author	Date	Definition
American Association of Advertising Agencies	1989	A concept of marketing communications planning that recognises the added value in a program that integrates a variety of strategic disciplines - e.g., general advertising, direct response, sales promotion and public relations - and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency, and maximum impact.
Schultz	1991	The process of managing all sources of information about a product/service to which a customer or prospect is exposed, which behaviourally moves the customer towards a sale and maintains customer loyalty.
Keegan *et al*	1992	The strategic coordination of all messages and media used by an organisation to collectively influence its perceived brand value.
Kotler *et al*	1999	IMC is the concept under which a company carefully integrates and coordinates its many communication channels to deliver a clear, consistent and compelling message about the organisation and its products.
Duncan	2002	A cross-functional process for creating and nourishing profitable relationships with customers and other stakeholders by strategically controlling or influencing all messages sent to these groups and encouraging data-driven purposeful dialogue with them.
Schultz & Schultz	2004	IMC is a strategic business process used to plan, develop, execute and evaluate co-ordinated, measurable, persuasive brand communication programs over time with consumers, customers, prospects, and other targeted, relevant external and internal audiences.
Kliatchko	2005	IMC is a concept and process of strategically managing audience-focused, channel-centred and results-driven brand communication programs over time.

Table 1 *Definitions of IMC (Kerr et al, 2008, P.515).*

From a structural perspective, the actual structure and management of IMC agencies is still a frequently discussed topic by practitioners. There are currently a number of structural options for an IMC service provider; these are outlined below.

“Full Service” offerings are sometimes referred to as “360 degree” or “full service” agency operations. This means that a single service provider offers a wide range of services to a client as discussed by Duncan and Moriarty (1998) and Laurie and Mortimer (2011). Typically these services may include advertising, sales promotion/activation, direct and digital marketing and creative services. In reality, the exact mix of services provided varies from agency to agency. At the other end of the spectrum are “specialists”. As the name implies, these organisations (usually) focus on one or two specialised disciplines, such as Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) or Application Development for example.

There are also combinations of the above, whereby full services may be delivered by an agency utilising sub contracted relationships with other vendors. In essence this means that a “lead agency” will bring in other disciplines/agencies with skills that it does not possess itself, in order to offer the client a 360 degree offering. The Ogilvy Agency, according to Schultz, MacDonald and Baines (2012,p.2) referred to this as (Agency led) “orchestration”.

In similar vein, a further solution is for a client to “orchestrate” a number of specialists in order to deliver an IMC solution. Effectively this means that the client would act as the “lead”.

Another orchestration variant, “planning led”- discussed below, has also emerged which is somewhat similar to those above in that it involves one organisation taking the lead and orchestrating delivery via a number of specialists. In this case external planning departments have emerged to fill this role, strategically planning the campaigns and effectively briefing the agencies on creative and implementation requirements. Typically a planning company is employed to create and deliver a communications plan and/or a strategic plan for a client. In the full service 360 degree agency, typically the planning function dictates the direction of the agency response, both strategically and tactically. In a standalone planning organisation, the planners create the strategy and then either give this to the client to orchestrate delivery via multiple agencies as referred to earlier, or are themselves contracted to carry out this orchestration, selecting suppliers as required.

The above points concur with Novelli (1989-90) where he showed that IMCs operate either via a series of satellite companies working together when required, or as one big central organisation, referred to as a “One Stop Shop”. We therefore frequently see large corporations such as WPP or Publicis for example, line up several specialist companies in their group to work together occasionally to deliver “an integrated solution”, or in other cases, a group may use a single company that offers the entire range of services.

Practically, the IMC and management objective is for the agency to operate as discipline neutral (as against specialised in one area) and then to be adept at both strategic planning and communications planning, utilising whatever is the most effective mix of communication techniques to engage an audience.

Generally speaking when discussing integrated marketing, "communication" is seen as not involving sales – although this is changing rapidly as (primarily through the development of new digital channels and techniques discussed earlier) a single communication can swiftly and seamlessly result in a sales transaction, and as discussed earlier, digital platforms facilitate trackable (attributional) behaviour, including purchase. This results in what Hackley referred to as "mediated salesmanship" (2010, loc.2814).

We therefore have a situation where clients can choose specialist agencies offering one or two services or at the other end of the spectrum, generalist (IMC) agencies offering many integrated services, including occasionally, sales.

From a client/management perspective McGovern and Quelch (2005, p.2) argue that "To create the most value from outsourcing, marketing managers must become expert ring masters, who cherry pick, develop and monitor an integrated network of outside suppliers that brings new capabilities to the marketing effort". The resultant management requirement is very difficult to achieve effectively in the context of an increasing number of specialist disciplines and potential "turf wars" (Kliatchko, 2005) and as we shall see later, clients are increasingly seeking a streamlined management approach, with a single point of contact for all services.

From my own practitioner perspective, it has long been felt that coordination and integration of several external agencies takes considerable management time and runs the risk of inter- agency squabbles over service ownership and budget allocation.

There has undoubtedly been a steady trend towards what many define as IMC, as referred to by Novelli (1989-90), Kim, Han and Schultz (2004), Kliatchko (2005), Kitchen and Schultz (2009), Laurie and Mortimer (2011, 2012, 2013), and it is argued that changes in the way clients are diversifying their methods of allocating budgets (amongst other reasons) has forced advertising agencies (in particular) to offer wider ranges of services in order to retain their share of a client's marketing budget. IMC now means that the central advertising agency (at least potentially) is increasingly faced with more outcome based remuneration models, which (for example) are sometimes used in direct marketing. However, it may well be that definitions of IMC still vary from company to company in a practitioner environment and are therefore to some extent at odds with academic papers.

In a recent paper, Laurie and Mortimer (2013, p.1) cited Kliatchko (2008), commenting that in the context of their paper "IMC is defined as an audience-driven business process of strategically managing stakeholders, content, channels and results of brand communication programs". This implies that at least from an academic perspective, IMC is of strategic importance to clients and agencies. One of these key stakeholders includes the providers of various services as part of an outsourced agreement.

2.3 OUTSOURCING

Outsourcing is fundamental to the client /agency relationship. These externalised relationships utilise outsourced structures. The alternative would be for client companies to set up internal agencies and whilst this happens, it is relatively rare. Outsourcing, as defined by McCarthy and Agnagnostoub (2004,p.63) is "an agreement in which one company contracts-out part of their existing internal activity to another company."

Organisations frequently outsource functions such as Accounts, IT, Production, Customer Care and Marketing Services, among many others and the outsourcing sector has been growing steadily for some time, with McGovern and Quelch (2005) confirming a 10% year on year projected growth. In fact, if one were to look at the traditional promotional mix, most marketing communications services are contracted out to some extent, including some sales services (Horsky,2006). More recently Gartner (2013) reported a slowing of growth possibly due to global market conditions, stating "The worldwide IT outsourcing (ITO) market is forecast to reach $288 billion in 2013, a 2.8 percent increase in U.S. dollars (and 5.1 percent in constant currency) from 2012."

According to Parvatiar et al (2008) and Dishman (1996) there are several common reasons for using outsourced services, these include:

Access to skills/Product knowledge: This means that an organisation may need to buy in, for example, creative services from external experts where it does not make sense to retain these services in-house permanently.

Financial Savings: Frequently organisations find that their own cost base can be higher than that of an outsourced partner. An example is where software development services are purchased offshore where labour costs may be lower.

Speed to Market/Ease of Scaling up/down: Occasionally an organisation may wish to ramp up a sales operation quickly in order to tie in with a product launch and outsourced providers often provide

this service, thus the host organisation does not need to consider recruitment and subsequent downsizing.

Industrial Relations Issues: Frequently outsourced providers can implement work practices that are more favourable to a client organisation compared to in-house client employees.

Improved Performances in (e.g.) Sales: This can occur for a variety of reasons, some related to the aforementioned work practice changes. This can result in both a lower cost per sale (i.e. lower rates paid to external partner) and higher volumes of sales (through different work practices).

It is apparent that cost reduction is frequently cited as a key driver for using outsourcing, (Sharma, Golpalkrishnan and Raajpoot, 2009). Procurement departments frequently seek to create the best economic outcome for clients, such as greater efficiencies in budget allocation and utilisation, and increasingly focus on return on investment. On this latter point, Ross, Dalsace and Anderson (2004), when discussing outsourced sales functions indicated that the area most undervalued is the potential for a much broader evaluation of outcome, such as measurements being linked to outcomes rather than behaviours. It could well be that more than a decade later and in an integrated communications period, this reference to evaluation potential may be more significant than ever, due to the provision of IMC and the increased availability of greater measurement techniques such as those used in attribution modelling. This point is underlined by Peltier, Schibrowsky and Schultz (2003), who highlight the problems of evaluation of silo based services and the lack of connection between sales and marketing integration. It is further underlined by Ellis and Ybema (2010) who point to the difficulty of attributing performance to a single discipline/activity such as advertising. More recently Nichols (2013, p.63) referred to this issue of attribution as needing to move beyond measuring in “swim lanes”, by which he meant measuring in silos. The relevance to this research is that when creating outsourcing agreements it is now an option to consider IMC integrated measurement approaches which include sales, although this has yet to be extensively examined from an academic perspective, and many of the attribution measurement techniques are not fully developed.

Writers such as Ahearne and Kothandarman (2009), view outsourcing success as depending on an integrated process of collaboration – designed to help avoid hostility in buyer/seller relationships. An implication of their study is that collaboration, both within the host organisation and at an inter-firm/inter-personal level, is desirable for outsourcing to be truly effective.

To some extent Ahearne and Kothandarman’s study builds on an earlier paper by Hakansson and Ostberg (1975, p.121), where they state “External specialists will be of limited usefulness because of

difficulties in coordinating satisfactorily with internal decision-makers." This underlines that in some cases an outsourced partner may find it difficult to work effectively with several contacts/cross functional team members within the client organisation. The opposite also applies, in that a single point of contact in a client organisation may find it difficult to manage several external agency partners. To further add to this complexity, where a client company contracts with several outsourced agency partners, various inter-agency conflicts also can arise, as discussed by Hackley (2010, p.291) . It is clear therefore, that it is important to consider intercompany and interpersonal issues prior to implementing an outsourcing plan.

As referenced earlier, both Parvatiyar et al (2008) and Dishman (1996) pointed to a key reason for using an outsourced solution in a marketing services scenario as frequently being to gain access to skills that the host company would choose not to employ internally on a full time basis. Indeed the planning/research functions now frequently found in advertising agencies were once commonly housed by client side organisations until it became too expensive to justify. Advertising agencies then intervened and offered the service to their own client groups. As we shall see later, an additional challenge for clients is how to assess precisely which services should be contracted to outsourced agencies, as opposed to being provided in-house. Some digital services are particularly relevant here, such as social media management. In a contemporary environment, some organisations now at least consider handling what would once have been outsourced marketing services, in-house.

Currently there is little academic literature seeking out key stakeholder client and agency views on not only the potential make-up of IMC related services, but additionally views on where the delivery of these services should reside - should they be structured internally within the client organisation or externally via a single IMC or multiple partners? This is important because agencies now have more options than ever before for various services to be included in their outsourced offerings - including sales - and both clients and agencies could benefit from research that points to the structural options available.

From an organisational structure perspective, interactivity of function (in this case meaning integration of functions) is seen as a way of driving sales and improving performance, (Peltier, Schibrowsky and Schultz, 2003, p.98). They highlight a typical problem with silo structures: "Even when traditional marketers hold customer information (i.e. internal records), the lack of connection or cooperation between marketing, sales and research often prevents their use." Their study points to both the problem *and* the solution and whilst Peltier's study focuses on internal structures in an

organisation, it could be argued that integration of functions in an outsourced environment is a logical extension of this.

Whilst there have been a significant number of studies undertaken (as evidenced later in this chapter) on many aspects of IMC, I believe there is a requirement for further interpretive, informant based research where "the goal is to understand behaviour rather than predict it", (Hudson and Ozanne, 1988, p.510). In this respect, the area surrounding perceptions of IMC and its relationship with outsourced implementation has yet to be researched in a manner that could improve understanding and aid managerial decision making, and this could be addressed by giving voice to key stakeholders in client and agency organisations. In many cases much of the existing research was created prior to the emergence of many digital tools, the impact of which is discussed below.

2.4 IMPACT OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES ON IMC

Whilst it could be argued that many of the elements of IMC have remained largely unchanged over the past twenty years, the arrival and development of digital media and technologies has created a vast array of communication tools, many of which are also outsourced as part of IMC agreements. The significance to this study is that, as per Hackley (2010), the structure and range of offerings under an IMC banner are now more numerous, integrated and complex than before.

From a definitional point of view, the American Marketing Association (2013) defines digital direct marketing as "a digital marketing method that provides relevant marketing communications that are addressable to a specific individual with an email address, a mobile phone number or a web browser cookie. Traditional direct marketing uses an individual's postal address". From an IMC perspective there has been a shift in emphasis towards the use of direct digital technologies, and they are now used by virtually all agency categories. Additionally the lines between (for example) advertising, PR and digital direct marketing are now very blurred as the discussion moves from not only paid and owned media but to paid, owned and earned media. Significantly, the traditional media landscape that in the past was composed of paid media (TV/radio/press) or earned media (initially solely PR related activities) has been profoundly changed by the arrival of owned media (websites for example). Additionally deregulation (amongst other factors) has enabled the proliferation of media choice, ultimately increasing media and audience fragmentation. Add to this an explosion in the usage of hand held devices and tablets which facilitate mobile communication to, from and between individuals and groups, and it can be seen that a significant change has occurred over the past twenty years. Consequently, the aforementioned developments have created implications for

agency structure and service offerings as discussed by Hackley (2010), as well as client perceptions of the same.

The pace of development and adoption of digital technologies has impacted heavily on what was previously a stable media structure, (Winer, 2009). This affects both the inter and the intra media decision, and this is examined in more detail below.

Disruption of the old order of relatively settled organisation and media structures has resulted in multiple new categories of agency and disciplines and has made the issue of IMC service provision more complex in many ways, including deciding what services could and should be offered to clients. The explosion of digital technologies (such as Twitter, Facebook, Vine, YouTube, the Worldwide Web, Digital TV, Mobile communications/devices for example) and their use by consumers has therefore had a profound effect both on client side sales and marketing activities and agency service offerings.

Durkin and Lawlor (2001), Porter (2001), Day and Hubbard (2003) and Kanter and Bird (2009) proposed that in many cases there is now no real line between marketing and sales. We now have a discipline/media/channel that potentially binds together sales and marketing communications. In effect this has meant that lines between agency categories have also been eroded. This has profound effects on the planning of marketing and sales activities and organisation structures together with consequent measurement / remuneration techniques. Digital activities cross virtually all marketing communications disciplines and are potentially used across the full spectrum of agency categories. It can also be seen that digital tools can be used to make sales directly, in effect facilitating some or all marketing communications and sales processes via one operation/within one structure. This was referred to by Hackley (2010, loc 2814) as “mediated salesmanship”, and also facilitates greater cause and effect relationships between advertising and sales.

Whilst not the specific focus of this study, it is also useful to note the significant shift of consumer power - with the consumer (once seen as the recipient only of communications) now being in a position to advertise, critique and generally comment on the brand to potentially millions of people via various forms of social media (this is addressed in greater detail later in this review). Underlining this, Schultz and Patti (2009) and Stewart and Pavlou (2002) pointed out that persuasion was now not solely in the hands of the marketing agency, but now frequently involves the target market communicating with other target market members through digital means, for example using social network tools such as Twitter and Facebook. In essence this means that there is increasingly less control over message content and communications. This has implications for the IMC offering and

implementation, that is, in deciding which services to offer, degrees of control, and how to structure an organisation, (Finne and Gronroos, 2009).Further reinforcement of this view was proposed by Kucuk (2012) who reported that (changes to) the balance of power meant that consumers could now more easily filter, ignore messages or create their own messages. This evolution prompted agencies to change campaign approaches, shifting from communicating at/to consumers, to communicating/engaging with them. The challenge in a contemporary IMC environment is for a client/agency to consider how best to offer a service containing all of the skills required.

Figure 2 represents how various forms of media can now be classified as owned, earned or paid for. It is now difficult to differentiate which form is related to sales and which is related to creating and delivering the various elements of marketing communications - an implication being that marketing integration (possibly including sales) is already happening and driving more measurable Return on Investment (ROI) - and that the structure of marketing communications agencies may need to change to further reflect this. Indeed Hackley (2010, loc 6288) refers to email marketing in relation to measurement strategy as follows, "of all marketing media email marketing offers the most powerful potential for measuring and also for achieving a desired ROI."

When one examines Figure 2 it can be seen that from a consumer perspective the areas contained in “earned media” facilitate the creation and response to brand communications by the receiver, in effect the receiver becoming the advertiser /communicator, with consequent control and power issues.

It has also become apparent that categorisation of agencies by discipline has therefore significantly altered to reflect these changes.

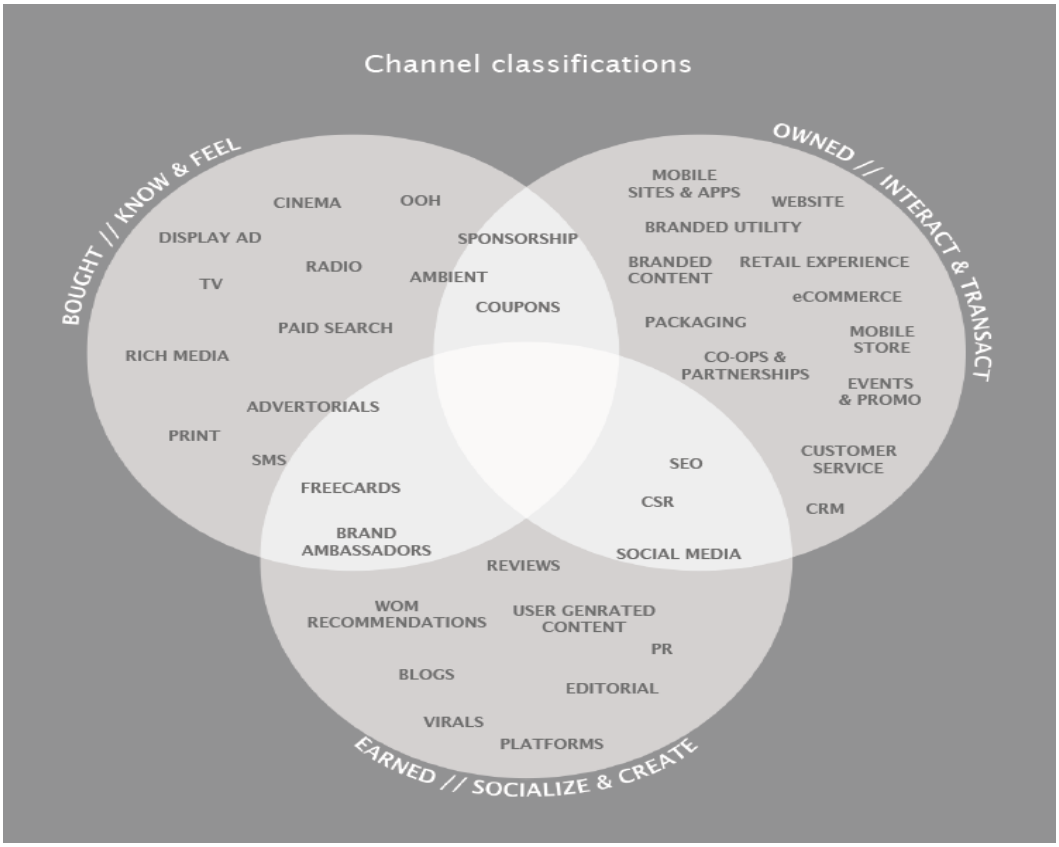


Figure 2 *Media classifications. (Carat Media Presentation, 2011).*

According to Christensen and Overdorf (2000), the kind of disruptive innovations referred to earlier (in regard to digital technologies) lead to an entirely new market. The arrival of digital technologies has facilitated a growth in both new innovative products and allowed for digital adaptation of existing products and services. From a media channel perspective, it has created a new, direct and engaging platform for clients and agencies to adopt using disruptive technologies such as tablets and mobile devices.

From an IMC practitioner perspective, the digital revolution has exposed the consumer to a vast array of marketing touch-points across paid, owned and earned media. The concept of Shopper Marketing (or "pathway to purchase" as it is sometimes referred to) is now a key approach used by many clients and agencies to understand and predict customer behaviour. From a definitional point of view, Stahlberg and Maila (2012, p.1) defined Shopper Marketing as "understanding how one's target consumers behave as shoppers, in different channels and formats, and leveraging this intelligence to the benefit of all stakeholders, defined as brands, consumers, retailers and shoppers". It is relevant here because it has meant that an IMC service provider needs to either research and provide pre-purchase behaviour stimuli across several disciplines or collaborate with several specialists.

In the past, marketers would measure activities independently of each other in silos, this meant that communications were over or under attributed and viewed as success or failure. The “last click” phenomenon was prevalent; whereby a sale would be attributed to the last person/medium the sale came from - thus ignoring all earlier influencing communications. However it is now considered important to be able to analyse the integrated effects and contribution of all media. In short, digital technologies have enabled greater levels of attribution measurement as well as new media channels, both having a considerable impact on IMC.

Consequently, more recently a new phenomenon called “Advertising Analytics 2.0”, as discussed by Nichols (2013, p.64), has emerged. Analytics 2.0 incorporates attribution, which allows for the quantification of contribution of each medium to a sale, thus often allowing for a closer relationship to be established between sales and marketing.

In many ways the driver (and consequence) of much digital activity is data itself, as a result of the availability and harnessing of massive amounts of data generated by consumer interactions, not only with the brand but also between consumers. However, according to Hipperson (2012), the ubiquity of this data can actually impede or overwhelm companies who do not know how to interrogate and integrate it. For agencies and clients alike, the complexity of harnessing and using data is a relatively new phenomenon and one that many consider is a natural part of contemporary IMC.

The real time “always on” nature of digital activities means that real time planning is now a reality and also potentially a requirement, in an IMC world. Allied to media buying optimisation, this is sometimes seen as a requirement of the “third wave” of agencies, (Hipperson 2012). Hipperson in the same paper described third wave agencies as those that focus on content, new lifetime value calculations, integrated planning, real time insight, qualitative and quantitative research, co creation (product and content), optimising media buying and a move to project management not account management.

In summary, the development and adoption of digital services has radically changed both inter-media and intra-media decision making. There is now greater media fragmentation than ever before in traditional paid media and owned media. This is coupled with the arrival and proliferation of social media/word of mouth (WOM), and an explosion in the number of communication devices such as data handsets, tablets for example. This, in turn, has had significant impacts on the extent of both media control (or lack of it) and media planning.

Of particular relevance to this research are the greater challenges surrounding agency service selection, provision, IMC management and evaluation for both the agency and the client, that is,

which services should an agency offer, and would a contemporary full service agency be seen as credible?

2.5 INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION COMPANIES (IMCC) AND MANAGEMENT

As explored earlier and evidenced in Figure 2, the number of communication channels has increased with digital channels in particular becoming more prevalent, and consequently categories of both media and agency have blurred - integration from a consumer/recipient/receiver perspective has grown, even when not entirely controllable. From an agency perspective a blurring /erosion of categories has also occurred - with less of a clear distinction between disciplines and operators. This potentially makes the choice of agency and the structure of an agency more challenging for clients.

In contrast to most authors on the subject, Cornelissen and Locke (2000), Cornelissen (2003) and Christensen et al (2005) all doubt the long term validity of IMC. Indeed Cornelissen and Locke (2000, p.7) stated "that IMC is a fashion apparent in its lack of definition and transient influence". This was disputed by writers such as Schultz and Kitchen (2000) who argued that not only did it exist, it was far more than just a fad and suggested that Cornelissen was ignoring the real world situation.

In the case of Christensen, Torp and Firat (2005), there was a further contrarian view - their argument fundamentally being that the greater complexity of modern communications makes IMC impossible due to the vast array and increasing arrival of new technologies and communication choices - this in turn contrasts with Schultz and Kitchen who argue that this complexity actually makes IMC more desirable in order to avoid communication fragmentation. Christensen's view is that contemporary communication methods are so numerous that they are at least partially uncontrollable (such as in the case of social media) and attempts to orchestrate communications in terms of message content and strategy is very difficult.

Fifteen years after the original study by Cornelissen, IMC is still a hot topic of debate with clients (appearing to be) seeking to manage fewer (but more significant) agency relationships, (McGovern and Quelch, 2005). This has obvious implications for IMC service provision. From a practitioner perspective, increased fragmentation of media and the complexity of media choices in paid, owned and earned media have led in many ways to the adoption of IMC in principle, but with the recognition that IMC agencies may all offer a slightly different range of services depending on their own client requirements. It may also mean that the number of specialists operating outside of IMC agency structures may actually increase despite consolidation of the sector as a whole, in line with Polos, Hannan and Carroll (2001) where they discussed how consolidation can actually lead to new identities and categories of/for organisations.

Kliatchko (2005) posited that despite the fact that it has been a topic for many years (see Table 1), defining IMC has been an on-going and iterative process, with definitions evolving over time, moving from when IMC was originally seen primarily as message unification (i.e. ensuring that the main thrust of a brand communications were consistent across channels) in 1989, to the inclusion of areas such as measurability and the concept of IMC as a business process in 1998. The term "business process" discussed by Kliatchko in this context is interesting in that it clearly implies that there is a sequential series of discreet and measurable activities that result in a clearly defined output such as sales, which is beyond the previously used metric of production outputs, such as billable hours. This therefore allies business processes to measurement capabilities (in order to be able to assess output).

As we shall see later, many of these areas are addressed as part of this research, but unlike the vast majority of prior studies, are viewed through the lens of an implementation process.

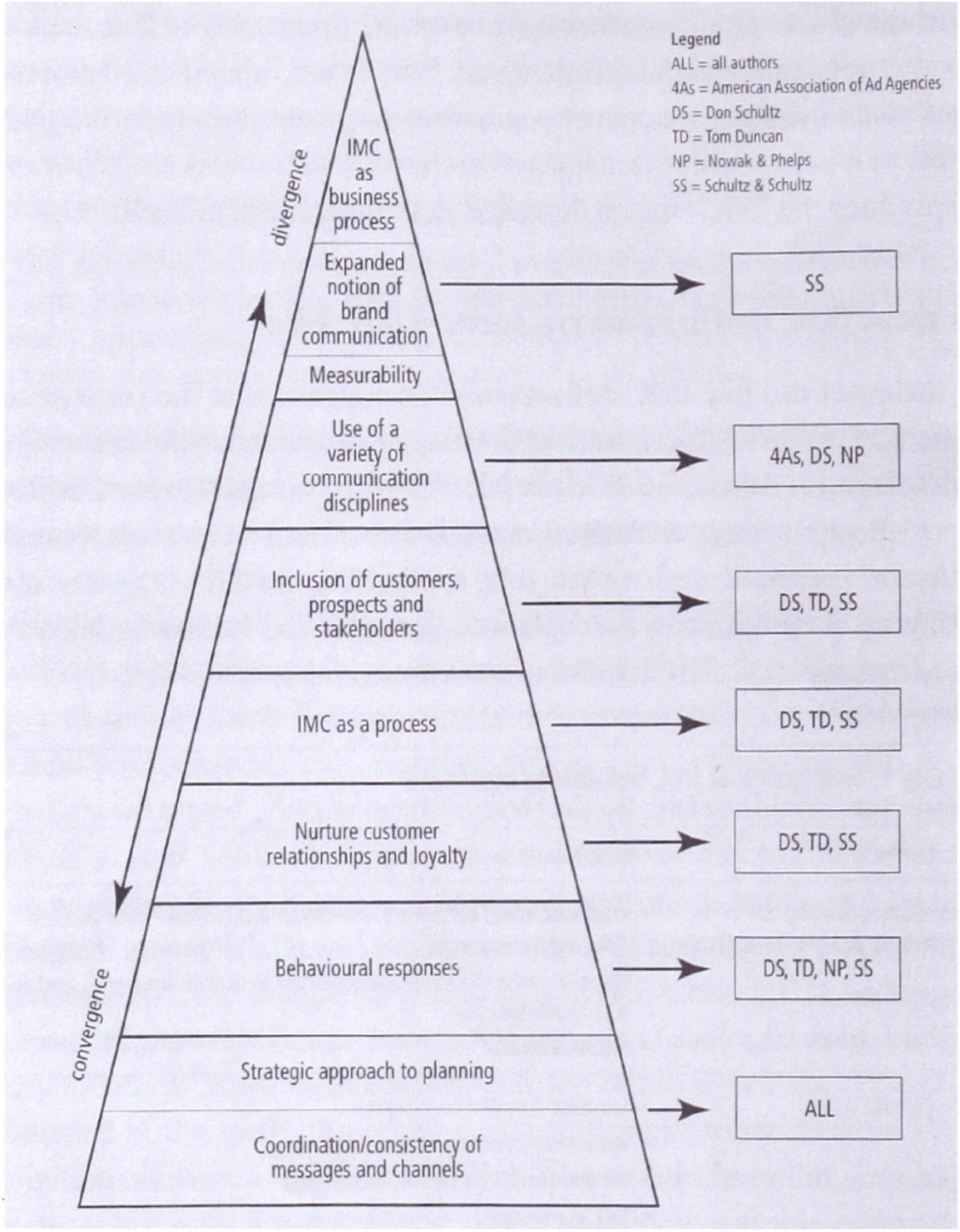


Figure 3 *Convergence/Divergence of IMC Definitions. (Kliatchko, 2005, p.2).*

Figure 3 shows that (at the lower level) there was greater agreement on the definition of IMC as message coordination, whilst the higher up the pyramid one goes, fewer authors agreed. In reality however, none of the studies before 2005 could have foreseen the continued pace of digital media growth coupled with consequent erosion of categories and dividing lines between sales and

marketing. Additionally, none of the studies referenced by Kliatchko examined issues surrounding implementation of IMC.

Kliatchko (2009) built upon his earlier work by positing that four levels and four pillars are the key to IMC, see Figure 4 below. The area of key interest here is that Kliatchko points to the rise of digital communications and digital tools as driving and enabling a stronger measurement culture, and ties this to level 4 (i.e. the highest level) of strategic IMC. As stated earlier, digital communications often have seamless routes to sales activity (Hackley, 2010, loc. 2814), and therefore integration, evaluation and remuneration based on sales, seems to be a logical potential next step for clients and agencies and for inclusion in the IMC mix.

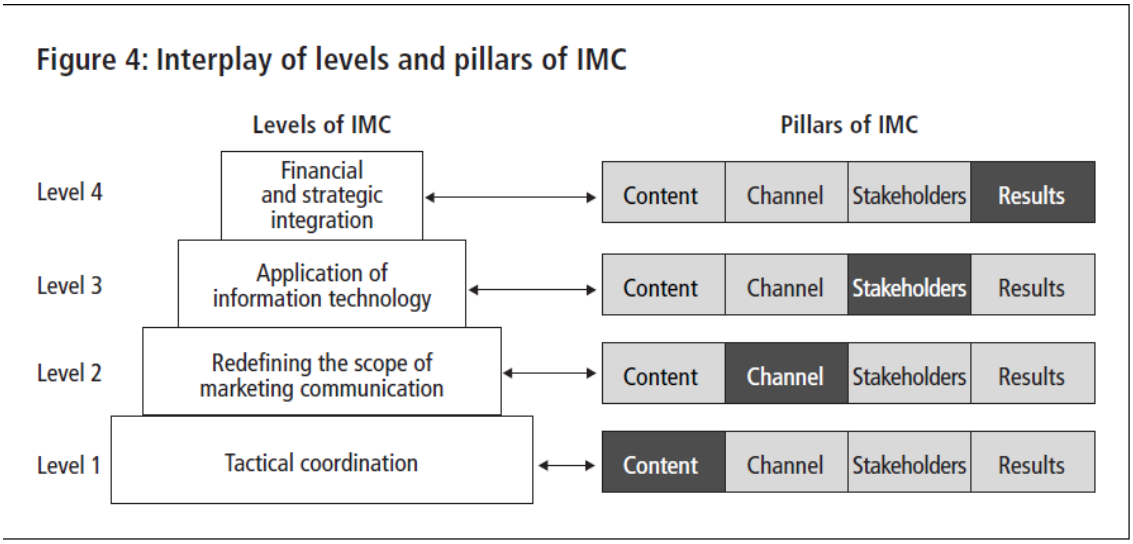


Figure 4 *Interplay of levels and Pillars of IMC. Revisiting the IMC Construct (Kliatchcko, 2008, p.153)*

Only more recently have practitioners been engaging in sales activity as part of IMC, usually as part of their digital work. Kotler, Rackham and Krishnaswamy (2006, p.72) entered the debate on "ending turf wars between sales and marketing departments", and discussed undefined, aligned and integrated approaches. Whilst the views did not relate to IMC in particular, it is reasonable to assume that integration on the client side may well result in integrated briefings and hence revised service expectations from the agency side.

Despite the perceived growth of IMC it was not at that time fully developed, a view shared by Kitchen and Schultz (2009) who argued that IMC was still very much in its infancy in terms of a number of key areas - including structural offerings and associated integration issues, i.e. how to structure a client/agency organisation for IMC, and associated implementation issues. I would contend that not much has changed in relation to research methodologies adopted since Cornelissen (2003,p.217) stated (when referring to uncertainties over IMC definitional issues and on

how widely IMC was implemented) that “despite all the discourse and rhetoric concerning the appeal of IMC, comparatively little empirical investigation commentary exists to supply evidence on its actual adoption”. He pointed out that there is a strong requirement for participant observation “to capture theories in use” (p.230) and for scholars to rely less on self reporting research techniques in this domain.

Self reporting/completion is, of course, a valid form of research, but its use in isolation is problematic, as the approach has a number of limitations (Bryman and Bell, 2011, p.232). These limitations could be categorised as relating to issues of accuracy of data reported, the time lag between activity and reporting (and therefore its effect on accuracy), bias and ambiguity / not understanding questions. Additionally, the hypothetico deductive survey approach limits responses open to questionnaire respondents, particularly In the case of quantitative open ended surveys. Potential issues exist, such as how responses are coded in the absence of face to face interview recordings. To reiterate, these criticisms are levelled when one form of methodology is persistently dominant, and whilst it is not suggested that these are the only methods used to date to assess IMC management, surveys coupled with content analysis have been the mainstay, (Laurie and Mortimer 2011). Eight years after Cornelissen’s paper, Laurie and Mortimer (2011), in a study published in Campaign Magazine and using a content analysis method, indicated that there were considerable differences between the views of academics and practitioners on IMC, and their view was that only when there was a common understanding on the uses of IMC could it really succeed. Their argument was that misunderstandings of IMC were a barrier to effective implementation for clients and agencies. Laurie and Mortimer’s work was updated when Campaign Magazine (2012) revisited the IMC debate and reported that there were still many differing practitioner versions of IMC being implemented. Additionally, the same authors (2013) referred to organisational structural issues in relation to IMC implementation, which is addressed below.

2.6 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND IMC INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOUR

The delivery of IMC is dependent on individuals working within organisations and together with other organisations and their employees. Frahm and Brown (2003, p.4) described how organisations achieve relationships either via monologic communication (i.e. hierarchical) or via dialogic communication (up/down and across levels) techniques. The assertion was that for organisations to change (as required when implementing IMC) a dialogic approach is desirable.

Organisations comprise individuals, with the objective of people working toward a common goal. From an IMC perspective, the continued evolution referred to earlier, has resulted in changes to service offerings and buying behaviours. The effect of these changes may be considerable both on individual roles and behaviour, as well as on organisational performance. There is therefore a requirement to consider the dimensions of both intra and inter-company operations and relations, a topic discussed in greater detail in section 2.7 with specific reference to Haytko (2004) and Ellis and Ybema (2010). To add further complexity, Morgan (2003) discussed his belief that marketing often has no clear content or boundaries. Therefore the role of what a marketer or marketing department does varies from company to company and industry to industry, making common definitions difficult.

According to le Meunier- Fitzhugh and Piercy (2008/2009, p.21) success in organisations depends (at least in part) on "the proper level of interaction and cooperation across functions, (as this) promotes greater opportunities for performance success." This implies that IFR (Inter Firm Relationships) and IPR (Inter Personal Relationships) are key to IMC success in all of its forms. Therefore, IMC implementation is intrinsically linked to individual and group behaviour and is thus a key part of this research, where we examine implementation of one form of IMC across multiple organisations.

According to a study by Peltier, Schibrowsky and Schultz (2003), organisations frequently need to adapt/restructure in order to allow them to become "smart" (i.e. more efficient and effective) in a way that allows them to harvest the benefits of IMC. In an extension of this theme, Biemans, Brenic and Malshe (2010) found that there was no one optimum sales and marketing interface/structure for an organisation, claiming it depended on four key variables (see Table 2) along with the organisation's heritage and founder imprinting. Their argument is that marketing and sales are profoundly different and require different skills.

	Hidden marketing	Sales driven marketing	Living apart together	Marketing-sales integration
Function separation	• No separation between the two functions • All marketing and sales tasks performed by the same individual(s) • Marketing not seen as separate from sales and marketing not always part of the job descriptions • Huge emphasis on sales activities	• Presence of a marketing department • Marketing function either as a spin off of sales or a newly hired marketing manager • Marketing creates strategies and plans for broader directional purposes • Sales retains flexibility in plan implementation	• Marketing and sales are separate and distinct functions • Both functions have their own identity and job descriptions • Marketing formulates plans and sales implements them	• Marketing and sales are separate, yet closely related and complementary • Both departments work jointly on many of the plans and programs
Tasks of marketing	• Key tasks for both sales and marketing people are lead generation and follow-up: no real awareness of "marketing" • Both functions stay focused on short-term activities and results such as day to day operations	• Marketing as a sales support • Creates support materials, campaigns and collaterals • Conducts customer studies and generates new insights about customers	• Marketing combines information across sales territories and creates programs • Marketing acts as a conduit and connects sales personnel with one and another • Implementing marketing strategies and programs once marketing hands them off	• Marketing and sales equally engaged in creating and executing strategies; there are no clear lines of responsibility demarcation • Emphasis on co-creating plans and programs, jointly testing them and gathering feedback
Tasks of sales	• Monthly / quarterly goals assume greater importance for both functions	• All traditional sales activities • Obtaining orders and being in touch with their customers	• Providing market feedback so that marketing understands the effects of their strategies and plans	• Sales appreciates the added value of marketing, marketing tries to create more value for sales
Interfunctional communication	• Communication is frequent and informal and occurs as information comes in and when needed, ad hoc communication • Communication is intuitive	• Marketing takes initiative and organises periodic meetings • Communication evolves through experimentation • Mostly formal means of communication • Marketing tries to understand what is happening in the marketplace • Marketing wishes there is more informal communication	• More frequent communication during meetings with formal feedback • Informal communication is only used when necessary; function of interpersonal relationship between sales and marketing executives • Communication focuses on current strategies and activities	• Extensive use of both formal and informal means of communication • Very high frequency of communication, mostly bidirectional • Sales and marketing voluntarily contribute information
Information sharing	• No specific mechanisms to share information • Information shared mostly through informal channels • No formalised processes for sensemaking or information interpretation • No shared knowledge stores within organisations	• Sales does no acknowledge / appreciate that marketing needs information from them • Sales hesitates to share customer information • Information shared only when marketing insists	• Sales is encouraged to share feedback • Processes for information interpretation exist • Repeated failure on marketing's part demotivates salespeople from sharing information	• Constant and freely shared information hallmark at this stage • Information is not *owned* by any group, it is quickly disseminated across functions and acted upon • Successes and failures are shared quickly • Both functions are active in processes of sense-making, information interpretation, storage and usage
Collaboration	• Easy to achieve collaboration • Small firm size and informal communication helps individuals to collaborate	• Marketing takes initiative; sales is passive about collaboration opportunities or possibilities • Marketing initiates customer visits to obtain better market information and improve its credibility in the eyes of sales	• Marketing initiates pilot programs and works with sales to test them • Marketing may invite sales group to participate in strategy creation • In some firms, collaboration is totally absent; both functions exist in silos and do not work together	• Most activities are joint activities • Both functions see value in obtaining assistance from the other group • Strong emphasis on collaboration
Dominant orientation and interfunctional	• Sales orientation dominates • No apparent conflicts between sales and marketing • Marketing takes a backseat to sales	• Sales orientation still dominates, but traces or marketing/strategic perspectives evident • Marketing managers try to forge interpersonal relationships with salespeople	• When marketing disregards sales, sales question the value of marketing • Sales tries to protect it's turf • Clear cultural differences between the functions; if not managed well, they decrease the interface's productivity	• Marketing and sales cooperate well • Mutual respect and appreciation are evident • Conflicts are avoided or resolved constructively • Marketing and sales focus on both short and long term goals and objectives

Table 2 *Marketing/Sales configurations and characteristics. (Biemans, Brenic and Malshe, 2010, p.187).*

Schultz (1993) focused on structural barriers to integration and suggested methods to overcome them. He pointed out that seeing that many organisations are vertically organised, dialogue even

between sales and marketing departments is frequently limited. Hence approaches to outsourcing are also typically non-integrated. In my lengthy experience as a CEO of an international group in the IMC area, this lack of communication is a highly common situation that is magnified when marketing departments are further segmented by, for example, product and brand.

To a limited extent the views of Biemans, Brenic and Malshe discussed earlier are supported by Homburg and Jensen (2007, p.124) who also espoused the differences between sales and marketing and argued that "thought world differences" (meaning that sales and marketing staff have very different roles and see themselves as polar opposites), between sales and marketing can be a positive influence on performance, whilst other differences can be negative to the performance of the brand and the company overall. As one would expect, poor product knowledge and poor interpersonal skills were seen as negative to both sides. However having one side focusing on short-term planning and acting as a customer advocate (the sales side) whilst the other (marketing side) is advocating longer term views and product protection, is seen by Homburg and Jensen as a strong positive in reaching sales and marketing objectives. In effect this supports the view that whilst integration is positive, it is understood that skill sets /views interdepartmentally may actually differ productively.

From a slightly different perspective, Rouziès et al (2005) found that there were four key determinants of organisational integration success: people, process, structure and culture and that a key to success is job/role rotation between sales and marketing in order to enhance greater inter-role understanding. Rouziès's findings are in the main broadly supported by Kotler, Rackham and Krishnaswamy (2006), and Le Meuinier- Fitzhugh and Piercy (2007). Biemans, Brenic and Malshe (2010) found that senior management collaboration is a key factor although indicating that no one specific structure works better than another - but that something akin to co-creation of key outputs such as marketing strategy and sales objectives are desirable.

Le Meunier-Fitzhugh and Piercy (2008/2009) opined that there was no direct relationship between the physical location of sales and marketing departments and subsequent performance. They imply that of greater importance are collaborative processes and inclusive approaches and how they are positioned across differing functions or departments. Indeed in a further study by Le Meunier-Fitzhugh and Piercy (2010), they proclaimed that buy-in and promotion of cross functional cooperation was the key in trying to promote greater collaboration. The underlying theme in the Le Meunier-Fitzhugh and Piercy research is that collaboration/cooperation coupled with senior management buy-in of the benefits of collaboration were the pre eminent key factors rather than physical location integration. To some extent, these views are further endorsed by Malshe (2011)

who indicated a need for task forces to cross the boundaries between sales and marketing, and overlaid this with a view that social contact between employees and integration stakeholders was at least as important as physical location. It could well be argued that with the increased availability of technology, physical location is becoming less of an issue, as colleagues can technically communicate almost as if they are face to face in the same room, via various methods such as video conferencing and Skype for example. This has implications for the IMC versus specialist debate (with or without sales inclusion) in terms of physical location/orchestration requirements and benefits or otherwise of IMC operations, i.e. do all the elements of IMC need to be in the same building or even be part of the same company?

In essence there are many views on both physical location and structural requirements of departments and SBU's (Strategic Business Units) and their functions. Kotler, Rackham and Krishnaswamy (2006) proposed a number of potential stages that an organisation may go through to improve relations between sales and marketing. These stages involve integration of activities, integration of processes and systems, enabling culture (such as creating shared responsibility for results between different divisions), culminating in integration of organisational structures. From a slightly different perspective le Meunier-Fitzhugh and Piercy (2008/2009) asserted that management employing clearly defined and articulated goal setting techniques coupled with sound processes can overcome disintegrated locations and interdepartmental issues. Indeed they went further: "Organisational structure alone may be a blunt tool to use in attempting to improve collaboration". Their view was that "High performing organisations structure their sales and marketing functions both as separate departments and as single departments" (P.19), therefore as there may be no one best structure, it underlines the importance of the individual both at an intra/inter firm and interpersonal levels.

2.7 INTER PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS/INTER FIRM RELATIONSHIPS

In examining Integrated Marketing Communications and its management, Inter Personal Relationships (IPR) and Inter Firm Relationships (IFR) are key factors, particularly when one considers either collaboration or formal integration of/within various departments / business units, with resultant issues being relevant to both client organisations and agencies.

According to Haytko (2004, p.312), "Interpersonal relationships exist in a number of categories including: strictly business, business friends, and highly personal". She examined the views of participants on which type of relationship was more effective for both the individual and the company. Her overwhelming conclusion was that developing close personal relationships was

"beneficial to both personal and professional lives" (p.312). This has profound implications for the IMC debate, insofar as a single IMC organisation will possibly need to interact potentially with a greater number of client side contacts (than a specialist agency), or indeed create more internal agency contacts for the client based on subject matter skills. The issue becomes even more complex when one considers the use of specialists. The development of excellent personal relationships would therefore influence the effectiveness of these additional boundary spanning roles and ultimately the IMC offering, as well as (at least potentially), future purchase behaviour of the client.

In effect there are boundary spanning (discussed in more detail in the following section, 2.8) individuals within all of the organisations involved in IMC (i.e. clients and agencies). Ellis and Ybema (2010) effectively pointed to boundary spanners as being able to move in and out of their own organisations and similarly into/out of other organisations in a fluid manner. Therefore when constructing an IMC offering, boundary spanning is inevitable, encompassing key managers who deliver services both from and to the client/agency. In the case of an agency account director or executive, the topic of "tensile discursive positioning" (Ellis and Ybema, 2010, p.279) is also relevant, whereby an individual may constantly need to shift boundaries or roles. This means that the agency account director (for example) will frequently need to shift boundaries/roles and therefore consequently shift perceived loyalties between client and agency on a regular basis. A further illustration of a boundary spanning role could also include a sales and marketing director who acts as both a boundary spanner and a mediator between functions and possibly multiple agencies under the orchestration model. From a practical perspective, the issue of effectively managing across boundaries on behalf of the client in an orchestration model is very difficult to achieve (Kliatchko, 2005, p.13), yet this is a pre requisite for IMC management.

According to Haytko (2004), existing research on firm to firm relationships has confirmed that whilst inter-firm relations are vital, the issue is primarily about individuals, and individuals frequently think about their personal relationships in a boundary spanning role in primacy to inter firm relations. From a practitioner perspective, this lends credibility to the adage that "people buy from people" (rather than the company they work for) - perhaps particularly in a services environment such as a marketing communications company, where individuals create and produce bespoke "products" for clients that often have a very short lifetime. It is therefore necessary to examine further boundary spanning situations and roles as they pertain to IMC. This requirement is also endorsed by Kitchen and Brugmann (2010, p.7) who commented that "As most IMC research has been conducted with regard to advertising agencies, little is known about actual IMC application within client firms". Additionally from an inter organisation perspective, Laurie and Mortimer (2012) indicated that most

issues surrounding implementation of IMC rest with the client as it requires internal adjustments in the host organisation.

2.8 BOUNDARY SPANNING

Boundary spanning can be defined as the "linking of organisations to one another in order to create mutually beneficial relationships" (Peach et al, 2011, p.1). In similar vein to the findings of Haytko discussed earlier, Day (2000) focused on inter-organisational relationships by contrasting transactional, regular and routine sales against collaborative/co-creative exchanges and concluded that these polar opposites could be viewed on the one hand as purely "contractual" (transactional) as against "relationship important" (collaborative) exchanges. Day then proposed a relationship spectrum (see Figure 5) running from transactional activity, through value adding exchanges (attempting to retain loyal customers) to collaborative exchanges, and used this to explain his view that organisational relationships should outweigh interpersonal relationships.

In the same paper Day suggested that there were three broad approaches to long term success via a "market relating capability," (p.27). This meant that in addition to providing excellent transaction activities which were taken as a minimum requirement, there were three other considerations: Relationship Orientation (which in essence meant following a customer first organisational boundary spanning marketing philosophy), knowledge and skills development (ensuring management/marketing information systems collected data on formal and tacit activities, retention plans for staff to retain tacit knowledge and therefore maintain relationships) and integration and alignment of processes within and often between organisations.

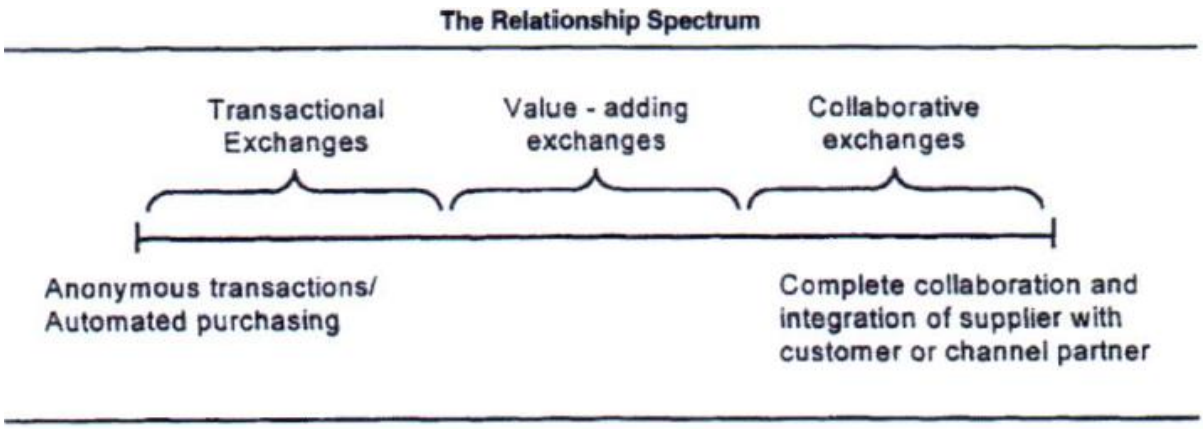


Figure 5 *Managing Marketing Relationships. (Day, 2000, p.25).*

Whilst Day and Haytko's views are at different ends of the individual / firm spectrum in many ways, they are in broad agreement on the importance of IPR and the relevance of IFR. These views are further supported by Cater (2008) who indicated that a "Business friends" relationship coupled with strong social bonds positively influences openness of communication and trust, and that these were proven contributors to operational success.

Therefore, broadly speaking, these three works all promote the concept of understanding the importance of inter-personal and inter-firm relations. Importantly, all recognise the significance of boundary spanning. Whilst Haytko's 2004 study is particularly relevant since she conducted this in an advertising agency environment, there is a requirement to update extant research using a participant observation approach (Haytko used depth interviews), to seek out practitioner views in an actual business situation and to facilitate interpretation through all perspectives. This approach would also have the additional benefit of giving voice to boundary spanning individuals and incorporate their views on both IPRs and IFRs in an IMC environment. This allows for previously unreported views to be expressed and recorded.

In a further development Ellis and Ybema (2010) and Ellis et al (2011) also highlighted that marketers effectively both construct boundaries around what they do (possibly for reasons of self preservation) and then themselves push (via boundary spanning roles) into other functional areas. The implication is that boundary spanning could be perceived by some individuals involved as "one way", rather than collaborative - thus potentially leading to inter- personal and inter-firm conflict in certain situations. An example of this would be multiple agencies collaborating on an IMC project where one partner "pushes the boundaries" into another person's "territory" and the recipient feels this is invasive or intrusive.

What is particularly relevant to the IMC debate is what those IMC marketers claim to do, i.e. does the IMC role include sales, and all paid owned and earned media options, NPD, and pricing for example? This is referred to as "framing" or "categorisation" and is discussed by Polos, Hannan and Carroll (2001). Framing is very important in the area of boundary spanning as it helps to set the areas of responsibility, i.e. the boundaries and therefore these territories need to be carefully managed to avoid conflict. It could well be that if the practices and definition of IMC are fluid (as suggested by Laurie and Mortimer, 2012 earlier), then framing is carried out on a bespoke/ tacit basis. This potentially could create either greater or reduced conflict depending on IPR. Therefore, the definition of IMC from a practitioner perspective (client and agencies) is important to determine, as it effectively determines the extent of boundary spanning required to deliver IMC solutions.

Putting Haytko's and Ellis's work together ultimately points to the critical role of boundary spanners both for employees of their organisations (i.e. following codified organisational rules and processes) and as individuals (building personal relations internally and externally with organisation staff). Boundary spanning may be particularly challenging in an IMC operation when expectations are potentially markedly different from each side, particularly if categorisation is lenient, (Pontikes and Hannan 2012, p.9). "Lenient" here means that a category descriptor of what constitutes IMC can become so general as to be ineffective in portraying its content, thus making boundaries unclear and skills/service offerings duplicated. Differences in perceptions of what IMC means, causes problems for individuals within organisations, particularly in relation to trust.

2.9 TACIT KNOWLEDGE, TRUST, KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND BEHAVIOUR

Svensson (2010, p.258) in study within a Swedish advertising agency, stated that "At the end of the day, inter-organisational relationships (IOR), which is another term for inter-firm relationships, boil down to relations between flesh-and-blood people interacting, meeting, talking, arguing and negotiating". This comment implies that a significant part of this interaction is not codified and is therefore tacit behaviour.

Tacit knowledge

Boundary spanning roles are an intrinsic part of the IMC offering, whether the service is delivered by single or multiple agencies and is equally relevant on the client side where boundaries between departments and functions, planned and perhaps unplanned, exist. Alongside these formal (coded) practices are non-codified ways of working that can be described as tacit knowledge as discussed by Hackley (1999).

It is also interesting to examine the work of Hackley (2000) in relation to tacit knowledge specifically in an advertising agency environment. His assertion was that in organisations where processes have been in place for some time, formal codes are heavily supplemented by tacit knowledge in order for operations to function smoothly or "silently", even in the absence of overt management attention. In effect, a newly introduced form of boundary spanning could therefore cause practices to become less efficient, as tacit knowledge may have eluded the planning of new processes. The relevance here to IMC in particular is the potential issues surrounding implementation either initially or for revised versions of operations. An implication is that implementation could take a longer time than thought to become effective, i.e. until tacit working practices take hold.

The implications for current IMC research are that in a boundary spanning role an individual may well adopt the correct wider and formally coded processes as required, but be unaware of tacit operations and behaviours during implementation of IMC. For example, it may be that a new account director may be aware of the stated IMC agency processes/interactions but not of tacit approaches and therefore be less effective (or perceived so) or even (apparently for inexplicable reasons) fail. Of particular relevance to this research is to unearth issues relating to tacit knowledge and trust, as a new form of IMC is implemented.

Trust

Trust is also an additional and relevant key element to consider, particularly as IMC is initially developed and implemented within an organisation by individuals, irrespective of the structure of the offering.

Lee and Choi (2011) investigated the effect of ongoing trust between organisations in relation to outsourcing success. They found that high levels of trust and knowledge sharing contributed significantly to success. They further confirmed that trust builds over time and that knowledge sharing at the outset was vital.

Knowledge Sharing and Behaviour

This knowledge sharing could be informal (i.e. not procedural) – Hackley (1999, p.723) also discussed this as tacit knowledge and indicated that it comprises "those particulars of action which are necessarily omitted, to varying degrees, from abstracted theoretical description."

In a similar context, co-creation/collaboration was addressed by Hopkinson (2003) in terms of "internal" boundary spanning. It was seen as a source of potential conflict, occurring when a person may act on behalf of the client whilst in the employ of an IMC organisation, thus potentially leading to conflict when the IMC organisation believes it has behaved correctly and the "internal" employee does not.

From a knowledge sharing perspective, Lee (2001) examined the importance of knowledge sharing in the success of outsourcing relationships. In particular the study focused on the development of a social exchange approach to outsourcing, whereby a process of deepening relationships happens over time. Perhaps unsurprisingly, he found that knowledge sharing led to greater success in outsourcing. One of the issues uncovered was the difference between explicit and implicit knowledge, the latter effectively being tacit knowledge. The findings were that both types of

knowledge needed to be transferred in a partnership outsourcing relationship - this highlighting the critical importance of both tacit knowledge and the boundary spanner.

In a later paper Hackley (2003) indicates that a source of conflict within an agency can frequently be caused by one department (e.g. account management) being rationally driven, versus another department (creative) being driven by emotion. It was also found that the hierarchies established may well vary from agency to agency depending on whether the creative, account management or planning department is in primacy within the agency. The potential relevance here is to conduct research to ascertain if power hierarchies are reported as affecting inter-firm/inter-personal relations and IMC operations.

Therefore from an IMC perspective, potential expectations (particularly tacit expectations) from clients engaging an IMC agency, could give rise to significant IFR and IPR conflict, unless there is a clear understanding of IMC definitions, service offerings and modes of operation. As IMC (and possibly marketing) is still poorly defined in a contemporary sense, further research on management, implementation and expectation issues is worthwhile.

Whilst Hopkinson (2003) and Ellis and Ybema (2010) in particular have developed significant research in the IFR/IPR area, they have not done so in an IMC setting, and therefore there is an opportunity to further develop elements of their themes in a contemporary IMC setting. Pulling all these strands together, it is apparent that IFR and IPR and their management are key areas in organisational relationships. Key additional elements include tacit workings and knowledge and trust. Whilst these are possibly relevant to many industries, it is likely that in a service environment such as IMC where product tangibility is less evident, IPR and IFR are even more important. From an IMC perspective understanding how these areas affect management and implementation (coupled with views on ideal structures), has yet to be adequately documented.

2.10 SYNTHESIS OF LITERATURE REVIEW AND THE RESULTANT REQUIREMENT FOR ADDITIONAL RESEARCH

We saw earlier that trade and practitioner press still frequently address IMC issues, and its various dimensions. There also exists a considerable amount of academic research on the areas of IMC (definition, structure and delivery), digital services, IFR, IPR and outsourced sales. However there is a considerable gap between academics and practitioners on IMC from definitional, implementation and management perspectives. This is endorsed by Brennan (2004) and Laurie and Mortimer (2011, 2012, 2013). In addition, the potential integration of sales into an IMC offering has yet to be researched.

It is apparent, even three decades after the initial research, that there has been very little research on how the various areas interact during implementation of IMC. Tadajewski and Hewer (2011, p.451) proposed that "there needs to be a concerted effort in understanding how practitioners engage in marketing activities." They also refer to a paper by Wierenga (2002) where he suggested that scholars should explore the overlap between academic marketing knowledge and practitioner marketing knowledge. Indeed Wierenga (2002, p.361) added that "marketing academics should not exclusively concentrate on enlarging the codified body of knowledge of marketing science. They should deal with the question of how the "other" marketing knowledge can be effectively used for marketing decision making, with the purpose of improving the quality of marketing decisions". The "other" in this reference refers to practitioner knowledge. Additionally, Cornelissen (2003) referred to a gap between the appeal and the adoption of IMC, and pointed to a strong requirement for utilising a participant observation methodology in order to capture theories in use and to rely less on self reporting research techniques in this domain.

In the intervening period relatively little has changed from a methodological perspective.

Laurie and Mortimer (2013) indicated that there has been little research into clients' perception of IMC and its implementation, and that their study addressed this issue through examination of senior personnel across both the client and agency sides of the industry discussing implementation. The research proposed here extends Laurie and Mortimer's work by including multiple hierarchical levels and, importantly, in examining issues surrounding implementation.

Figure 6 details the key relevant studies (quantitative and qualitative) that have been carried out since 1985 on the key subject areas that are relevant to this research as discussed in the literature review, concerning relationships within or relevant to the IMC context in general. It illustrates that whilst various academic topics have been researched, a gap exists (which further academic research would address) surrounding issues of perception, definition, management and implementation of IMC.

Table 3 further illustrates that the vast majority of papers published on IMC have utilised quantitative and/or survey based approaches, and whilst these are legitimate, there have been few inductive qualitative approaches taken, and these could yield valuable insights into the subject and help find out why and how certain approaches are taken in agency service selection for IMC. The use of other complementary methods would give a more complete and balanced view of the issues.

Where qualitative techniques have been employed in some areas referred to in Table 3, this has rarely been specifically in connection to the implementation of IMC. This literature review therefore provided evidence that the subject of IMC is both topical and under researched in some respects.

Author	**Title**	**Area studied**	**Research Method**
Eisenhardt (1985)	Control: organisational and economic approaches	The use of control variables in compensation (outcomes)	Survey
Grunig (1989)	Organisational structure in PR: An exploratory study of departmental differences.	Organisational structure	Mail Surveys. In depth interviews
Duncan and Everett (1993)	Perceptions of IMC	Roles and responsibilities	Mail survey
Rose and Miller (1994)	Perceived value of IMC	Educational and professional implications	Mail survey
Gronstedt (1996)	Integrated communications at America's leading TQM corporation	Communications	Case studies, interviews, content analysis
Schultz (1996)	The inevitability of integrate communications	The trend toward personalisation	Essay
Phelps and Johnson (1996)	Entering the quagmire: Examining the meaning of IMC	"Meaning of IMC"	Mail survey
Rose (1996)	Practitioner opinions and interests regarding IMC	Educational and professional implications	Mail survey
Beard (1997)	IMC adoption and implementation	Client/Agency relationship	Mail survey
Hunter (1997)	The relationship of PR and marketing against a background of IMC	IOR	Mail survey
McArthur and Griffin (1997)	A Marketing management view of IMC	Client and agency side research	Mail survey
Grunig and Grunig (1998)	The relationship between PR and marketing in excellent organisations	Client side survey	Mail survey
Duncan and Moriarty (1998)	A communication based marketing model for managing relationships	Development of CRM approach	Essay

Author	Title	Area studied	Research Method
Kitchen and Schultz (1999)	A multi country comparison of the drive for IMC	Agency executives	Mail survey
Hackley (1999)	Tacit knowledge and the epistemology of expertise in strategic marketing management	Examines codified approaches v practice	Multi disciplinary
Spake, D'Souza, Crutchfield and Morgan (1999)	Advertising agency compensation. An agency theory explanation	Future of advertising agency compensation methods	Pre survey interviews, survey
Hackley (2000)	Silent running; Tacit, discursive and psychological aspects of management in a top UK advertising agency	Examines tacit operations in five advertising agencies	Critical discourse analysis
Cornelissen and Lock (2000)	Theoretical concept or management fashion?	Examining the significance of IMC	Content analysis
Schultz (2000)	A response to theoretical concept or management fashion	Critique of Cornelissen and Lock paper above	Content review/critique
Cornelissen and Thorpe (2001)	Departmental arrangements for communication between communication departments	Interaction between two departments working with outsourced partners	Mail survey and follow up interviews
Durkin and Lawlor (2001)	The implications of the internet on the advertising agency /client relationship	A study into Irish internet full service agency offerings	Depth interviews
Hackley (2001)	Looking at me looking at you, qualitative research and politics of knowledge representations of advertising and academia	The politics of knowledge in advertising agencies	Interviews and observation
Wiernega (2002)	A comparison of academic v practitioner views of marketing	A proposed study to examine non codified activities in marketing	A range of proposed methods
Hackley (2003)	How divergent beliefs cause account team conflict	An examination of self reporting of roles in an advertising agency	Qualitative interviews

Author	Title	Area studied	Research Method
Cornelissen (2003)	Change, continuity and progress, the concept of IMC and marketing communications practice	Examining gap between academic and practitioner perspectives of IMC	Content analysis
Hopkinson (2003)	Stories from the front line: how they construct the organisation	Study to assess "self" as an organisational customer or partner	Interviews/Discourse analysis
Peltier, Schibrowsky and Schultz (2003)	Interactive IMC, combining the power of IMC, the new media and database marketing	Incorporating data into IMC	Case study
Haytko (2004)	Firm to firm and inter personal relationships. Perspectives from agency account managers	Study of IFR/IOR in advertising agencies	Depth interviews x 20
Schultz, Cole and Bailey (2004)	Implementing "the connect the dots" approach to marketing communication	Review of metrics and the recommendation of a return on touchpoint investment (ROTPI)	Content review and article
Kliatchko (2005)	Towards a new definition of IMC	Review of IMC definitions	Content review
Rouzies, Ajay, Kohli, Ronan,Michaels, Barton, Weitz and Zoltners (2005)	Sales and marketing integration: A proposed framework	The integration of sales and marketing, starting with impediments and suggesting model	Conceptual framework paper
Schultz, Block and Pilotta (2005)	Implementing a media consumption model	Examines simultaneous consumption of media	Quantitative analysis
McGovern and Quelch (2005)	Outsourcing marketing	Discusses "new" outsourcing direction of data and analytic services	Article HBR
Christensen, Torp and Firat (2005)	IMC and postmodernity: an odd couple?	Proposing that structuring IMC prevents required fluidity	Conceptual paper
Horsky (2006)	The changing architecture of advertising agencies	A view of the changes in specialisation v integration of IMC	Content analysis

Author	Title	Area studied	Research Method
Homburg and Jensen (2007)	The thought worlds of marketing and sales. Which difference makes a difference?	Examines whether differences between sales and marketing are positive	Survey
Schultz, Kerr, Kim and Patti (2007)	In search of a theory of integrated marketing communication	An examination of academic teaching of IMC	Content study
Le Meunier-Fitzhugh and Piercy (2007)	Does collaboration between sales and marketing affect business performance?	Affect of structure and location on collaboration	Survey
Cater (2008)	The importance of social bonds for communication and trust in marketing relationships in professional services	Examining IOR and IFR	Primarily survey
Kliatchko (2008)	Revisiting the IMC construct, a revised definition and four pillars	Examining IMC definition and adding new element	A review of academic IMC definition related papers
Finne and Gronroos (2009)	Re-thinking marketing communication, from integrated marketing communication to relationship communication	Developing of a relationship communication model RCM	Conceptual model development paper
Schultz and Patti (2009)	The evolution of IMC in a customer driven marketplace	The drive toward a consumer driven IMC model	Guest editorial article
Le Meunier-Fitzhugh and Piercy (2008/2009)	The importance of organisational structure for collaboration between sales and marketing	Relationship between structure and performance of sales and marketing	Survey
Kitchen and Schultz (2009)	IMC new horizon or false dawn for a marketplace in turmoil	A market based perspective of IMC	Essay
Kliatchko (2009)	IMC 20 years after; A second look at IMC definitions	A review of definitions of IMC and a new proposition	Content study and essay
Ellis and Hopkinson (2010)	The construction of management knowledge in business networks	Inter firm relationships and boundary spanning	Interviews

Author	Title	Area studied	Research Method
Ellis (2010)	Business to business marketing relationships, networks and strategies	Discusses various aspects of B2B and services marketing	Text
Hipperson (2010)	The changing face of data insight- and its relationship to brand marketing	Proposes a particular form of IMC	Practitioner article/opinion
Ellis and Ybema (2010)	Marketing identities: shifting circles of identification in IOR	Investigation of boundary spanning roles and movement into and out of company	Interviews and discourse analysis
Kitchen and Brugmann (2010)	Integrated marketing communications	A review of literature in IMC implementation	Literature review
Le Meunier-Fitzhugh and Piercy (2010)	Improving the relationship between sales and marketing	Identifying influences of collaboration between sales and marketing	One to one tripartite interviews
Laurie and Mortimer (2011)	IMC is dead, long live IMC	Definitions of IMC	Content analysis of practitioner articles
Malshe (2011)	An exploration of key connections within the sales and marketing interface	Reviews importance of vertical and horizontal communication bridges	Survey
Laurie and Mortimer (2012)	Barriers to the implementation of Integrated Marketing Communications: The Client perspective.	An examination of barriers to implementation from client point of view.	Questionnaire
Laurie and Mortimer (2013)	Implementation of Integrated Marketing Communications: Whose responsibility is it?	An examination in if clients are implementing IMC fully	On line survey with expert interpretation.

Table 3 *Key Relevant Research Papers on IMC, IMC management, IFR/IPR. (Author)*

From both an academic and practitioner perspective there are a number of important areas that could usefully be addressed through new research and/or revisiting topics from a different methodological perspective compared to prior bodies of work. These research areas could be posited as:

1) *Management and Implementation of IMC*

   One area that has largely been left untouched from a research perspective is that of management and implementation of IMC. Hence we have academic descriptions of what IMC is and how it theoretically operates, but very little empirical research on issues surrounding its management and implementation. There is little research on the areas of IPR and IFR pre and post IMC implementation, yet, as we have seen, these are likely to be significant factors in determining the success of IMC within and for an organisation.

   According to Laurie and Mortimer (2013, p.6.), "The literature is increasingly showing that the role of the client is crucial in the implementation of IMC and yet clients are the unknown quantity in the industry compared with academics and agency executives". The proposed methodology seeks to address this by engaging with both client side and agency side management before and during implementation of IMC.

2) *Potential Inclusion of Sales in the IMC Mix*

   As discussed earlier, the original marketing mix (and its later derivations), frequently refer to sales. Yet when we come to outsourced services, sales and marketing appear to be divorced, even though literature frequently refers to intertwining the two.

   Kotler, Rackham and Krishnaswamy (2006), Rouzies et al (2005). There is therefore an opportunity to examine attitudes toward inclusion of sales in the outsourced IMC mix.

3) *Client/Agency Practitioner Definitions*

   To date there has been relatively little research carried out on IMC definitions from a practitioner perspective. It is important to assess if there are gaps regarding IMC definition between clients and agencies, as well as between academics and practitioners.

4) *Optimum Mix of IMC*

   Since the original discussions on the subject of IMC around thirty years ago, there have been significant developments in technology, which have at least in part led to an increased

number of skill sets and greater measurement techniques. This means that the content of an IMC offering is also under review by practitioners. This is also set against the background of conflicting views on both a drive toward integration - as evidenced by Schultz (1993,1996), and Schultz and Patti (2009) - and away from it, supported by views of Cornelissen and Lock (2000). What has yet to be addressed is what practitioners feel is the most appropriate and credible mix of IMC in a current environment.

5) *Methodological Issues*

There is a lack of IMC related qualitative interpretive current research which would aid understanding of IMC issues at a practitioner/implementation level. Ellis et al (2011) refer to an over reliance on positivist, quantification and measurement centric approaches, and to Haytko (2004) who questioned the use of methods that simply test pre-existing notions from relationship marketing literature rather than taking an interpretive and inductive approach. These views are also in line with those of Arndt (1985) and Cornelissen (2003) - the former of whom indicated that there has been too much self reporting research and not enough interpretive approaches in marketing. The potential weakness therefore is that by relying on self reporting survey based IMC research, we are reliant on accuracy of respondent memory coupled with a very restricted interpretation of the questions and the subsequent responses. Additionally the survey method also limits the responses open to questionnaire respondents. Thus, in order to expose the complexity of perceptions of individual participants within the contemporary IMC context in sufficient depth, some form of interpretive perspective is appropriate.

It could also be argued that much IMC activity is based on tacit activities and knowledge and this is omitted from much existing theoretical description. This means that “voice” is not given to anything other than formally coded activities. There is a requirement therefore to seek views on alternative and “ideal” potential modes of IMC provision by clients and agencies, taking into account the aforementioned media landscape changes and apparent weakening of categorisation.

2.11 CONTRIBUTION OVERVIEW

From a twenty five year perspective as a practitioner, I have long suspected that greater levels of integration between marketing communications services and between sales and marketing in general could amongst other things reduce costs of sales, increase sales levels and lead to new evaluation and remuneration methods. I have also been intrigued as to why both clients and agencies do not create or demand more integrated offerings from their outsourced partners.

From a theoretical perspective, I believe this research is important as it builds on aspects of papers referenced earlier and that this work ultimately both contributes to and develops the debate on various forms of integration and importantly, on IMC implementation issues, e.g. Schultz (1996), Polos, Hannan and Carroll (2001), Narayandas (2002), Kliatchcko (2005) and Laurie and Mortimer (2011,2012,2013).

I feel that this research will prove to be significant as it is grounded in practice through a multi stage iterative interview case study approach, whereas existing literature has largely focused on analysis of historic events and/or single surveys. Therefore when contrasting this author's research with existing literature one finds that many of the themes I may uncover are potentially recurrent insofar as they arose in prior IMC studies, but the context of this research is somewhat different in that it explores and extends these existing works in a new environment, i.e. the external outsourced agency structure. Critically, this research is classed as revelatory (Yin 2009, p.47) as for the first time it considers the issues of implementation surrounding collaboration/coordination of sales and marketing services in an outsourced environment. The study further explores client and agency perceptions of IMC/Coordination merits and potential IMC alternatives through an in situ, participant observant, case study.

The anticipated outcome of this study is that it may aid greater scholarly understanding of the nature of IMC and, from a managerial perspective, potentially lead to a greater appreciation by clients and agencies of more appropriate organisational structures, service offerings, remuneration approaches and most importantly, implementation issues.

This could in turn lead to greater levels of confidence in planning and decision making by both clients and agencies in relation to IMC. Additionally, as the earlier study of relevant literature has shown, over the past two decades there has been a desire to find new tools to facilitate measurement and evaluation - based on outputs. This study will also contribute to both existing literature and hopefully to the overall practitioner debate which is vibrant, as evidenced in various trade journals on these areas.

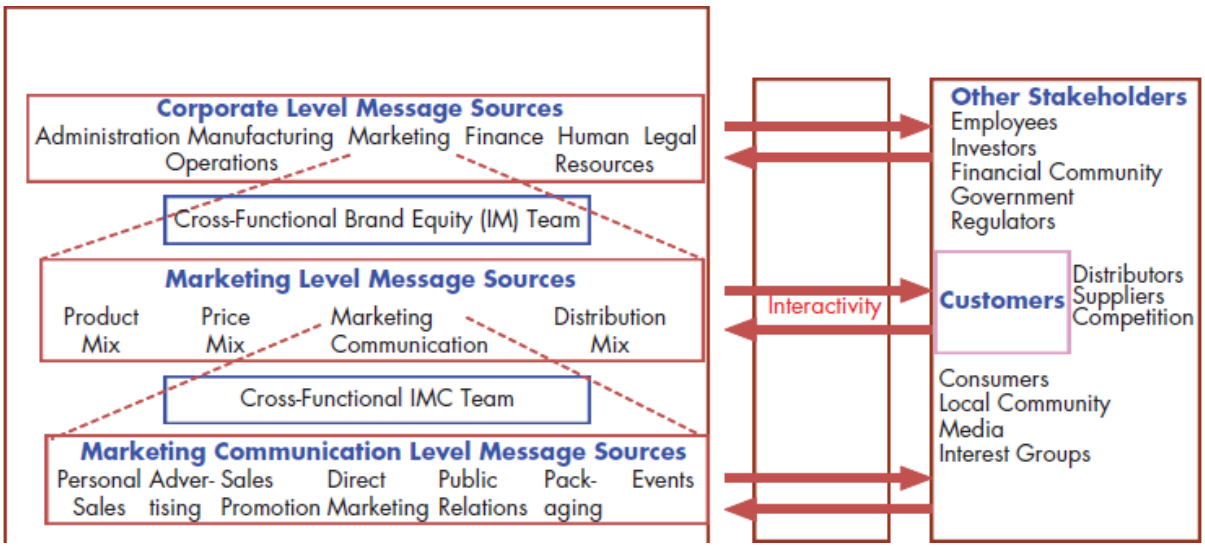


Figure 6 *A Communication Based Model for Managing Relationships. (Duncan and Moriarty, 1998)*

The method adopted complements the above structure (Figure 6) where three levels of integration were discussed by Laurie and Mortimer (2011) after Duncan and Moriarty (1998). Part of my contribution is to assess/validate this from an Irish perspective (that is, to see if similar themes emerge as in the aforementioned study, at corporate, marketing and marketing communication levels). The Irish market is considerably smaller than the UK market and various forms of collaboration exist. It will be useful to assess attitudes to IMC and see if outcomes coincide with larger market findings.

2.11.1 Contribution to Practice

The subject of IMC is a significant topic for both clients and agencies as evidenced in the literature review. Its importance and relevance has been further highlighted, heightened and complicated by the arrival of digital services, which has led to greater levels of media fragmentation, diminishing categorisation and elevated levels of uncertainty around a number of key areas such as agency service offerings and the optimum client/agency organisational structure. Additionally, client organisations are frequently keen to examine ways to close the gap between agency activity/outcomes and remuneration. Many of the IMC measurement techniques currently used, whilst still useful, largely do not allow for the inclusion of sales, often due to the contracted separation of outsourced third parties - although digital measurement techniques are now closing the gap as per A.A.I. (2014).

I believe that potentially there are considerable practical and transferable learnings to be derived from this research, in that organisations in Ireland will have geographically contextualised industry thinking, benchmarked against existing theory, coupled with locally generated case study findings to

consider when making decisions in relation to selecting an outsourced partner. For example, there is the potential to include sales in the outsourced mix and therefore to consider additional, mutually goal congruent, measurement techniques. Currently IMC literature does not provide for sales being part of the IMC mix. From an organisational and individual staff member perspective it is possible that opacity could well be reduced through clearer alignment of goals between sales and marketing.

2.12 CONCLUSION

Ardley (2008) proposed that one of the key failings in marketing literature is that it fails to take organisational practice into account, and therefore the reflective aspects of tacit knowledge. He argues that typically, texts produce models that are not implemented in practice because local variables and interactions (i.e. such as tacit operations) are generally not taken into account in books or academic literature thus implying that tacit operations are vital to understand in order for implementation to be more successful. He calls for greater ethnographic and interpretive studies to explore "what actually goes on in organisations" (p.381) and that this would result in "thicker descriptions". Hackley (2003) also suggests that traditional texts tend to focus on abstract principles and ignore verbal responses and he also suggests we need thicker descriptions of what actually happens. Ardley also refers to a paper by Robson and Rowe (1997) where they also criticise marketing texts for divorcing sales from marketing, whereas in their study it was evident that practitioners/companies see the two intertwined. Ardley also quotes Brown (2006, p.221) who stated that marketing was really "about selling stuff", and that this is not reflected in texts. Both papers go on to argue that academic research makes little impression in practice within companies, and that academic outputs are rarely read by practitioners.

Laurie and Mortimer (2013,p.1) stated that "Discussions on Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) in the academic and practitioner journals are gradually changing from examining definitions and justifications to sharing good practice" and indicate that this movement needs to continue with regards to future discussions and research.

The outcome is also expected to yield high levels of reflective practice benefits (i.e. insights that could assist other organisations considering IMC), in that knowledge could be transferable to every day practice in both agency and client side organisations, this reflects Van de Ven and Johnsons's (2006) approach where they outlined that both quality and impact of research improve when four rules were observed - 1. Confronting anomalies in practice; 2. Organising research in a collaborative approach between academics and practitioners; 3. Considering alternative models and approaches; 4. Framing the research to appeal to academic development and a relevant domain of practice.

Many writers have spoken of and researched the impact of greater collaboration between marketing and sales, e.g. Kotler, Rackham and Krishnaswamy, (2006), Le Meunier- Fitzhugh and Piercy (2008/2009), Le Meunier-Fitzhugh and Piercy (2010), Beimans, Brenic and Malshe (2010) however these studies have not specifically included the use of outsourced agency partners or indeed external IMC /sales integration. Therefore, the study also builds upon the work of Le Meunier-Fitzhugh and Piercy (2008/2009) where they used a tripartite interview approach and concluded that greater collaboration between sales and marketing is critical to improving business performance.

Coupling the lack of qualitative inductive approaches in IMC research with a paucity of research on IMC management and implementation in particular, means that significant gaps exist between practice and theory in these areas. The following study is unique in that it incorporates client/agency informant views via a qualitative approach to address some of the key issues detailed above. One of the key objectives is to give voice to practitioners at all levels in order to contemporise views on IMC definitions and highlight management and implementation issues as a specific form of IMC is delivered.

CHAPTER 3 - Methodology

3.1 INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER

This chapter details the rationale for the chosen methodology and takes the reader through the mechanics of a two stage research process as part of an overall case study. Stage one comprises a series of exploratory interviews with client side and agency side informants, and is followed (in Stage two) by a single revelatory case study, as described by Yin (2009,p.47), which incorporates three phases of interviews coupled with participant observation, as a variant of IMC is implemented by an organisation.

The literature review has shown that a gap worthy of further research exists, the addressing of which will potentially aid both practitioners and make an academic contribution by building upon extant research. This research focuses on determining (from an Irish market perspective) client and agency side perceptions of current and alternative modes of IMC (Integrated Marketing Communications) service provision, including the potential of provision of sales services as part of an IMC offering through a single outsourced service provider.

Of particular interest is the gap in existing literature concerning inter-firm and inter-personal issues during implementation of IMC, referred to by Hackley (2010, loc. 6323), where he discussed practical issues surrounding implementing true integration by clients and agencies.

These issues of IMC implementation and management are addressed from a predominantly emic perspective for the first time in this area.

3.1.1 Research Aim

To explore client and agency perceptions of the relative merits of alternative modes of IMC service provision and its implementation, in order to both extend existing research on these specific areas and to help bridge the associated scholar/practitioner gap.

3.2 CONTEMPORARY IMC TOPICS, CONSEQUENT AIMS, CORE RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

3.2.1 Contemporary IMC Topics

There are a number of contemporary topics, as evidenced in Campaign Magazine (2012) and the European Journal of Marketing (2015), which are of specific interest to this research .Whilst the definition of IMC has been discussed for many years it remains a contemporary issue, possibly at

least partially due to significant changes in digital channels and media. These changes appear to have resulted in a much broader range of services (including sales) that could be considered to be part of IMC, and this may have implications for measurement and remuneration. When viewing service offerings, it may be that IMC is context dependent with definitions therefore being lenient as discussed by Pontikes and Hannan, 2012.

In line with the views of Laurie and Mortimer (2013), this research recognises that IMC has moved from conceptual discussions to issues surrounding its strategic importance (see figure 1) and implementation- these are currently seen as key (with the latter un researched) issues for organisations on both the client and agency side.

3.2.2 Consequent Aims Emerging from these topics

The contemporary topics referred to above indicate that new research would be beneficial in a number of areas, in particular to assess client and agency definitions of IMC and to solicit and interpret views on IMC service content and the potential role of sales inclusion, which could have a significant impact on remuneration and measurement. Additionally, a significant opportunity exists to investigate views on IMC at a strategic level together with issues surrounding implementation, as called for by Laurie and Mortimer (2013)

Therefore, the overall research aim is defined as being:
"To explore client and agency perceptions of the relative merits of alternative modes of IMC service provision and its implementation, in order to both extend existing research on these specific areas and to help bridge the associated scholar/practitioner gap".

3.2.3 Core research questions to achieve these aims

Below are the core research questions. Each question is expected to be explored in depth in order to gain key central and ancillary responses.

1. How is IMC defined by client and agency side senior personnel?
2. What are views on the inclusion of sales in the IMC mix?
3. What are the experiences and views on IMC measurement and is it linked to remuneration?
4. Is IMC seen as strategically important and if so what does this mean in practice?
5. How is implementation planned? What are the key issues in IMC implementation?

3.2.4 Methodological Approach

Taking a broadly interpretive approach, from a methodological perspective, a two stage empirical data gathering mechanism is adopted in order to gain informant views (in stage one) from a wide selection of client and agency side senior personnel on IMC related issues such as their understanding of IMC definitions, views on implementation, structure, credibility etc. These informant views are expected both to contribute to extant literature on contemporary IMC definitions, but more importantly for this research, to inform semi structured interview prompts used in a stage two participant observer case study. It is anticipated therefore that stage one (whilst contributing to literature in its own right) will help to inform stage two, whilst also recognising that stage two informant views may create entirely new themes surrounding implementation of IMC.

3.3 Rationale for a Qualitative Approach

The consideration of various forms of IMC together with its implementation is a multi faceted and complex subject. There is frequently much uncertainty and ambiguity around the term "integrated" and for the purposes of this research I have adopted the: "quality of cooperation between sales and marketing" - referred to by Homburg and Jensen (2007, p.126) as the broad definition, this meaning the extent to which there is collaboration between the various elements of sales and marketing disciplines characterised by a unity of effort. An additional complexity of IMC implementation is that it involves inter firm and inter personal boundary spanning, coupled with tacit operations/knowledge.

As discussed in the literature review there have been a number of quantitative and some qualitative studies on various aspects of IMC. However there are also a number of areas where there is a paucity of qualitative approaches and these are highlighted by the chosen research questions and topics outlined above. I have adopted a qualitative approach in order to allow informants to adequately give voice to various issues, and importantly, for me to probe (until I have a clear understanding) key issues. In my view the quantitative and qualitative studies previously carried out act as excellent platforms for this study to build upon. I would contend that due to the aforementioned levels of complexity, a qualitative approach is therefore appropriate and could be highly beneficial for subsequent research on the subject.

3.3.1 Case Study Rationale

A naturalistic case study approach as discussed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) has been selected in order to achieve the research aims outlined earlier.

To further underscore the choice of a case study structure Yin (1981a, 1981b), indicated that a case study is an empirical enquiry that "investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real life context especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident". Schramm (1971, P.6) indicated that a case study should "illuminate a decision or set of decisions, why they were taken, how they were implemented and with what result", which closely matches the objectives of this research which at its core examined implementation of a specific form of IMC. This research subject falls within the parameters suggested by Yin by being both contemporary and studied within its real life context as well as focussing on the boundary issues inherent in IMC integration implementation.

The incorporation of an emic approach also qualifies under the heading of being a "revelatory case study" (Yin, 2009, p.48) in that the author of this research had unique access to analyse the subject matter in a way not previously undertaken in IMC/IMC management studies.

In many ways this methodology is indebted to the work of Glaser and Strauss (2009) and Strauss and Corbin (1998).

Interview transcripts were analysed by adopting a coding approach which, to some extent, drew upon 'grounded theory' (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). My approach was not 'traditional' grounded theory, however, as it did have preconceptions and categories that were applied both to the gathering and analysis of data. My analysis started from the transcripts. Representations of the views of particular informants were then made using categories for themes that were both data-saturated and theoretically informed (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Therefore, my reading of the empirical material presented in my analysis is organised under thematic headings that attempt to recognise both the elements of the research questions and to the pre-occupations of the participants (Burman, 1994).

3.3.2 A Two Stage Research Approach

The case study is broken down into two related stages, namely a series of semi structured interviews with senior client and agency personnel in order to determine attitudes and opinions to IMC (stage one) and secondly a participant observation case study before, during and after a period of IMC implementation, (stage two). Stage two consists of three sets of interviews, with each set referred to as tranche one, two or three. Stage one and stage two utilise different informants/participants.

I have adopted an interpretive and largely inductive approach. This emic approach was created through the use of semi structured interviews and the adoption of a participant observant case study. My intention was to create a rich and thick interpretive overlay to complement, critique and extend existing studies, which have in the main been quantitative, measurement centric, and/or positivist. This approach is in line with Cook and Payne (2002) where they spoke of this form of exploratory research acting as an adjunct to experiments, not an alternative. The use of participant observation allows me to gain access and to interview informants in their natural working environment and therefore gather views from the "inside".

I believe this interpretive research sheds light on the implementation of IMC modes by taking in views of client side and agency side practitioners. In addition, the use of a case study approach allowed me to assess some of the key implementation issues surrounding a new form of IMC in a commercial setting.

3.3.3 Intra Methodology Decision Rationale

Having decided to adopt a qualitative approach, a review of various qualitative approaches was undertaken using Creswell (2009, p.179) as a guide. Creswell suggested a number of qualitative data collection techniques, including observation, interviews, document reviews and audio visual material usage.

In order to meet the objective of gaining a deeper understanding of informant attitudes, opinions and experiences, it is my contention, and one supported by Hackley (2001, p.43) that semi structured interviews were most appropriate for part of this research. This approach allows informants to give voice to their views on issues raised by them and/or the interviewer, and was expected to yield greater ontological insights.

Document and visual research were be undertaken in order to aid the process of sourcing suitable informants and subsequent segmentation, but as the main source of research neither would have met the primary research objective of generating the insights required. In essence, it was important

for this dissertation that the researcher ensured that informants were given the opportunity to give and explain their views and for these to be explored and questioned at the same time by the researcher. Therefore interviews /participant observation were chosen as the core research methodology.

With regard to the interview mechanic, a number of options were considered, the main interview options for consideration were unstructured and semi structured, structured or the use focus groups (Bryman and Bell 2011, p.467). Due to the complexity of the subject and because many differing definitions of IMC are used, semi structured face to face interviews were deemed to be most appropriate as they allow for the interviewer to explore responses through a format less rigid and reductive than structured interviews.

The main disadvantage of using structured interviews in this research lies in the rigid and prescriptive nature of this form of interview, whilst a completely unstructured approach could have led to both gathering irrelevant data and/or failing to garner key information through a lack of lateral movement in questioning. Focus groups were deemed inappropriate in both stages, as the nature of the discussions were either confidential from a corporate perspective or in some cases were on sensitive matters such as commenting on co-worker behaviour for example.

Therefore semi structured interviews were selected as they have the advantage of allowing the interviewer to frame the interview, and both adapt and probe informant responses to hopefully unearth relevant insights. For Stage two, a participant observant approach is also adopted, as per Bryman and Bell (2011, p.426).

In summary, this research incorporates a two stage, mixed methods qualitative process all under the heading of a case study, stage one being semi structured interviews with a range of client side and agency side management, with Stage two focussing on a participant observant case study (incorporating semi structured interviews) with a company as it implements a specific form of IMC for the first time.

A qualitative, interpretative methodological approach similar to that used by Prasad (1993, p.1407), where the author discussed the use of semi structured interviews and participant observation as being appropriate to capture “a rich array of subjective experiences”, was taken due to the level of ambiguity and complexity of the subject matter.

In order to further add to existing academic knowledge, it was deemed beneficial to undertake an appropriate interpretive approach case study for Stage two, as a participant observer, in order to

witness/interpret some of the views articulated by informants (at a number of levels within the organisation) in a live company situation - as this does not appear to have been carried out before in an IMC/ IMC implementation management context across clients and agencies. These interviews were conducted on three different occasions over nine months during which an alternative mode of IMC was being implemented. As a participant observer, and with over twenty five years practitioner experience in the domain being researched, this emic approach allowed me to both gain verbal insights through interviews but also to observe and take notes based on group meetings and observations during the relevant period. It was agreed that I receive open access to the company throughout the case study period.

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

As discussed earlier, the approach adopted incorporated a two stage qualitative methodology, both stages using semi structured interviews as part of an overall case study.

The two stages of the case study adopted were therefore as follows:

Stage One: Exploratory semi structured personal interviews with senior client and agency personnel

Stage Two: Semi structured interviews and participant observation, to gain informant views on a form of IMC as it is implemented for the first time by a company. None of the participants from stage one are connected to the company involved in stage two

3.5 STAGE ONE EXPLORATORY SEMI STRUCTURED PERSONAL INTERVIEWS

One of the reasons for selecting interviews as the methodology was that informants frequently have differing views (for example) as to what IMC actually means to them, i.e. clear categorisation and organisational forms (Polos, Hannan and Carrol, 2001) appear not to exist. Therefore questionnaires were not used, as they would have either needed to be overly prescriptive in terms of supplying written definitions for example (with an expected reduction in response rates due to the length of the required survey instrument), or open to potential misinterpretation - "income" as an example could be defined in many different ways, thus making comparison difficult or invalid without clarification via an interactive approach.

Face to face interviews were also selected as the methodology primarily because of the aforementioned requirement for a more interactive and nuanced approach. An added benefit of face to face interviews is that nonverbal cues were also taken on board and reacted to immediately. Researcher influence in interpretation was minimised through prior training in interview techniques and by only using one person (myself) to conduct interviews. Interviews were "loosely structured" using a funnelling technique to allow for (deliberate) focus on key areas as the interview sessions progress. This funnelling technique allowed interview content to move in a semi structured way with the interviewer guiding the informant in order to share views on key areas. A sample of transcripts were second coded (i.e. checked by a second person with more than ten years senior IMC experience and holder of a Marketing degree) to ensure a minimum 80% agreement on both coding and emergence of themes – this being in line with recommendations by Miles and Huberman (1994).

The purpose of the initial interviews was to highlight key areas/ issues that may assist in the development of the subsequent case study stage and to gain contextual insights. Another important benefit was to ascertain if gaps arose between client and agency perceptions of IMC.

3.5.1 Selection of Respondents/Unit of Analysis and Access

Interviews were conducted with both client side and agency side executives (informants) and focused on inter and intra organisational relationships, partly due to a view that closer integration between organisations (in this case IMCC and clients) potentially leads to boundary spanning relationships - which in turn potentially leads to conflict or perceived personal risk in relation to individual status - this also representing an unexplored area in IMC research.

Definition of "informants":

*"*Client side informants" means informants that are employed at a senior level, by non agency organisations.

"Agency side informants" refers to respondents that were employed at a senior level within agencies, in any relevant discipline such as advertising, direct marketing or digital services for example. In both cases, senior level informants were initially selected as they are typically involved in the decision making process on whether to implement IMC or a variant of IMC.

Sampling method:

In relation to agency side selection of respondents/informants, selection was made with reference to various trade body memberships (detailed in Table 4) and use of stratified and purposive sampling, i.e. seeking out relevant senior informants within organisations. The strata were selected based on the agency's positioning as single service v multiple service provider, or by selecting CEOs with experience of one or both areas. For example, IMC organisations are more likely to have experienced or considered use of sales as part of their service offering, as they currently offer multiple services. However both strata were included. A key point to note is that many of the respondents have many years industry experience in multiple roles and are familiar with both IMC and specialist operations , irrespective of their current role. Again the semi structured approach encouraged respondents to talk openly not only about their current roles, but equally importantly, their other prior experiences and opinions.

From the client side, trade body listings (also see Table 4) were also used to determine the stratified universe, with selection carried out on a purposive basis. The sectors (also detailed in Table 4) incorporated were selected as they tended to use outsourced partners in marketing and/or sales.

The operating level of respondents was mostly at senior executive level, as they possessed wide levels of experience in marketing communications in each tranche. However I also incorporated (at the second stage) informant views of executives at other levels, this is because management elites tend to be over represented in studies (Alvesson and Wilmott, 1992) - and that in order to arrive at a more balanced view incorporating tacit knowledge and operations, "front line" and middle management informants were also included, (Ellis and Ybema, 2010, p284).

Timing: Interviews were carried out in two tranches, firstly with clients and later with agencies. Each tranche of interviews were carried out over a six week period during 2012.

Table 4 below shows sources of data.

Trade Bodies	Data Source	Industry Sectors Chosen	Professional Body
MII	Membership Listings	Brewing, Banking, Insurance, Security, Property	Marketing Institute of Ireland
SII	Membership Listings	All	Sales Institute of Ireland
IDMA	Membership Listings	Direct Marketing	Irish Direct Marketing Association
ASAI/IAPI	Membership Listings	Advertising	Advertising Standards Authority of Ireland
PRCA/PRII	Membership Listings	Public Relations	Public Relations Consultants Association
DMI	Membership Listings	Digital Marketing	Digital Marketing Institute
APMC	Membership Listings	Sales Promotion	Association of Promotional Marketing Consultants

Table 4 *Data Sources for Stage One Interviews. (Author)*

The above data sources were chosen as they represent the key industry bodies for sales and marketing, with both the client side and agency side fully represented.

Participants (see table 5 and table 6) were selected via a study of the agency/organisation's publicly available marketing literature which describes their own philosophy toward integration. This is in line with the checklist approach adopted by Laurie and Mortimer (2011) and therefore also incorporates Duncan and Moriarty's (1998) prior research, where they set out three levels of integration:

Level one: Marketing communications

Level two: Marketing level

Level three: Corporate level

Tables 5 and 6 below are therefore reflective of the researcher's interpretive view of both authors' approaches.

Participant	Firm	Sector	Level of Integration*	Role
Informant A	Advertising Agency	Agency	2	CEO
Informant B	Advertising Agency	Agency	2	CEO
Informant C	Digital Agency	Agency	6	CEO
Informant D	Advertising Agency	Agency	2	CEO
Informant E	Advertising Agency	Agency	2	CEO
Informant F	Healthcare Agency	Agency	2	Head of Unit
Informant G	Digital Agency	Agency	6	CEO
Informant H	Advertising Agency	Agency	4	CEO

Table 5 *Agency side Participants in Stage One Semi structured Interviews. (Author)*

**Created via content desk research of agency marketing literature/websites – 1 = total integration including sales; 2 = total integration excluding sales; 3 = total integration via subsidiaries; 4 = total integration via third parties; 5 = partial integration offering; 6 = specialist in one or more disciplines. Based on checklist approach by Laurie and Mortimer (2011, p.1471 and Duncan and Moriarty (1998, P.9).*

Participant	Firm	Sector	Level of Integration*	Role
Informant J	Insurance Company	Insurance	3	Head of sales
Informant K	Retail Bank	Business Banking	3	Head of SME Banking
Informant L	Digital Real Estate	Property advertising	3	CEO
Informant M	Medical Company	Healthcare	3	Account Director
Informant N	Postal Service	Motor insurance	3	Head of Marketing
Informant O	Bank Finance	Motor finance	3	CEO
Informant P	Utility	Consumer Gas /Electricity Provider	3	Head of Marketing
Informant Q	Security Company	Security	3	CEO

Participant	Firm	Sector	Level of Integration*	Role
Informant R	Brewery	Brewing	3	Head of Marketing
Informant S	Retail Bank	Retail Banking	3	Head of Marketing

Table 6 *Client side Participants in Stage One Semi structured Interviews. (Author)*

** Created via desk research to show if more than one agency is used by the client – 1 = single IMC /sales agency; 2 = single IMC agency; 3 = multiple agencies. Based on checklist approach by Laurie and Mortimer (2011) p.1471 and Duncan and Moriarty (1998, P.9).*

3.5.2 Semi structured Interview Questions and Aide Memoire

All informants received a formal letter of invitation, see Appendix 1. All questions were based on relevant published literature e.g. Schultz (1996), Narayandas (2002), Kliatchko (2005) and Laurie and Mortimer (2011, 2012, 2013), combined with my own experience in the area. I have included in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3 the interview questions and the papers to which key questions relate where appropriate**.** As discussed earlier, even though some of the questions asked were inspired by my reading of the academic literature, I have tried to adopt a predominantly emic approach, in that my significant industry experience, coupled with my close knowledge of this specific issue, allowed me to assess and extract insights as an "insider" - as against a more etic or external observer approach.

In total eighteen interviews were undertaken in stage one.

A pilot interview was carried out (but not used in the final coding/analysis) to ensure any improvements in questions and/or scheduling required are implemented prior to the full scale face to face interviews.

In essence, the purpose of stage one interviews was both exploratory and also designed to inform case study interviews and observation.

The key objectives therefore were:

- To scope out key issues and themes for stage two, potentially such as those described earlier e.g.: key stakeholder, potential structural and HR issues, current views on IMC

definition, categorisation, evaluation, compensation and reasons for not including the sales function

- To use resultant informant views to allow for confirmation /extension of existing academic works by authors mentioned earlier
- To contrast client and agency staff views on the above IMC topics

All interviews were carried out by the author and were in all cases carried out with the use of an aid memoire. Contemporaneous notes were also taken. All interviews were audio recorded and outputs transcribed by a professional transcriber. NVivo 10 software was used as an aid to the storage and analysis of all data collected. Maclaran and Caterall (2002) discussed the advantages and disadvantages of using computer technology in qualitative research with the key advantages being transparency of coding as visible to others (including in my case my second reader, who checked for coding consistency) and improved presentation of findings. The main disadvantage relevant to this research was the potential to "miss the point" as referred to by Maclaren and Caterall in a large volume of data stored. This was overcome by listening back and contrasting the recordings with transcripts and through the use of contemporaneous notes. From the perspective of this research, I therefore used NVivo10 in order to store data in a database and for the benefit of output reporting of themes, their descriptions and node summary reports for example. In essence the actual coding of transcripts was unchanged from manual methods, except that data is more readily available through data searches, (Yin 2009, p.128).

A total of 18 stage one interviews were conducted during business hours either in the individual's workplace or in a nearby suitable venue. All interviews were face to face interviews.

Overall each interview took on average 64 minutes and in total (stage one) interviews yielded 160 pages and 62,000 words, all of which were analysed in conjunction with contemporaneous notes.

I was familiar with the background / experience / track records of many of the informants and therefore I was able to probe further on issues I knew they had encountered or had views on, and this was certainly beneficial, as it was noticeable that more pertinent informant views were elicited as interview time elapsed and thus I was able to challenge or probe responses immediately. The overall impression I gained was that the topic was one on which both strong opinions existed coupled with confusion as to what IMC meant in practice and therefore there were significant inconsistencies between informant views. I was left with an overall sense that informants had been

involved or witnessed IMC developing through trial and error, rather than being guided in any way by academic studies or clear best industry practice.

Coding was carried out based on a self designed coding manual, with each reference being coded to a node/theme (i.e. credited to a specific node) thus allowing for a decision to be made on whether to retain or delete the theme, or to make it a sub node of a similar (and more credited) node. Existing research theories were also considered when framing the first and second order themes. Following this, patterns of occurrence were then analysed. Figure 7 depicts the process adopted.

This strategy recognises the sensitisation of the author to various theories in arriving at an interpretive deductive emic approach. It is therefore accepted that in framing the questionnaire and subsequent semi structured interviews the author has to some extent influenced the direction (but not the outcome) of the interview process.

Triangulation:

Was gained through participation by both a number of client side and agency side respondents, and to some extent by the use of semi structured interviews and participant observation (detailed later in stage two) raising similar themes.

Figure 7 graphically depicts the process overview for this study and the data analysis process followed.

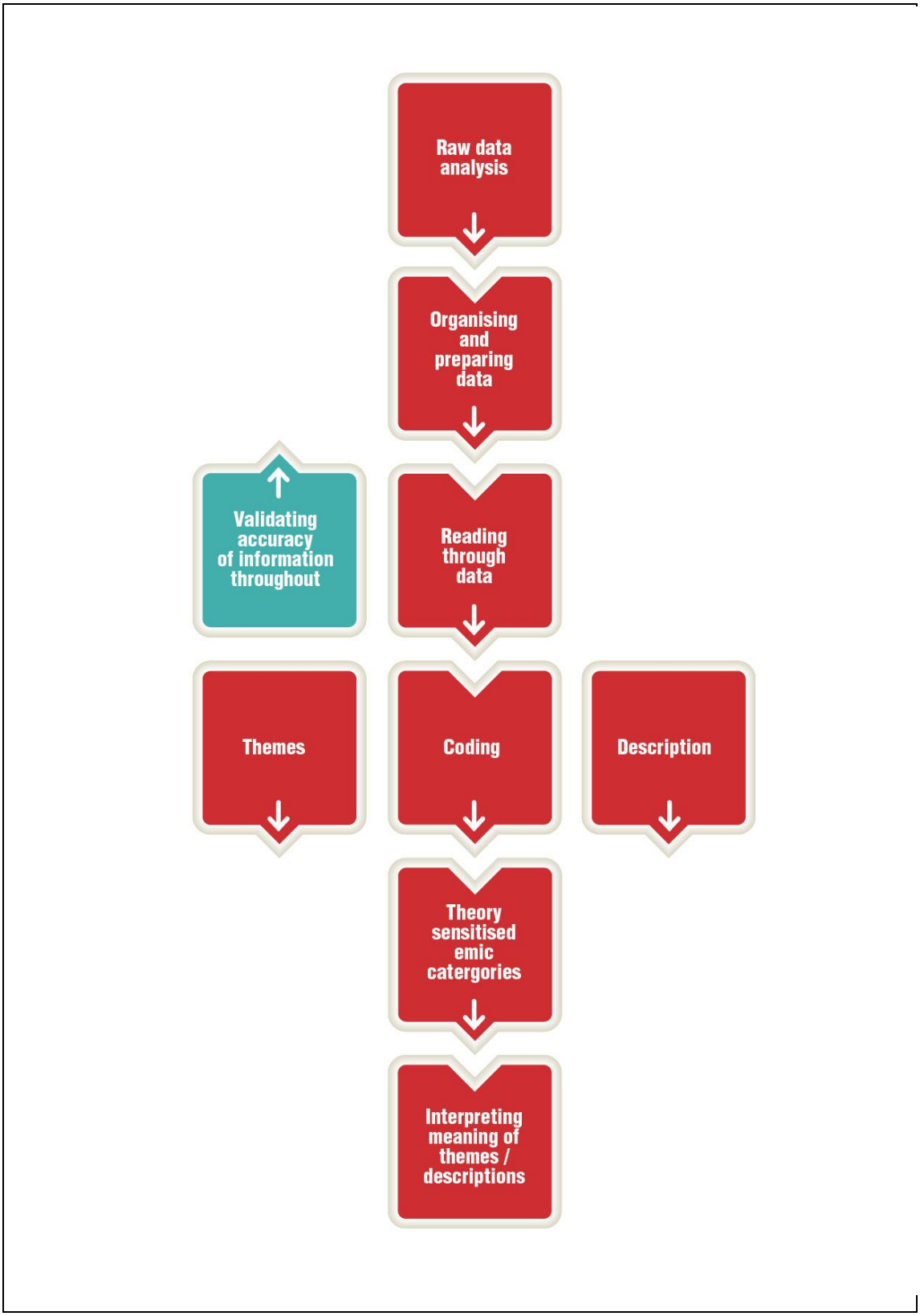


Figure 7 *Data Analysis in Qualitative Research. Based on Creswell (2009, p.185). (Author)*

3.6 STAGE TWO. PARTICIPANT OBSERVANT CASE STUDY

Stage one interviews were designed to assess views on a number of contemporary IMC issues, as well as helping to inform the structure and content of the stage two implementation case study.

As we shall see in the findings and analysis chapter, stage one semi structured interviews with client side and agency side participants yielded a number of apparent benefits, concerns and issues around the subject of IMC from both an idealistic and practical perspective. Conceptually, there were markedly different views on what IMC is and on what constitutes IMC. From a practical IMC management perspective, it was notable that many still saw IMC implementation as a single (marketing) department issue and indicated that it could be very difficult to have two functions (eg sales and marketing) or more, closely integrated.

The outcomes from stage one interviews helped to shape the approach taken in the stage two case study. It was apparent for example that some informants in stage one took the view that whilst it was ideally desirable to include sales in an IMC setting, it was perceived as challenging and difficult in reality to implement and to measure effectiveness – and informants spoke of their experiences and views. In some cases sales had simply never been considered as part of IMC until these interviews, and some informants thought it could be successful and wanted to see it tested in a live situation. This created a requirement for informants at several levels to be included in the study, something not considered vital at the outset. Therefore discussions with the stage two host company were shaped to assess if they foresaw the same issues arising as stage one (experienced) informants had suggested.

In essence, the author was in a position after the first stage to consider issues raised by informants and contrast these views with those of stage two host company management pre implementation - and then ascertain where gaps existed on all sides post implementation.

Stage two focused on a participant observant case study and examined views surrounding the provision and implementation of one specific form of IMC - and its perceived effectiveness versus previously used silo based approaches. The core methodology was participant observation combined with a series of semi structured interviews/analysis within the host organisation and within two stakeholder companies at various points over a nine month period. This author acted as the participant observer and was afforded extensive access to multiple levels of the hierarchy in each of the three companies.

The objective therefore was to carry out a participant observant case study within an organisation that was introducing sales and marketing services together under the direction and control of one outsourced agency service provider - in order to assess the impact of this direction and control on various sales, Inter Personal Relations and Inter Firm Relations - with informant perspectives from both the host organisation and agency side staff.

3.6.1 The Host Company for the On Site Case Study

Company A is Ireland's largest provider of TV services, with (at the time of this research) in excess of 600,000 homes served, out of a universe of circa 1,500,000 homes - with various TV package options which include Sports, Movie add-ons and Pay Per View options among others. The company is part of the Company A's organisation in the UK, but its offering in Ireland is somewhat more limited in that it does not offer exactly the same suite of services as offered in the UK, i.e. in Ireland there is no broadband/telephony offering available from Company A.

The company uses a number of channels to reach the consumer market, including:

Direct response advertising: This is where consumers contact Company A directly to order services in response to (typically) becoming aware of various advertising communications. The company also uses other direct response mechanisms (including post, web sign-ups for example) to drive direct acquisition.

Retail Stores: Company A is a major retailer in Ireland, and uses "permanent" kiosks in appropriate locations. These are typically in shopping centres and malls.

Venue marketing: Where short term "Pop up Retail" units sell directly to the public.

Door to Door Sales (DTD): Company A enjoys significant volumes of sales through Door to Door sales teams operating nationally.

Other methods: There are a range of other routes to market employed including the use of agents who can both install and sell services as well as an agent network that may sell Company A services alongside, i.e. electrical products in an independent retail store.

The company's marketing activity for Ireland was handled both from within Ireland and from the UK. Communications to the consumer were mostly created in the UK, whereas communications to the business sector were often created locally.

3.6.2 Case Study Overview

The case study focused on one sales intermediary organisation (Company C) that is responsible for selling Company A's services to the public. These services were venue marketing and door to door direct sales.

Historically, Company A (in Ireland) used various outsourced partners to make some of its new sales/ customer acquisitions. These intermediaries were independently owned and managed and effectively acted as agents selling on behalf of Company A. They each had their own exclusive geographic area and /or route to market.

Virtually all marketing activities to support the above approaches were carried out either from within Company A UK or from an outsourced marketing services company in Ireland. The key point is that the two functions (i.e. sales delivery and marketing creation, coordination and delivery) operated entirely separately.

This case study involved my sponsoring company (Company B) acting on behalf of Company A to provide an integrated offering of both sales and marketing and coordination services across both selected routes (in effect managing the sales intermediary), in order to assess various qualitative outcomes of this IMC management (including sales) variant delivery. Figure 8 depicts how these IMC services were delivered cohesively to the target market during the case study, by putting the potential subscriber at the centre of the sales and marketing communications strategy.

Figure 8 *Key Service Delivery Elements Using An Integrated Approach in this Case Study. (Author)*

The approach move from a dis-intermediated approach (Table 7) to a fuller form of IMC (which includes sales co ordination), see Table 8.

Table 7 illustrates the silo structure adopted (i.e. no sales and marketing integration) prior to this study, whereas Table 8 exposes the integrated approach adopted for this study.

COMPANY A MARKETING DEPARTMENT	COMPANY A SALES DEPARTMENT
Marketing Support	**Sales Activity**
Advertising	Outsourced sales team provision
Public Relations	Venue selection
Direct Marketing	Staff training
Digital Media support	Venue Sales/ Door to Door (DTD)
Sales Promotion	Programme management (Sales)
Support Collateral	

Table 7 *Previous Disintegrated Sales and Marketing Model. (Author)*

THE SPECIFIC INTEGRATED OFFERING FOR COMPANY A CASE STUDY	
Advertising	Outsourced Sales Team Selection
Public Relations	Venue Selection/Duration
Direct Marketing	Staff Training/Management
Digital Media support	Venue Sales/Segmentation
Sales Promotion	Programme Management (Sales)
Support Collateral	Staff Remuneration
Stand Design	Integrated Reporting
Sponsorship	
(All, where required, delivered/coordinated by a single integrated sales and marketing services agency. Remuneration via a combination of fixed cost recovery and performance related sales commissions).	

Table 8 *The Integrated Company A Case Study. (Author)*

3.7 STAGE TWO METHODOLOGY

The methodology for stage two involved a participant observant case study utilising a series of semi structured interviews with both client side and two separate sets of agency side informants - each using several hierarchical staff levels within each organisation.

From an intermediary perspective, the routes to market in this case study were managed by agents on behalf of Company A with marketing support coming from a separate business unit (i.e. Company B), and (of equal importance to this overall research) sales delivery coming from a separate source (Company C). Previously there was little or no coordination/interaction between companies A, B and C. The primary objective of my study was to explore client/agency IFR (Inter Firm Relations) and IPR (Inter Personal Relations) perceptions as a form of integrated/coordinated IMC (including sales) was delivered and managed by a single outsourced partner (Company B) (see Figure 9) and secondly to assess perceptions of implementation from those directly involved.

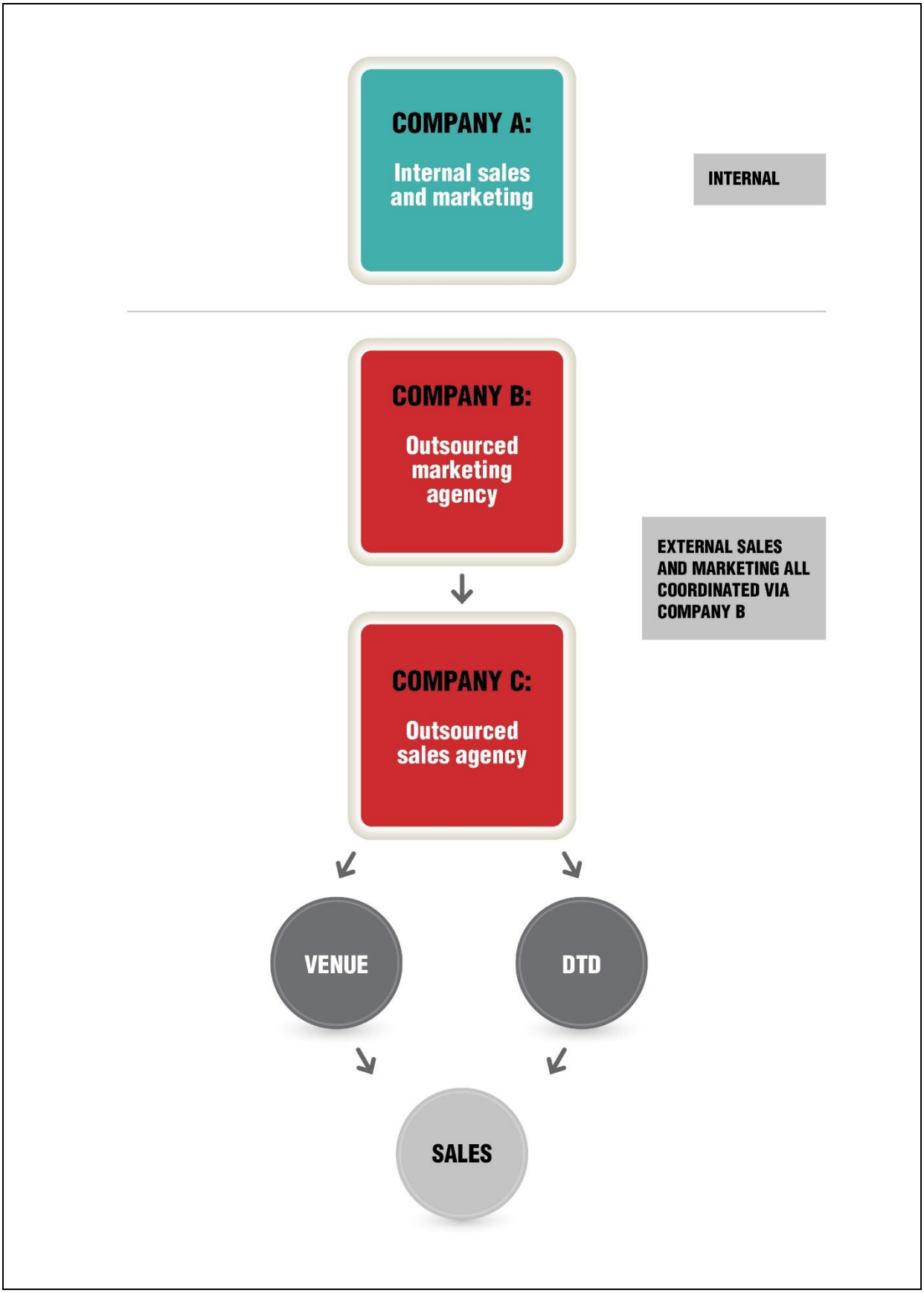


Figure 9 *Case Study Structure. (Author)*

Intermediary selected: **Company B**

Company B is a leading marketing services agency in Ireland, providing a range of IMC servi ces. The author was the Managing Director of the key subsidiary company that managed the relationship with Company A. This resulted in unique access to both Company A as well as Company C in the development of this dissertation. The author did not handle the account on a day to day basis, but was given complete access as required before, during and after the research period. Below is an extract from company B's website, which illustrates their service offering.

We want your brands and business to prosper and creativity is our tool. At xxxxx our definition of creativity extends beyond the winning of creative awards (although we do like to keep score), to the development of new ideas, products, brands and business solutions. We embrace the recession induced challenges our clients face and provide innovative solutions. We have Irish Advertising's most creative culture so we attract Ireland's most creative minds; people who in turn are available to work on your brands and challenges. At xxx we believe creativity and effectiveness go hand in hand.

Table 9 *Extract from Company B's Website, July 2014. (Author)*

Intermediary selected: **Company C.**

Company C is an authorised agent of Company A, playing a significant role for Company A by covering much of Munster, Ireland. The selection of this particular organisation was based on the unique reporting/case opportunity available, as discussed by Yin (2009).

Below is an extract from their website outlining their services and positioning, which can be contrasted with that of company B above. In essence Company B offered marketing services, whereas Company C offered sales services.

COMPANY A AUTHORISED AGENT
Company C is Company A's TV partner since 2000. Company C is based nationwide. Company C is Company A's local partner. With large scale venue hotspots and trusted local installers, you are sure to get exceptional service. *Company C has many different mediums to market: Company C has 4 permanent kiosks located in Arthur's Quay Limerick, Bridge Shopping Centre Tullamore Offaly, City Square Shopping Centre Waterford and Dungarven Waterford. Company C prides itself on their large Door to Door presence. Company C also have venue stands in many shopping centres nationwide, which is supported by Company C's Company A Roadshow promotional tour. Company C also has a fully staffed call centre in Limerick, if you have any questions or queries please call: xxx xxxxxx.*

Table 10 *Extract from Company C's website July 2012. (Author)*

The above extract illustrates how Company C describes themselves on their own website. Company C's role is to sign up new customers/subscribers (i.e. sales) and then physically install the service at the subscriber's home.

Case study period**:** May 2012 - January 2013**.** Informant views and insights are gained via a series of semi structured interviews carried out at three stages, together with the collection of considerable contemporaneous notes.

The stage two case study comprises three separate tranches of interviews each with the same informants over a nine month period.

Commencement of case study interviews: May/June 2012

Mid-point of Case study interviews: End September 2012

Post Case study interviews: January 2013

The overall stage two process is graphically represented in Table 11.

Rationale for method

The specific availability of informants within the host company represents a revelatory opportunity, Yin (2009). The complexity of both issues (including IFR and IPR) and definitions together with differing hierarchical levels of respondents in each organisation means that a case study incorporating semi structured interviews and participant observation is felt to be most appropriate.

Ethics Flowchart and checklist Submitted (see Appendix 4)

Target Audience Selection

Relevant staff members - three each from both Company A and Company B and two from Company C. Respondents work closely on the project and come from varying levels within each organisation.

Pilot Interview

To test aide memoire and flow

Informant Invitation Letters (see Appendix 1)

Used to request participation and layout guidelines

Face to Face Interviews

8 on 3 separate occasions = 24 overall, over a nine month period

Aid memoire produced to facilitate key issue coverage

Questions based on author's experience and relevant research (see Appendix 5)

Contemporaneous Notes

To be taken and collated

Analysis

Coding (supported from a database perspective via Nvivo 10 software tool) to arrive at emerged themes and prepare for author's analysis

Coding based on approaches by Cresswell (2009) and Saldana (2009)

Table 11 *Process Flow for Stage Two. (Author)*

Selection of respondents/Informants /units of analysis for Interview:

Company A x 3 Informants

Company B x 3 Informants

Company C x 2 Informants

Therefore, each of the three tranches of interviews comprises the same 8 informants.

Interviews were held with those members of staff who were directly involved with the creation, implementation, supervision and/or delivery of the outsourced programme.

These "front line" managers were approached as part of my sampling strategy to explore what Wilson (1999, p.104) terms "the realities of organisational marketing at middle and junior management levels" which includes both formal and informal (tacit) operations.

In all cases the same individuals will take part in each interview stage and this consistency helps to ensure appropriate interpretation and tracking of opinions as they evolve over a nine month period.

Participant	**Firm**	**Sector**	**Role**
Informant 1	Company A	Client	Head of sales
Informant 2	Company A	Client	Sales Controller
Informant 3	Company A	Client	Marketing & Advertising
Informant 4	Company B	Marketing Agency	Project Director
Informant 5	Company B	Marketing Agency	Account Manager
Informant 6	Company B	Marketing Agency	Data Analyst
Informant 7	Company C	Sales Agency	Managing Director
Informant 8	Company C	Sales Agency	Sales Manager

Table 12 *Participants in Stage Two Semi-structured Interviews. (Author)*

Semi-structured interview questions and aide memoire: As in stage one, questions in stage two were based on the content of prior research papers by various authors including Laurie and Mortimer, Ellis and Ybema and Kliatchcko in particular, all of whom have produced papers relevant to the various subjects of this research, (Appendix 5 contains interview questions). These papers were selected in particular as they contain highly relevant IMC subject matter and are also relevant topics for "future study", which this research was designed to address. The papers also had the benefit of sensitising the author to key themes that had arisen before.

As in stage one, all interviews were carried out by the author with the use of an aide memoire based on relevant literature. All interviews were face to face and were audio recorded and contemporaneous notes were taken. Interviews were conducted on site in the host company offices during office hours. Nvivo was used to store data. Once again, each transcript was listened to and read back to ensure accuracy. After coding, large samples of the themes were discussed with the informants to ensure the author had accurately captured informants' intended meanings. The actual coding was carried out in a similar manner to stage one.

Over the nine month period there were in excess of 205 pages of transcripts and over 105,000 words recorded, all of which were coded. In addition there were over 30 pages of contemporaneous notes taken.

The fact that this case study took place over nine months allowed for highly engaging interviews and fascinating observation possibilities, as implementation of IMC progressed. In general it was possible to ascertain the shifting perceptions of IMC and integration as it impacted upon individual roles and responsibilities. Certainly the work of Hackley (1999) and of Ellis and Ybema (2010) was highly relevant in terms of tacit operations and tensile positioning. Because the author was a participant observer for a long period, it was notable that, in this particular case, views of participants became entrenched and often seemed to centre on self preservation of individual roles and practices. In general it was noted that informants seemed to look forward to taking part and giving voice to their views and assertions.

3.8 ETHICS

The approach to rigour and relevance is in line with Yin (2009) where the author discussed validity in the context of case studies in particular. This area is discussed further in the limitations section of this dissertation in Chapter 5.

As in stage one, the approach adopted recognised the sensitisation of the author to various research theories in arriving at an interpretive emic approach. It is therefore accepted that in framing the questionnaire and subsequent semi-structured interviews, the author has to some extent influenced the direction (but not the outcome), of the interview process.

Reliability: Both stages of this research used a highly detailed protocol which is documented and which included details on study objectives, preparation of questions, collection procedures, evaluation, pattern matching and explanation building, coupled with a case study database. A full

audit trail was created to allow for a third party to examine any element of processes employed, from selection of informants through to analysis, findings and interpretation.

With regards to the protocol, the author has over 25 years highly relevant experience in the sales and marketing agency environment, working with clients throughout this time. Therefore the area of subject matter knowledge was sufficiently comprehensive. Additionally the author has been trained and is experienced in interview/observation techniques. All questions in the aide memoire were based on relevant literature and allow for flexibility in how informants are addressed. An appropriate documentation process with a self coding manual in line with Miles and Huberman (1994) was set out and adhered to including pre testing of interview aide memoires, second reading of coded scripts, comparisons between oral and printed scripts, and by taking informants through coded scripts. The approach outlined in this research adheres to the other key aspects as per Yin (2009, p.81), where he outlined the sections a case study protocol requires as: An overview of the Case Study project; Field procedure detail; Case Study questions and a guide for the Case Study report.

All data collected was recorded using audio recording equipment and then transcribed by a professional transcriber and checked for obvious transcription errors. Coding was checked by a third party to arrive at intercoding agreement as per Creswell (2009, p.191), which means that coding was checked by a third party to ensure there is agreement on coding of transcripts. These reports were then stored on NVivo 10 which allowed for a full audit trail and later segmentation and analysis by the author of all data collected. This allowed the researcher to immerse himself in the data. From an internal reliability perspective, the use of double coding was adopted.

Validity: From a construct and internal validity perspective, the approach utilised involved the use of multiple informants followed by multiple iterations of pattern matching to arrive at common themes. Face validity was also gained through the input of informants reviewing final iterations as part of an inter/post coding process to confirm my understanding and interpretation, and aiding the process of theme saturation.

A holistic overview was gained through the multiple use of both client side and agency side informants and the use of both interviews and participant observation. The use of NVivo 10 and its numeric node application effectively allowed for some quantification of this qualitative approach, accounting for patterns of occurrence at both the theme generation stage and through generated reports, which in turn allowed for thorough analysis of findings.

3.9 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to provide a methodological rationale and detail the research methodology required from this study in order to address the stated research questions/topics.

The methodological procedures adopted for sample selection, collection and analysis of informant views were also discussed in detail. Additionally this chapter has also described the various ethical considerations incorporated.

This study is broken down into two related stages, namely a series of semi structured interviews with senior client and agency personnel in order to determine attitudes and opinions to IMC (stage one) and secondly a participant observation case study (in three tranches) taking place before, during and after a period of IMC implementation, (stage two). Each stage utilises different informants/participants.

The next chapter sets out the findings and analysis of both stages of this research.

Chapter Four: Findings and Analysis

4.1 INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER

This chapter sets out the findings from both stage one exploratory interviews and stage two case study interviews. The chapter commences with findings and analysis of stage one interviews. This is followed by findings and analysis of the stage two case study, which is in itself broken down into three tranches to coincide with the timings of each of the three sets of interviews. As discussed in the previous chapter, analysis was carried out through the creation of appropriate themes and utilising a database constructed in NVivo 10. This data was then interpreted from an emic perspective, whilst also recognising the etic influence of existing literature and prior research.

For each of the three tranches of the stage two case study the following is provided:

A review of the significant patterns of occurrence of key themes: This incorporates both the number of themes and the number of times that theme occurred

A coding guide: Outlining the key terms incorporated under each theme, and detailing what each theme covered

Theme specific example quotations: From informants, coupled with summary/analytical comments

An overall summary: Summary of the case study stage informant views

There then follows an additional form of analysis(for stage two only), detailing the patterns of occurrence by each individual company over time, to illustrate whether different themes emerged, dominated or became prevalent specific to each company during the case study period.

Finally, an overall summary of the entire chapter and patterns of occurrence is provided.

The findings show that a number of perhaps expected and unexpected themes arose, but probably most significantly, that similar issues raised were understood by informants in divergent ways. Additionally the results highlight the political nature of organisational objectives and their impact on stakeholders' constructions of their role. Critically, the Stage two phase unearthed themes that did not arise in Stage one or in existing IMC research.

Quotations are (except where indicated) exact transcripts and include unintended utterances which may illustrate uncertainty. Quotations sometimes appear more than once, as they may be relevant to more than one theme.

4.2 STAGE ONE EXPLORATORY INTERVIEWS

As discussed earlier, the objectives of Stage one exploratory interviews were: To scope out key issues and themes for Stage two, potentially such as those described earlier e.g.: key stakeholder, potential structural and HR and management/ implementation issues, definitions of IMC, current views on categorisation, evaluation, compensation and the main reasons for not including sales for example.

Timeline of interviews: Each set of interviews (i.e. client and agency) took place over a six week period in 2011 and 2012.

4.3 INFORMANTS' PROFILE

Client side

Participant	**Firm**	**Sector**	**Degree of Multiple Supply***	**Role**
Informant J	Insurance	Insurance	3	Head of Sales
Informant K	Banking	Business Banking	3	Head of SME Banking
Informant L	Property Advertising	Digital Advertising	3	CEO
Informant M	Medical Company	Healthcare	3	Account Director
Informant N	Postal Service	Motor Insurance	3	Head of Marketing
Informant O	Banking	Motor Finance	3	CEO
Informant P	Gas Company	Consumer Gas /Electricity Provider	3	Head of Marketing
Informant Q	Security	Security	3	CEO

Participant	Firm	Sector	Degree of Multiple Supply*	Role
Informant R	FMCG	Brewing	3	Head of Marketing
Informant S	Banking	Retail Banking	3	Head of Marketing

Table 13 *Client side Participants in Stage One Semi structured Interviews. (Author)*

** Created via desk research to show if more than one agency is used by the client; 1 = single IMC /sales agency; 2 = single IMC agency; 3 = multiple agencies. Based on checklist approach by Laurie and Mortimer (2011, p.1471) and Duncan and Moriarty (1998, P.9).*

Agency side

Participant	Firm	Sector	Level of Integration*	Role
Informant A	Advertising	Agency	2	CEO
Informant B	Advertising	Agency	2	CEO
Informant C	Digital	Agency	6	CEO
Informant D	Advertising	Agency	2	CEO
Informant E	TTL	Agency	2	CEO
Informant F	TTL	Agency	2	Head of Unit
Informant G	Advertising/digital	Agency	6	CEO
Informant H	Advertising	Agency	4	CEO

Table 14 *Agency Side Participants in Stage One Semi structured Interviews. (Author)*

** Created via content desk research of agency marketing literature/sites 1 = total integration including sales; 2 = total integration excluding sales; 3 = total integration via subsidiaries; 4 = total integration via third parties; 5 = partial integration offering; 6 = specialist in one or more disciplines. Based on checklist approach by Laurie and Mortimer (2011, p.1471) and Duncan and Moriarty (1998, P.9). TTL = Through the Line, meaning multiple services).*

4.4 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS – EXPLORATORY INTERVIEWS

4.4.1 Client Side

First Order Themes: The First Order Theme column in Table 15 has been constructed based on an aggregation of popular areas/themes. The objective here was to include those themes that had recurred frequently during the interviews.

Second Order Themes: This content was created as the result of a process of distilling and grouping together common themes, thus allowing for analysis based on this commonality. This effectively means that all frequently recurring themes are analysed in conjunction with other similar themes, as per Creswell (2009, p.186).

***Client side Interviews* - Patterns of Occurrence**

First and second order themes are shown below. The listing order is not significant. Patterns of occurrence include the number of individual informants raising a specific theme (shown as "X"), and the number of times a theme was raised (shown as "Y").

First Order Themes	Second Order Themes	Patterns of Occurrence X = Number of informants Y = Number of occurrences
IMC Definitions\TTL excl sales. IMC Definitions\TTL inc sales. IMC Definitions general	IMC Definitions	X9 Y42
Agency Structure One Agency Ideal. Agency Structure. Multiple Agencies. Host Organisation Issues. Host Organisational Structure. Positive to IMC. Host organisation separate functions	Agency Structure Issues	X 9 Y 28

First Order Themes	Second Order Themes	Patterns of Occurrence X = Number of informants Y = Number of occurrences
Full Integration Negatives. Full Integration Positives. Unified Message Content. Single ATL concept. Single v multiple creative. Integrating Sales Negatives	Full Integration Issues	X 5 Y 16
Commercial Model Risk & Reward Measurement excl Sales. Measurement Lead Generation. Measurement qualified lead generation. Measurement Sales. Measurement difficulties. Measurement: New approaches wanted. Measurement: Traditional Measurement issues	Commercial issues	X 9 Y 50
Credibility of Agency in providing full suite of services. Credibility offering issue. Credibility of offering Digital. Credibility of Agency in providing PR. Credibility Offering no issue	Risk and Credibility	X9 Y32

Table 15 *Client side Patterns of Occurrence. (Author)*

Initial coding yielded 30 first order themes which were ultimately distilled into five final themes, which are analysed below.

Agency Structure Issues: This theme concerns how agencies and clients are currently structured, and how this affects operations. It also addresses client perceptions of how agencies in particular could/should be structured to deliver an IMC offering, such as via a single company or a range of connected companies for example.

A single agency was seen as the most desirable organisational structure although a sizeable minority preferred multiple agency service delivery. The view below illustrates some of the key points raised. In essence the informant indicates that it appears to make sense to integrate sales and marketing but that traditional agencies struggle to do this effectively or even offer it as part of their mix, so many clients simply choose what is commonly available.

"I think there are a number of agencies who would have a sales arm or a sales division, but it tended to be a standalone entity and separate as distinct from integrated and …. from an integrated marketing point of view I think traditional agencies have struggled a little bit with how to bolt on and more importantly how to integrate the online piece, the sales activity tended to be a separate piece bolted-on on top of that again so I think there is, um, I think there is a gap in terms of how sales activity is cleanly co-ordinated and integrated in an overall end to end experience as there would be from an online and social networking point as well" Informant J, Head of Sales, Insurance Company.

This theme also incorporates views on issues that clients may expect to face if they were to appoint a full service IMC agency including sales, and therefore incorporates issues of organisation structure. It also includes views on having separate sales and marketing functions or if complex opaque work practices would have a negative effect on implementing IMC.

Half of the informants indicated that they had issues with IMC including sales from a structural perspective, as they currently operated sales and marketing in separate silos but still viewed IMC including sales as conceptually positive. The view below however highlighted that it was possible, depending on the host company structure, to deliver integrated sales and marketing activities, and that a single agency partner (rather than multiple partners) would be desirable.

Researcher: Is it problematic for a client company to integrate sales and marketing internally?

"No. Not necessarily, um, again it depends on the corporations' makeup, but, um, I've seen that work very well, absolutely. I've seen that work very well where the field sales force in its entirety with the exception of the director, the director was employed by the company, all of the field sales were outsourced and then the marketing was done by somebody else. If the same agency could do

the marketing as well, then I think that the bit would be quite compelling to me" Informant K, Head of SME Banking, Retail Bank.

Commercial issues: This theme focuses on the financial aspects of IMC from a client perspective, and includes informant views on agency remuneration, attribution, sales inclusion in remuneration as well as behaviour versus output based remuneration mechanics.

There was a strong desire to see sales included in commercial evaluation and to see more measurements of agency performance. Currently lead generation as a measurement method was utilised by some informants. When examining current practice it appears that agencies are measured mostly on behaviours and to a lesser extent on outputs, according to informants.

The commercial integration of sales and marketing was seen as positive. The concept of risk and reward commercial models was also overwhelmingly supported. The view articulated below from a client side informant shows that there is a desire to integrate not only sales and marketing but also to consider integrated remuneration by linking outcomes to remuneration.

When asked if a single agency offering sales and marketing was feasible...

"well first of all I think that would be quite an exciting proposition actually, um, I think the key thing which the agency would need to demonstrate is we are going to do this marketing for you, this advertising, this promotion for you and we are also going to run your field sales, we are going to run your direct sales, your telesales and therefore I think that you could end up with a model whereby the agency does get paid by performance, eh, of their sales guys, for the performance of their sales guys, driven by the effectiveness of their marketing so in a way I think that could be quite compelling" Informant K, Head of SME Banking, Retail Bank.

Full integration issues: The area of full integration covers informant assertions on what issues a client could expect to consider if implementing a full integration policy whereby a single agency may be responsible for the "full" range of marketing and possibly sales services.

There was an overwhelmingly positive view of integrating marketing and sales. This appears to somewhat refute the work of Cornelissen and Locke (2000) and supports that of Schultz (1996), Schultz and Kitchen (2000) and Kliatchko (2005), the former who stated that IMC is far from a short term fad or management fashion.

One informant, when speaking about potential issues an agency could have in moving from a single discipline to a multiple discipline scenario spoke only of the positives, in terms of how it would be easier to reward an agency based on performance if it were carrying out all of the activities.

"You know it could be a way of addressing, um, the issue I spoke about in the last question regards companies and how difficult it is with so many variables to reward based on the marketing of the agency so I think actually that could be quite compelling" Informant K, Head of SME Banking, Retail Bank.

Unified message content was seen as a key benefit of IMC. This refers to the perceived benefit of ensuring that a single strategic or creative approach could be effectively maintained across all communications channels.

On the negative side full integration including sales was seen as positive but difficult to deliver, possibly relating to credibility/measurement issues discussed later.

IMC Definitions*:* Informant views collated under this theme incorporate comments on how IMC is perceived by clients in terms of its definition and what services are included. Informants currently see Integrated Marketing Communications as excluding sales, and (for the most part) being made up of advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, possibly PR, and digital services. Informants also defined IMC as delivering message and sales unification, an example being:

"Integrated marketing to me is very much the consolidation of the end to end activity where the above the line and the below the line represent the sort of activity and the strategic marketing objectives in the organisation. What that would mean is that the full effect of any single campaign of activity is reflected through a very definite programme of support in the above the line from the TV, radio, press, poster, for example, through online execution, through below the line activity whether that's direct mail or email which can then be followed up and supported by sales activity in an integrated end to end manner. It would be compelling to me" Informant J, Head of Sales, Insurance Company.

Risk and credibility*:* Related to the theme above, views below centre on levels of perceived risk a client may feel in selecting and choosing an agency, and on how credible it is for agencies to offer a wide range of services including sales.

"Well I suppose in that you know you are a "jack of all trades and master of none". That's the biggest possible negative that there is there. The other thing is that when you are dealing with other agencies it keeps each agency on their toes I suppose, you know, they know that not all the pieces of

the pot are in with them so there is that element of it" Informant N, Head of Marketing, Postal Service.

The credibility of an agency offering all integrated services was seen as a major issue with the majority of informants stating that there were capability issues in the delivery of IMC, and this was without including sales, the inclusion of which respondents indicated would have widened the credibility gap.

In short, perceived risk and/or credibility issues were considered to be key issues and a barrier to the use of IMC and even more so for use of IMC including sales.

4.4.1.1 Interpretation and Discussion

As was possibly expected at the outset, client organisation informants have contrasting views on a number of areas – indeed in some cases interviewees contradicted themselves when full transcripts were analysed. An example of this was informants not believing IMC should include sales, yet wanting measurement or evaluation to include sales. This means the agency would be evaluated on something it has little control or direct influence over, a key driver of the Hunter TBA (Tyre, battery and accessory) Study (Narayandas 2002), where integration of sales and marketing through a single outsourced partner proved successful, in effect a form of what is sometimes called "closed loop marketing" where all integrated elements are measured.

In the main, this element of the exploratory research indicated that there is a desire for IMC and that the structure of how an agency delivered it was not overly important, i.e. via one company or several satellites. It was however implied that if delivery was to be by satellites, then one core delivery team would be desirable to aid management. This aligns closely with the findings of Novelli (1989-90), where he suggested that the role of relationship management was frequently seen as the key issue.

The biggest criticism of IMC was that as it includes many services, it was felt that in most cases credibility/service delivery was an issue, i.e. can a group deliver "best in breed " services across several disciplines? Whether this is a transitional issue that will dissipate as "traditional" agency personnel become more skilled in (e.g.) digital strategy, is difficult to answer at this point. Also much research exists, such as that by Polos, Hannan and Carroll (2010) to show that the consolidation of an industry (such as marketing communications) may actually spawn specialists, and this would have an effect, one assumes, on agency selection by client companies as specialists are often seen to offer superior services to generalists.

On whether sales should be factored into IMC as Naryandas (2002) suggested, views were divided, with those against integration highlighting issues of operational difficulties as a key factor, and also, perhaps tellingly, that they had not been offered it before by an agency. On the other hand, interviewees from a Sales Director role seemed to be quite adamant that this was the way ahead, as a lack of integration was felt keenly by them in customer facing roles. From a theoretical perspective, Narver and Slater's work (1990, p.21) regarding "coordinated efforts" is supported here, in that possibly a key factor in not proceeding with IMC is the vertical silo structure of departments within companies (which makes inter departmental and intercompany collaboration more difficult) rather than any firm lack of belief that it would not be more efficient or effective.

Commercially things were much clearer, with the majority of respondents strongly asserting that measurements and payments should include a strong reference to outcomes, including sales. Also remuneration models that included a risk/reward element were seen as strongly desirable. This is particularly interesting when one considers a practical reluctance to allow sales integration coupled with a desire to reward agencies based on sales.

On the whole, informant views suggest a strong demand for integration of IMC including sales, particularly once issues such as credibility and perceived risk are resolved.

Generally, informant assertions certainly concurred with those of Polos, Hannan and Carroll (2010) on the area of categorisation - and the lack of defined boundaries in this fragmented market was clear. The uncertainty in defining IMC coupled with positive views towards it exhibited by informants appeared to indicate that informants were open to experimenting with which services to include.

The perceived benefits of integration were almost always seen as clear and revolved around a link between improved performance metrics, message unification and a method of facilitating a change in agency compensation.

4.4.2 Agency Side

First Order Themes: The First Order Theme column in Table 16 below has been constructed based on an aggregation of popular areas/themes. Again the objective here was to include those themes that had recurred frequently during the interviews.

Second Order Themes: Once again, this content was created as a result of a process of distilling and grouping together common themes, thus allowing for analysis based on this commonality.

Agency side Interviews - Patterns of Occurrence

First and Second Order Themes are shown below. The listing order is not of significance, but the discussion later also follows in the same order. Patterns of occurrence include the number of individual informants raising a specific theme (shown as "X"), and the number of times a theme was raised (shown as "Y").

First Order Themes	**Second Order Themes**	**Patterns of Occurrence** **X = Number of informants** **Y = Number of occurrences**
Message unification, strategic issue, definition comes from client, definition unclear to client	IMC Definitions	X 7 Y 18
Internal barriers to IMC, Host company structural issues, Use of external planners	Structure	X 4 Y 7
Specialists positive, specialists negative, technology as driver of specialisation	Specialists	X 6 Y 9
Managing multiple agencies an issue, single agency advantages, collaboration issues	Management	X 7 Y 16
IMC including sales and excluding sales	Sales Integration	X 8 Y 24
Better measurement needed, IMC and performance	Measurement	X 7 Y 15
Risk reward desirable, risk reward negatives, commercial issues	Remuneration	X 8 Y 18
Credibility issues in service delivery, categorisation	Credibility	X8 Y29

Table 16 *Agency side patterns of occurrence. (Author)*

IMC Definitions: Informant views on this area yielded two topics of particular relevance to this research.

Firstly, there were assertions that IMC is no longer about the desire to ensure that message content is unified across all media, but had now moved on to viewing IMC as a strategic issue, in line with Laurie and Mortimer (2011, p.1476), Duncan and Moriarty (1998), Schultz and Kitchen (2000) and Kliatchko (2008) – thereby moving from tactical unified message content to IMC as a matter of key strategic importance to a company, implying that company structure frequently needs to change in order to embrace IMC fully. These assertions are captured in the following two quotes:

"I think it's evolved, okay. I think initially people thought integrated meant that it looked and sounded the same so whether you bumped in; and some people unfortunately still think like that; um, so if you see a TV ad and you hear a radio commercial and you see a piece of point to sell a pact design that you could tell they were all in the same theme, um, but I think smarter companies are kind of looking at it now that it's not the execution that should be integrated, but the thinking and the strategy so that on a single insight around a consumer or several insights that the commercial communication and the commercial strategy, so how the salesmen work, how things are designed is related back to that insight. It doesn't mean it all has to look and sound the same. It means that each one of them is based, I think, on an integrated thought" Informant B,CEO, Advertising Agency.

"Making all of you know, a brand's communications work to a common purpose" Informant D,CEO, Advertising Agency.

Another area of interest relates to the theme above, in that it focuses on the areas of structural requirements, either within an agency or a client company, or if a campaign is being created and implemented by a number of agencies, and informants generally had suggestions how requirements could be addressed, as illustrated below:

"Um, I suppose it all involves breaking down some of those traditional barriers between the various, I suppose, elements of the promotional mix so in the past you would have various agencies or internal teams working in silos, but then, I suppose, integration method means that you can link learnings and there is greater cost effectiveness and efficiencies derived from breaking down those barriers so that you'd have collaborator teams or collaborative agencies" Informant F, Head of Unit, Healthcare Agency.

It was also apparent that with an increasing number of disciplines it was becoming more difficult for a single agency to deliver IMC from its own resources, and sometimes therefore IMC definitions in

practice alter, i.e. two clients (or agencies) may perceive IMC as integrating a different range of disciplines, as articulated below:

"It's a bit of a cliché, um, to be honest, um, and I think it means different things to different people, um, what we see, and I only talk about what we see, um, is that, um, everybody kind of understood how the marketing communications world worked and it was possible to get good integration and the arrival of digital now has thrown an extra element into that and companies, and clients in particular, are struggling to get that integration so I believe in a company's need to do it; we don't offer it as a full service, but if you've got a brand you need to make sure that everything that you're doing is integrated and one of the challenges that we see is that companies are finding it more difficult now to get that integration than they did before because there are elements and specialist activities that are not readily available in the companies that traditionally provided that full integration" Informant C, CEO, Digital Agency.

Structure: The structural issues surrounding IMC were the focus of this theme. Client silo structures were seen as a structural barrier to IMC delivery.

"Yeah I think there is in that internally they usually have people who are somewhat specialist in a particular discipline so it's very rare in organisations that they have an integrated marketing function themselves which is why, you know, they generally have people who are running a number of third party organisations that are providing, you know..." Informant B, CEO, Advertising Agency.

Another structural issue surrounded the personnel available who truly understand IMC both client and agency side operations. The quote below illustrates this point and perhaps indicates that this may be a temporary phase:

"...rightly pointed out at the beginning of the conversation, what are we trying to deliver and I think there is, I still think in Ireland there is, well I don't know what the agency experience is, but there is quite a difficulty in making digital. Okay so making it profitable and making it commercially cause it's quite, the clients whatever about trying to create a brief for creative for an ad campaign to try and write a digital brief for a web SEO/something else, they're not that, the traditional client market here is they're not that, you know, some of them don't even do email. My senior, senior marketing people, um, they don't write anything down, you know, old school, so for them to get their head around the architecture on a web site and what you want to do to drive traffic there and so it is quite challenging for an agency to be" Informant H, CEO, Advertising Agency.

The assertions and views on the use of external planners "orchestrating" (Schultz, 2012, p.2) implementation agencies (such as advertising, sales, DM, SEO for example) was seen as being potentially valuable. In effect this separates strategic planning and possibly communications planning, from creative processes and the delivery of services.

"Bringing them together to work together. Now ironically enough out of all the disciplines I think that could actually work. I think it's the one that could actually work. Um we've already got one very good and a few other players in the area in Ireland, but if you are working in a very transparent way with some of these let's call them strategic thinking agencies, planning agencies, and they don't get involved in any sort of creative execution on output whatsoever; it's just a rule they don't do it, then I think that can be very clean cause it can be handed to you with integrity" Informant E, CEO, Advertising Agency - on the topic of "Planning Specialists".

Specialists: It was interesting to see the various attitudes toward specialists, and to gauge any underlying trends. Some informants saw specialism as equating to a higher level of specific skills, whereas others viewed specialism as meaning clients had to shop around to create a campaign and that this was becoming less and less attractive to clients.

"We wouldn't see ourselves as being integrated merchants. We would see ourselves as being a player in digital and our heritage is in digital and direct, so we wouldn't offer the full scope of advertising, above the line, through the line, that wouldn't be ours, but understand the concept and would work with partners sometimes when that's required.

Researcher: "*Right, so you'd kind of structure yourselves as more of a specialist."*

Informant C, CEO, Digital Agency.: "*Correct. Absolutely."*

A different perspective was that specialists were not really needed if measurement and attribution could be figured out correctly, and this was now possible.

"To a point, um and again this is where the whole integrated piece needs to be very well understood because, um, you know, certain channels, um, the effect of those can be much more easily tracked than other channels which doesn't mean that the other channels that can't be so easily tracked haven't had a major contribution to it so until, you know, the cumulative effect of communications, you know, can be worked out and that was always the DM ghettos" Informant B, CEO, Advertising Agency.

A contrary perspective was that the sheer volume of new delivery tools makes a true single IMC delivery company quite rare.

"All the traditional channels or elements in the marketing mix, um, and now including digital, but, um, digital has its own kind of full service offering as well so digital is further fragmented; you've kind of got an asterisks of the traditional aspects of the marketing mix and then one of those is fragmented further into another asterisks of digital offerings so, I suppose, a truly integrated marketing solution has to be a full service and integrated digital solution as part of an overall solution, and then it gets a little bit more complicated because of the ubiquitous growth of digital so that the way that it's pervading into all of the other elements of the mix. So you now have digital outdoor, you now have digital PR, um, and other elements, um, but I suppose that's a sign of the times rather than, eh, eh, that's more about the tools rather than the integrated nature of marketing" Informant G, CEO, Digital Agency.

Management: Once again the area of intercompany turf wars arose under this theme. Whilst overtly, these turf wars were discussed as focussing on IMC being delivered by multiple agencies, it could also be argued that this happens both with unrelated companies working together and companies that are connected to an international group.

Researcher: "What happens when a client employs five or six agencies and they're all sitting around the table if they are…?"

"*Gosh that's really interesting. When it works, it works effectively when, um, integrated marketing solutions work most effectively when addressed by multiple agencies when the relationship between the agencies is very strong, eh, eh, the individuals who are working around the table is very strong full of respect and integrity and, eh, eh, and when demarcation lines are set*" Informant G, CEO, Digital Agency.

"Unfortunately the way agencies were set up, you have the below the line old fashioned term competing with the design agency competing and everyone with the same budget and the clients were basically refereeing and one division would win over the other one to try and get the business and then the P.R. and sales promotion team of which I was a part I would say "well we'll do your advertising as well and try to take the revenue in through their department if you like. So the silo approach in agencies doesn't necessarily lend itself to getting that seamless integration unless you have a really brilliant client and a really brilliant kind of key person leading the business " Informant E, CEO, Advertising Agency.

Trust also arose as a management issue, referring to the inter company relationship required between clients and its lead agency. This arose in terms of information sharing and could also relate to remuneration and measurement.

"I think that from an internal point of view they need to decide from the outset ...how integrated their offering is going to be so I think confidentiality agreements and so on would have to be put in place to allow the company to give the agency everything they would need to really plan a strategic and measurable integrated campaign and I think most companies are quite reticent to really bring an agency in to be an extension of their internal team and to have an effective integrated campaign you really do need some of the insights that only the internal staff have. So I think it's a lot around openness and sharing and collaboration" Informant F, Head of Unit, Healthcare Agency.

Sales Integration: It was apparent from informant views and assertions that the inclusion of sales both as a campaign objective and an income tool was now increasingly possible (and standard) due to the increasing usage of digital technologies which allowed IMC agencies to create and execute a sale on behalf of a client/brand.

An example of this is the informant views below, where sales are seen as a key part of the IMC offering. Interestingly, the hesitancy in discussing IMC content is perhaps indicative of a lack of certainty about what is/should be included, particularly with regard to sales:

Researcher: Would you describe xxx as an Integrated Marketing Company?

"*Yes in the new sense of the word. So what we'd see ourselves, we'd no longer see ourselves as a full service digital marketing agency; we'd see ourselves as a marketing agency, um, that understands new consumer behaviour well, because that consumer behaviour, because we have a provenance in digital technologies because the changes we've seen in consumer behaviour."* Informant G, CEO, Digital Agency.

Researcher: Are sales a big part of the conversation with clients typically?

"Well for us it's about core business problems or issues, um, or objectives, eh, and our clients would be split into two; one who are looking at driving sales through awareness and engagement and the others who are looking to drive direct sales. So the conversation is always about sales. The measurability and accountability of digital is really good" Informant G, CEO, Digital Agency.

A slightly different view was put forward by an informant, who pointed out that for her company, sales were not a measure of agency performance (as they completed sales themselves in house) but lead generation was:

"...it usually does, but it varies from category to category and indeed from brand to brand so, um, you know, certain service, eh, industries would have a very strong sales focus, um, so if it's generating calls into a call centre or to a company and so on. So they look at that very closely in terms of all the different metrics around the number of calls they get and the cost per call and conversion rate, eh, of that. In other categories it's about lesson where it's about, um, you know, just trying to move on brands, keep the eyes on and it's, you know, a number of steps removed from the, you know, from the sales process" Informant B, CEO, Advertising Agency.

Measurement: A number of interesting views emerged, and it was apparent that sales measurement is becoming more prevalent in evaluating IMC delivery.

"Absolutely so I think what agencies are going to see more of because it's our experience is that we've seeing more sales people in meetings. So as an agency we have more access and we've seen sales people – everything from directors all the way down through to individual sales people who might have responsibility for the sector or for a product – in briefing meetings, um, in meetings where we are presenting proposals, um, cause a lot of the time you need that specialist knowledge within a company to come directly to the agency and, um, we 'vet done work over the last year for a client whereby we have helped them to get internal integration between their marketing and sales organisation" Informant C, CEO, Digital Agency.

Agencies were also keen to see greater accountability in general and to equate their income to performance.

"That's what we do as an industry we allow ourselves to be sidelined because we're not accountable, you know, we've spoken with clients (this is going back seventeen years, literally seventeen years) about the fact that we have put one hundred per cent of our fee at risk for substantial bonus" Informant E, CEO, Advertising Agency.

What also emerged was a view that whilst some form of output based income is desired, actually finding the right measurement tools can be easy or difficult depending on the industry sector. Coupled with this was a view that greater transparency from client organisations was required in order to prove results.

"We have a client at the moment (a small client). We're saying right you spent money on advertising, um, you know two years ago, are you thinking of coming back into the market; they've been quiet for a while, so now tell me, you did it the last time, what I 'd say to them what did you learn the last time, did it work, did the internal people think it was good, did they help the sales effort and I think when you start exploring with clients, "so do you want it to drive sales" and they'll all probably nod to that absolutely, or do you want when you do your tracking that people don't think your brand is in great shape now, but in six months time or in twelve months' time after spending a certain amount of money, so you have to almost give them all the things marketing could do" Informant H, CEO, Advertising Agency.

Remuneration: This was a key area during these agency interviews, as informants frequently referred to a desire to see remuneration methods change.

Pay for performance (PPF) was frequently referred to, but informants had differing views on how this could work practically.

"There are lots of models out there which are really interesting. We have a number of clients that work at P.R like print or something like that and really at the end of the day it's like kind of, um, it's never really, I mean it's been interesting, but to what degree it works for the client and to what degree it works for us I'm not sure. Um, but there are very interesting models, direct sales models that are linked to the agencies in London who have direct sales models that are linked to commission and that's really interesting so they effectively become a kind of a reseller of the client's product which, eh, which is a really interesting way of looking at things, and, and I'm interested in that; we're not built for it, but as a kind of academic model it's very interesting" Informant G, CEO, Digital Agency.

Additionally, views emerged on how the client/agency relationship could be on firmer footing if sales and marketing were tied together:

"Yeah but there must be benefits to it too because you know it ties you in as a partner, a sales partner or a reseller or a, um, and it's a shared success then and so your client tenure must improve and you know it's a really interesting model" Informant G, CEO, Digital Agency.

Some of the informants also referred to the concept of output models in general, discussing these in terms of being paid for outputs rather than behaviours such as client service time input.

"Yeah. Um, I mean I'd be very much in favour of that because the vast majority remuneration is done, um, on the basis of hours these days. So you do a scope of work, come up with the number of

hours, times and amount of people there, department charge out rates and there you go that's your fee. As everybody knows or at least claims to know the relationship between the hours put in and the work that comes out in our business, you know, there is very little relationship. So you can do something in an hour or you can do something in a week. ... So anything in my view which recognises the value of what we do as opposed to the cost of providing it, um, is correct and at the moment it's based on cost of provision rather than value of services." Informant D, CEO, Advertising Agency.

The practicality of delivering services based on either PFP or outputs/outcomes in general, was discussed. A key issue that emerged was that measurement/attribution was often difficult when considering sales, but that with the use of digital technologies progress was being made.

Researcher: "There appears to be some reluctance to consider PFP models?"

"I think justifiably John to be honest with you because while it's an idealistic view, perhaps to say look we want to be accountable for the work that we're doing and therefore take the risk, but also take the reward. It does need a match client side so there are clients who will say "Oh great we'll allow you to put 10% at risk or 20% at risk or 30% at risk," but the integrity and the transparency that's brought to it from their side from a measurement prospective it's not always that easy to do. So far example, um, handling HB Ice creams, um, something chaotic goes on with the weather. No matter how amazing your programme is if we get the winter in the middle of summer that's going to have a dramatic effect. So, putting 30% arguably of your revenue at risk where no, there's no context of that. It's very dangerous so you know I think a more scientific version of it would help everybody" Informant E, CEO, Advertising Agency.

Credibility: An interesting area to emerge from this theme concerned how credible it was for an agency to offer full IMC services at a time when it appears that the number of new disciplines is still increasing. There were perceptions from clients and agencies that agencies were not necessarily experts in some of the disciplines that they sold. A typical response is detailed below in response to the question *"Do you think that clients generally find it confusing as to which agencies can offer which services?" - "Absolutely, absolutely and I think it's even worse these days. You've got to remember at the same time that the clients are already coming up to speed on digital as well you know and the interesting thing about digital is that once you learn an aspect of it you think you know it if you know what I mean. It's quite difficult to explain, but I suppose it's like you know when you make your first ad you think you're an advertiser, but after ten years you know a lot more than you did in those early years and so clients are really coming up to speed on it as well and therefore you*

sometimes have you know you'll find yourself in a room with the blind and the partially sighted leading the partially sighted and vice versa" Informant G, CEO, Digital Agency.

"It's because they're identifying maybe one of the key problems in creating truly integrated communications, which is you can be a "Jack of all Trades" and a "Master of None" and the difficulty with integration is that you need to be a "Jack of all Trades" which by definition means you are a "Master of None". If you come at it from a digital perspective naturally as a digital negative and I hate that word, um, you're preoccupied with that digital integration being the primary platform. If you're coming at it from a traditional point of view, your preoccupied with the advertising idea, um so the reason it won't work is because clients can't integrate the team who are there to create the integration if you know what I mean" Informant D, CEO, Advertising Agency.

Agencies were also aware that clients were concerned about "turf wars" that took place between multiple agencies brought together to deliver an IMC solution. These intercompany battles were seen as negative by all partners. An example is the informant view below:

"...but that would be very easy selling to the client to be able to do all of that and have everything working of the, you know, off the same platform, um, but even with, you know, organisations that have separate companies of specialists, effectively they're in competition with each other, you know, so having worked in those sort of organisations, if you were representing one part of it you were still fighting – it just happens to be a sibling that you're fighting with for the budget as opposed to a non related agency" Informant B, CEO, Advertising Agency.

4.4.2.1 Interpretation and Discussion

There appeared to be greater consensus between agency informants than with the client informants discussed earlier.

Many similar themes emerged such as - credibility; IMC definitions; sales integration and measurement. These were issues also highlighted by Hackley (2010, loc.6323), where he also discussed the practicalities of agency integration for both the client and the agency.

From a credibility perspective, agency informants exhibited doubts as to both how adept clients were in assessing agency capability. Their views indicated that clients in general were finding it difficult to assess which agencies offered best in breed services. Perhaps unsurprisingly, some of the informants also complained that agencies were guilty of overpromising on their own capability to deliver IMC.

Informants also indicated that they were increasingly accepting that they could not employ directly staff with all the skills to deliver IMC, but saw themselves offering core services and contracting in other services as necessary, thus delivering IMC via an orchestration approach.

From a remuneration perspective there was generally a welcoming of the development of a closer relationship between income and behaviour, but with a recognition that measurement techniques were perhaps not yet sufficiently developed to establish cause and effect accurately.

Generally there was agreement that the inclusion of sales in an IMC mix was positive, once the above measurement and attributions could be addressed. Interestingly, agencies did not see the integration of sales into IMC as challenging from an implementation point of view.

From an IMC definitional perspective it was apparent that agency informants in general held the view that IMC was no longer about message unification, but at the same time there were few informant views articulating IMC as a strategic issue, e.g. (Kliatchcko, 2008) and Laurie and Mortimer (2011). This lack of definition and categorisation appears to support the work of Polos, Hannan and Carroll (2010) in that there does not appear to be clear IMC boundaries hence the content of IMC is seen differently by many people.

From an IMC delivery perspective, agency informants generally indicated that it was possible to orchestrate a number of specialist providers with the use of a “lead agency” approach, although most acknowledged that “turf wars” were common.

Organisational structure was also discussed and informants from the agency side generally indicated that true IMC could only be delivered effectively if clients and agencies had similar structures - which supports the work of Narver and Slater (1990, p.21) where they referred to a requirement of “coordinated creation of customer value”.

On the related topic of implementation, agencies saw no specific difficulties in offering IMC services or in implementing IMC including sales. It appears that the levels of change that an organisation may need to incur internally in order to maximise the potential benefits of sales and marketing integration may be significant – and result in interpersonal and inter organisation relationship change.

Informants asserted that the client/agency interface as a result of IMC is often more complex as the number of disciplines and providers increases and this means that effective boundary spanning roles are vital and at the same time more complex.

In common with client side views, the perceived benefits of integration were almost always seen as clear and revolved around a link between improved performance metrics, message unification and a method of facilitating a change in agency compensation.

One insight that was unearthed was that it may well be the case that many client organisations had never considered full integration including sales before, and therefore had few if any reference points. Therefore, clients and agencies both welcomed the inclusion of sales, but had relatively little experience in using it and had concerns about measurement.

Finally, the credibility of agencies providing all IMC services arose as an issue, particularly as the number of services appears to be increasing.

4.5 CASE STUDY - Implementation of a Form of Outsourced IMC including Sales

As outlined in chapter three, outcomes from stage one interviews helped to shape the approach to the stage two case study. Specific areas that were added to the semi structured interviews after stage one included: Sales integration, integrated measurement and IFR/IPR, all of which proved to be important to informants and not examined in existing IMC research. This did not mean that stage one informants had necessarily experienced these areas in an IMC context, but when probed, informants indicated that they could be areas for consideration.

Case Study Informants

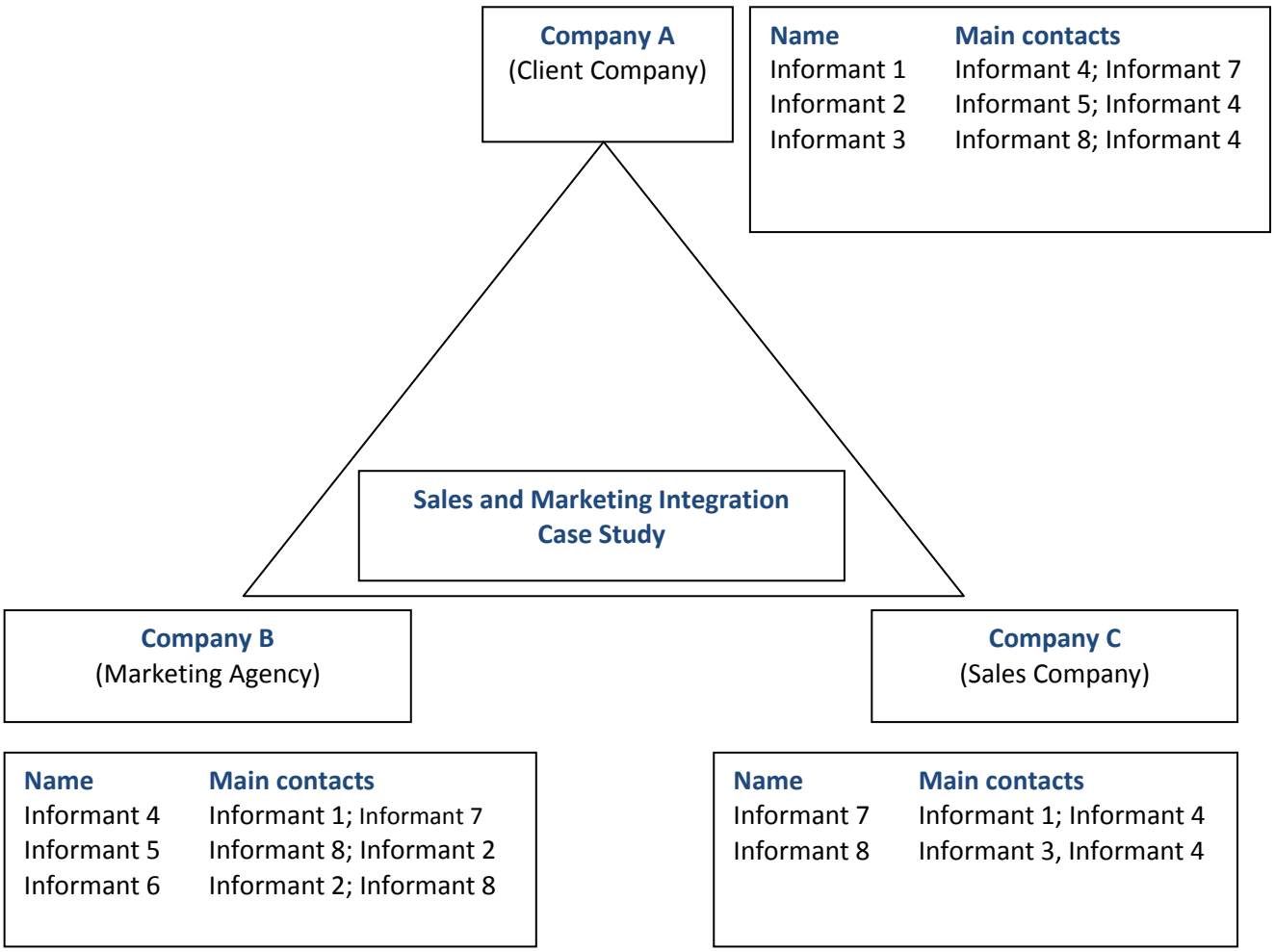


Figure 10 *Informant Network Relationships. (Author)*

Researcher involvement: The researcher is the Managing Director of a key subsidiary of Company B and has worked with Company A (who is a client) for many years and was given complete access to all informants throughout the relevant period. This allowed for the study to benefit from the author's great knowledge of relevant situations but without imposing influence on proceedings

during the study. The case study is both emic and etic in that developments and informant views are observed as the business and the individuals involved operate on a daily basis. However, the approach to the case study has to some extent been influenced by my prior reading, interpretation of relevant literature and my knowledge of the business situation, i.e. etic. This combination of this etic and emic approach allows the researcher to interpret responses and behaviours and seek greater insights through interviews.

Timeline of Interviews:

Case study pre implementation interviews: May/June 2012 (Tranche one)

Case study mid-point interviews: September 2012 (Tranche two)

Case study post implementation interviews: December 2012 (Tranche three)

Overview of Case study informants:

Informant 1: Head of Retail Sales, Company A. Informant 1 is responsible for all sales via retail channels, which includes the subject matter of the case study. He would be the most senior point of contact for the other stakeholders in this project.

Informant 2: Sales Manager, Company A. Informant 2 is the day to day contact in relation to this case study in Company A and reports to Informant 1. Informant 2's main objective is to ensure that all partners are compliant with Company A's rules and regulations and that sales volumes are achieved. Informant 2 would historically have had little interaction with the marketing function but the approach being implemented in this case study brings her into greater contact with marketing functions both internally and with the Company B team.

Informant 3: Marketing Dept., Company A. Informant 3 is responsible for ensuring that agents have the correct number of sales staff, professionally trained and delivering the right amount of sales per person per day. This means that Informant 3 is a front line member of staff who is in contact with both Company B and Company C.

Informant 4: Sales Director, Company B. Informant 4 holds responsibility within Company B for the Company A account and for delivery of the integrated programme on behalf of Company A. Informant 4 is based in Company A's offices 50% of the time with the balance split between Company B and Company C.

Informant 5: Senior Account Manager, Company B. Informant 5's role is to act as the day to day liaison with both Company A and Company C. Informant 5 reports to Informant 4 within Company B and works closely with all stakeholder levels to deliver the programme.
Informant 6: Data Analyst, Company B. Informant 6 analyses data on behalf of Company A and is based in their offices for most of the week. He is also responsible for creating the most appropriate metrics for Company A. His day to day outputs are shared with all stakeholders.
Informant 7: Managing Director, Company C. Informant 7 is Managing Director of the company and the main senior point of contact for Company C in relation to this case study. His company has been a key agent of Company A for many years.
Informant 8: Sales Manager, Company C. Informant 8 is responsible for sales and compliance both internally within Company C and with Company A. He is the main day to day contact for this case *study.*

Table 17 *Overview of Case Study Informants. (Author)*

In addition to the above informants, two Business Development Managers (BDMs) were employed at the latter stage of the case study period (and are referenced in some informant views), both reporting directly to Informant 4 in Company B. Both are not included as informants as they were unaware of the situation before, and during much of the case study period. However, their views were captured by informant 4 through internal reporting as implementation progressed.

Throughout this chapter the following approach has been adopted in order to analyse informant comments and views and to present findings coherently. Each tranche of interviews has been analysed separately using a similar approach.

First Order Themes: This column has been constructed based on an aggregation of popular areas/themes. The objective here was to include those themes that had recurred frequently during the interviews.

Second Order Themes: This content was created as a result of a process of distilling and grouping together common themes, thus allowing for analysis based on this commonality. This effectively means that all frequently recurring themes are analysed in conjunction with other similar themes as per Cresswell (2009, p.186).

4.5.1 Case Study - First Tranche Patterns of Occurrence

First and second order themes are shown below. Patterns of occurrence include the number of individual informants raising a specific theme (shown as "X"), and the number of times a theme was raised (shown as "Y"). A similar approach is taken for the second and third tranches.

The order below is based on the frequency/number of occurrences of each second order theme.

First Order Themes	Second Order Themes	Patterns of Occurrence X = Number of sources Y = Number of occurrences
Measurement approach sales led No integrated measurement / Sales focus Measurement issues	Measurement	X 8 Y 43
Isolated elements Silo structure comments	Current Structure/Planned structure	X 8 Y 40
Conflict Compliance	Control	X 7 Y 32
Collaboration good / Collaboration expectations	Collaboration	X 8 Y 25
MIS required Lead generation required	MIS required	X 8 Y 24
Marketing communications negatives	Marketing communications negatives	X 8 Y 13
Sales and marketing integration good Sales and marketing integration inevitable	Sales and marketing integration	X 1 Y 2

First Order Themes	Second Order Themes	Patterns of Occurrence X = Number of informants Y = Number of occurrences
Trust low Greater trust will come	Trust	X 2 Y 2
Consumer goes through journey Speed to market	Attribution	X 2 Y 2

Table 18 *Case Study Tranche One Patterns of Occurrence. (Author)*

Case Study - Stage One Interviews: At this first stage a number of themes arose, and broadly these could be categorised as current issues that informants felt needed to be addressed at the outset and issues that informants expected to arise in the future.

From the latter perspective issues around marketing communications and how to integrate same to help drive sales were felt by informants to be important. In a similar vein, the development and improvement of Management Information Systems (MIS), measurement and collaboration were all seen as activities that needed to be introduced or improved.

The topic of control arose frequently in this first stage as each party saw a trade off between collaboration, compliance and control. There were strong views that Company A were perhaps concealing their true motives for collaboration and that their main goal was greater control.

Measurement: This theme refers to informant views of a perceived sales focus on measurement and an absence of an integrated measurement approach.

Respondents saw measurement or lack thereof as a significant issue for Company A to address. Of particular note was that all sides saw that sales were pretty much the only measure used... *"I think within Company A, there is a, there is an attitude that marketing isn't seen as important in driving volume as other elements"* (Informant 6 Marketing Agency, Company B)*, "It's nearly always sales related measures"* (Informant 5, Account Manager, Marketing Agency, Company B), and that this had to change. Related to this was the view that the company (Company A) needed both to add more and relevant marketing activity, and to build extra measures into an evaluation process. The perception that sales and marketing operated in isolation was illustrated by the following view... *"I suppose I always saw Company A marketing as operating on its own"* Informant 7, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C.

Company C in particular raised a concern that benchmarking was not used: *"There isn't a measurement where you can see how you were performing against the national average"* Informant 8, Sales Manager, Sales Company, Company C.

The senior Company A person involved in this case study held the view that the new structure would address most of the issues raised... "*We are looking at data and we are, we are to a greater or lesser extent, instructing our ASAs (Authorised Company A Agents) on how to run their business, but what we are using now is a sales and marketing agency to partner and help us bridge the gap"* Informant 1, Head of Retail Sales, Host Company A.

Current Structure and Planned Structure: This was a highly significant theme, incorporating views on existing organisational and departmental silo structures together with feelings of isolation, as well as initial views on how this could/should change during the case study period.

This theme mainly focussed on feelings of current isolation/remoteness and silo based organisational issues. A good example being "*Possibly the Nationwide ones would feel a bit isolated I mean, if you are selling Company A DTD (door to door) in Donegal it does seem quite a bit away from head office. Handing you some balloons or something does not necessarily correlate (with what you need)"* Informant 5, Account Manager, Marketing Agency, Company B.

Other practical examples were *"I think sometimes the notice we get in regards to marketing changes or offers coming on board are very slow in getting down to the likes of ourselves then agents"* (Informant 7, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C). A further example of silo views was... *"They see the marketing function as being pretty much kitting out their offices and kitting out staff rather than driving demand"* Informant 6, Data Analyst, Marketing Agency, Company B.

Stakeholders all indicated that this was an area that needed to change if the project was to be successful. However, it did appear that each company had differing views of what success would look like post case study, with agents feeling they would be given more room to act alone whereas Company A viewed it as gaining greater control, an illustration of this being a quote from Informant 2, Sales Controller. in Company A when discussing Company C being more responsible for sales and marketing, *"No, no oh my God. No. We actively discourage some from doing solo runs into anything like that"* Informant 2, Sales Controller, Company A.

Control: This incorporates compliance, where informants indicated that existing rules and regulations were not complied with, and that conflict was also an issue where (or was expected when) new practices were introduced. It also incorporates informant views that compliance was

going to be seen as a proxy for control, hence *"Sometimes I think they are kind of left to their own devices a little bit, which doesn't seem to be working for them"* Informant 5, Account Manager, Marketing Agency, Company B. This concern was further reinforced by the comment *"They (Company A) began flagging about a year ago that things needed to change"* Informant 7, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C. Thus the theme of control and its relationship with compliance is seen as interlinked, with compliance viewed either positively (making things run smoothly) or negatively (enforcing unwelcome change) by informants.

Similarly the plan to closely match outputs with expenditure (which informants saw as a key feature of IMC) was expected to be seen negatively in some quarters, but vital. Example assertions include... "*Without a doubt, this is the first time that they have/will see... give x amount and this is the amount of sales, incremental sales, it has driven"* Informant 4, Marketing Agency, Company B, and *"Throwing a lot of effort at the wall to try and get sales to increase rather than stripping it apart and saying ok, which element here is an underlying productivity issue that I need to deal with"* Informant 1, Head of Retail Sales, Host Company A. *"There is no actual report at the moment to say xxx invested generates Y sales and is predictable"* Informant 5, Account Manager, Marketing Agency, Company B. It became apparent that the agent (Company C) was frequently allocated budget to spend at their discretion and the implication was that matching expenditure with sales or other outcomes may be seen as unwanted control or interference by the company.

This theme highlighted informant concerns about conflicts of interest and compliance, possibly because whilst each party welcomed compliance in theory, there appeared to be different views on what the processes should be, i.e. they had their own interpretation of what compliance meant, and therefore conflict could be seen to increase through lack of a shared vision.

Collaboration: This was a significant theme in terms of the volume of informant comments from all stakeholders, and tended to focus on a desire to see greater collaboration.

There were views expressed that silo offerings were having the effect of keeping teams apart, an example view being ...*"I think at the moment it's not a partnership (relationship with Company C)"* Informant 5, Account Manager, Marketing Agency, Company B.

It was also apparent that some viewed collaboration as being more about control, *"...absolutely. I think their first focus for me and for us has to be on the sales side, it's about beating them into some shape, into these retail organisations and then it's about ok, what are the marketing things we need to look at"* Informant 2, Sales Controller, Host Company A. A similar example was *"We are looking at spreadsheets, we are looking at data and we are to a lesser or greater extent, instructing our ASAs*

(Authorised Company A Agents) on how to run their business. But what we're using now is a sales and marketing agency partner to help us bridge that gap. So having an outsourced team, who appear to all intents and purposes to be Company A, in terms of dealing with our sales partners, bridging the gap between head office and sales agents" Informant 1, Head of Retail Sales, Company A.

At this, pre-implementation stage, all parties indicated that greater collaboration was required - *"I think they (Company C) would welcome a bit of support, and they would see it as support I think"* (Informant 6, Data Analyst, Marketing Agency, Company B), but that in some cases they implied that changes to current operations may result in conflict with the agents such as Company C. An example of this latter point is *"on potential collaboration...delivering something of substance rather than being big brother"* Informant 7, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C.

***MIS required**:* This theme refers to both a perceived lack of an appropriate inter and intra management and marketing information system - as well as referring to issues surrounding a perceived lack of attention paid to information/data produced.

It appears that each party prior to the implementation of this case study had operated in isolation, each maintaining their own information and sharing very little. However, as case study progressed it became clear that each party felt it needed access to intercompany data in order to ensure the IMC process was measured correctly. Typical views were as below:

"... a kind of a base line could be a difficult, a difficulty coming into an integrated situation. They look at, there's kind of an element of marketing where they look at it as brand awareness rather than driving sales volume" Informant 6, Data Analyst, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"Absolutely, the current model, there's no, and I know I keep going back to this word, there's no integration between the two, they just give them a budget for marketing and there's no tracking of it, they don't tell them how to spend it. They don't really see how they spend it emm, and to be honest with you they don't even know if they spend it at all on marketing. So with what we're hoping to implement that will all be accountable. We'll see where it's going. We'll advise them on where we think best spend is and we'll measure the sales that that generates" Informant 4, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"...they're (Company C) also feeding stuff back like, like this venue, it's not actually in the right location, cause the retailers can be a bit, unsophisticated with regards to changing or adapting or being proactive about identifying. They've always done this venue, in this corner of this shopping

centre but now actually 3 of the retail stores have now closed down around them, but they're still doing their venue in that corner, where the BDEs (Business Development Executives) come in and go well guys that's where everyone is coming in the front door over here so if we're spending money on this, this is where you need to be. So feeding back to us to say ok we need to make sure that the retailers are understanding how to maximise their opportunity. So there's eyes and ears out there that we haven't had before and they're feeding back on a range of topics and issues that we need to address" Informant 2, Sales Controller, Host Company A.

Marketing communications negatives: There was general agreement that the existing marketing communications activity was disjointed in terms of acting as an effective sales support. There appeared to be an understanding and appreciation that brand activity is important and should remain separate, but this was coupled with strong views that at least some advertising and marketing needs to focus more closely on the drive for sales.

In many ways, it was suggested (albeit obliquely) that the requested changes to management/marketing information systems, coupled with improved measurements, may address the sales support issue raised above. An illuminating informant view here was *"Taking a brand message and turning it into a message to ask a customer to do something is a big challenge"* (Informant 7, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C). The significance of this comment is that it nuances a disconnect between a marketing department (seeing its role as creating brand enhancing communications) whereas the sales agents believe they need sales-driving communications, frequently referred to as "call to action" pieces.

Concerns were also raised about current capabilities to deliver the communication and sales supports required, evidenced by comments such as "*To hit your own area that you're particularly zoning on obviously would help an awful lot more in regards to advertising"* Informant 8, Sales Manager, Sales Company, Company C*. "We don't have the tools to deal with enquiries at the door"* Informant 7, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C*. "The thrust of marketing is outside sales"* Informant 3, Marketing & Advertising, Host Company A.

All three views support the premise that marketing communications support was seen mainly as being about brand building, and that a lack of connection to sales meant that specific targeting of regions with focussed sales support was desired. Indeed, the final quote above confirms that the Company A marketing department did not see sales activity as something they were responsible for, the implication being that there are separate silos for sales and marketing.

Concerns were raised about why intermediaries such as Company C were not complying with brand guidelines: *"From a marketing perspective, they (Company C) are not on brand"* Informant 5, Account Manager, Marketing Agency, Company B.

Generally informants from all stakeholders groups felt that existing marketing communications were problematic, although in some cases for different reasons – an example being that Company C felt support was either nonexistent or irrelevant, whereas Company A felt support was sufficient and that funds were also provided to Company C to drive sales. However all parties agreed that existing materials and supports were disjointed and that measurement/budget allocation was patchy.

Sales and Marketing Integration: This relates to views on the desirability and in some cases inevitability of sales and marketing integration.

At this point all stakeholders have indicated that sales and marketing integration is potentially a positive thing, and in some cases, inevitable since the arrival of digital technologies. However, implicit from informant comments is a potential issue whereby integration means slightly different things to each stakeholder.

It was also apparent to some extent that tacit integration had begun, albeit without the necessary compliance and quality controls, hence...*"Yeah, and it's probably, it's probably getting blurred with the people involved and are pro actively involved in the digital side of things, because I don't know, but sometimes they tend to be people who are ye know looking at new opportunities and engaging in new things rather than being more kind of traditional"* Informant 2, Sales Controller, Host Company A.

Trust: This theme refers to levels of trust between stakeholders, mainly from an organisational motives perspective.

Trust only arose briefly at this stage, perhaps an indication that various stakeholders had yet to consider the potential of opaque objectives that Company A may have had from the outset. At this point trust was seen as something that would increase during the case study period. Typical of informant comments were:

"And you know for some people it becomes a real sort of mental challenge because they think that you know, they're not trusted" Informant 7, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C.

"They're (Company C) obviously seeing it as a positive because there's a huge amount, there will be a huge amount of trust and the information we will have access to" Informant 4, Project Director, Marketing Agency, Company B.

Attribution: This theme related to two specific comments relating to the final customer journey and how multiple sales touch-points can have a negative effect on sales attribution. This theme also incorporates references to a perceived lack of speed to market by the sales agency.

With regard to the customer journey, this potentially is a major issue in the future with greater integration... *"And with Company A we definitely find that customers have more than one point of contact before they sign up, so they could talk to someone in a retail store, they could go on line, they could call the call centre and then someone knocks on the door"* (Informant 2, Sales Controller, Host Company A), speaking about sales attribution.

This theme was potentially important even though the volume of informant comment was low, as it raised an issue of sales attribution, which one could expect to rise significantly later in the study as measurement techniques (as per those discussed by Nichols (2013) earlier) become more advanced.

4.5.1.1 Summary of Part One of Three Stage Case Study

As this represented the pre implementation series of interviews, the main purpose was to establish the main themes and to set benchmarks for subsequent evaluation during and after the case study period.

In essence themes that emerged were in some ways to be expected. In particular the issue of isolation felt by the agents was already flagged prior to this case study and is in line with feelings often associated with agents/sales teams - particularly in relation to interaction with a marketing function or department, e.g. (Kotler, Rackham and Krishnaswamy, 2006).

The biggest number of references at this point related to measurement, control and structural related themes, and this possibly reflects concerns over where the changes planned during the case study may ultimately lead and/or a desire to see improvements in these areas.

In summary, it appeared at this pre-case study stage that all parties were welcoming and open to the concept of an IMC approach where sales and marketing worked more closely together, with a single, outsourced agency, co-ordinating sales and marketing activity - but from these initial informant views perhaps each stakeholder had a different view of ultimate objectives.

4.5.2 Case Study - Second Tranche Patterns of Occurrence

The ranking of second order themes indicates a combination of when topics arose during the interviews and the degree to which informants placed emphasis on the topic as a key issue. The order below is based on the frequency/number of occurrences of each second order theme.

First Order Themes	Second Order Themes	Patterns of Occurrence X = Number of sources Y = Number of occurrences
Boundary spanning positives Boundary spanning negatives Misc boundary spanning Relationship issues Hierarchical v partnership relationships	Boundary spanning	X 8 Y 89
Collaboration improved Collaboration not improved MIS improved/not improved	Collaboration	X 8 Y 77
Increased control Power	Control	X 8 Y 40
Measurement sales based Quality of sales improved/not improved Volume of sales increased	Measurement	X 8 Y 33
Trust lower Trust higher	Trust	X 8 Y 28
Quantitative expectations Qualitative expectations	Expectations	X 5 Y 9
Communications improved Communications not improved	Sales and marketing communications	X 5 Y 6

Table 19 *Case Study Tranche Two Patterns of Occurrence. (Author)*

Case Study - Stage Two Interview Outcomes: A particularly significant new theme emerged at this stage of the case study, "boundary spanning". In fact this had the highest level of individual occurrences for this stage, and reflected the central role of the boundary spanners in facilitating closer integration between the external sales and marketing functions. Of particular interest is that not only did this theme not emerge in the first round of interviews, but it also did not arise in exploratory client and agency interviews. This indicates that the subject of implementation (or perhaps the potential issues to be considered) is not something that organisations consider to be significant when introducing IMC.

Expectations (from implementation of this form of IMC), and sales and marketing communications were also new themes, although the latter is a derivation of the earlier "marketing communications negatives".

Interestingly the "MIS required" theme did not arise at this second stage, as informants indicated that they were now exchanging and gathering information not formally included in MIS, through tacit means.

Boundary Spanning: This relates to the role of staff whose duty it was to build and develop a close relationship between all three of the stakeholder companies, but in particular between Company B and Company C. Issues raised focussed on informant views as to how effective these individuals were and on how they were perceived as having moved "in and out" of organisations. Similarly boundary spanning here also considers the relationship between stakeholder companies from a corporate perspective.

This theme therefore covers the areas of both intercompany and interpersonal relationships and focuses on attitudes/perceptions of respondents to other stakeholders.

Boundary spanning was a key theme in this phase of the case study, as informants got to grips with their roles and interactions. Dominant issues arose such as a perceived hierarchical approach from Company A and there was an indication that trust was becoming an issue as boundary spanners were alternately viewed as colleagues and, at the same time, a delivery mechanism for Company A's dictats. An illustrative comment was... *"To a large extent our staff would perceive them as someone to control us"* Informant 7, Managing Director Sales Company, Company C. A counter assertion from a Company B informant was *"I think the relationships (between all stakeholders) are a lot stronger because they (all) have trust"* Informant 5, Account Manager, Marketing Agency, Company B. It was apparent therefore that boundary spanning issues and trust issues were perceived as closely linked.

Loyalty was also referenced, i.e. questioning where the boundary spanner's role lay.

"I notice that with one of our people (a boundary spanner) they are more on the side of the independent (Company C), I need to talk to that person" Informant 4, Project Director, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"I would think that decision making has actually been taken away from us now" Informant 8, Sales Manager Sales Company, Company C.

"*Communication needs to happen at a whole series of levels (and it's not)"* Informant 7, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C.

However, from a Company A and Company B perspective this situation appeared not to exist.

"They (Company C) have a direct route now, before it was just a mailbox" Informant 6, Data Analyst, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"They (the outsourced teams) are seen as very much part of the team now" Informant 3, Marketing & Advertising, Host Company A.

Another illuminating area on this point was the perception of Company B staff that trust had improved between partners.

"They (Company C) felt threatened (by the boundary spanners), but now it's come full circle and they see myself and the guys as a welcome addition" Informant 4, Project Director, Marketing Agency, Company B.

Interestingly, views were also quite prevalent on the hierarchy of relationships exhibited since boundary spanners were introduced and communication more frequent. There was almost unanimity that the approach from Company A was hierarchical (a term used by the researcher in the interview process) and by default, not as collaborative as expected, by Company C in particular.

Researcher: How would you describe relationships now?

"I'd say it would probably be hierarchical" Informant 5, Account Manager, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"I think in the past Company C would have seen Company A as hierarchical" Informant 6, Data Analyst, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"It's tutorial" Informant 4, Project Director, Account Director, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"It still feels hierarchical" Informant 8, Sales Manager, Sales Company, Company C.

"At the moment I would say it's quite hierarchical" Informant 7, Managing Director, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C.

"It's hierarchical" Informant 1, Head of Retail Sales, Host Company A.

From a communications perspective, informants referred to greater frequency of communication, but not at a senior enough, peer to peer level.

Researcher: "How do you find communication between the three companies?"

"I think a lot could be done (positively) by getting a senior guy (from Company A) in the room" Informant 3, Marketing & Advertising, Host Company A.

"Yeah yeah yeah (communication needs to operate at a more senior level)" Informant 7, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C.

"Yeah that's (agents wanting more senior contact with Company A) coming to the kind of core" Informant 1, Head of Retail Sales, Host Company A.

Collaboration: This refers to various forms of collaboration that respondents saw as desirable or not. It also includes the areas of isolation, compliance and conflict in relation to collaboration.

From an integration perspective, this theme also covers lead generation, MIS developments, and perceived levels of integration between stakeholders.

It appears that as greater collaboration coupled with more compliance procedures were introduced, positives and negatives emerged. From a process point of view (such as speed to market when new opportunities arose) things were reported as having improved. However, in some cases, as new compliance rules were introduced, collaboration was viewed as being more about one stakeholder dominating another in the relationship.

In general Company B and Company A seemed to feel the project and collaboration was working well.

"Everything has become a lot quicker and easier to turnaround (with Company C). Everything is a lot tighter and the relationship a lot stronger" Informant 5, Account Manager, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"We are in meetings now that we would not have been in, in the past" Informant 6, Data Analyst, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"People are starting to understand the company a bit better now and I think things are starting to come into place" Informant 3, Marketing & Advertising, Host Company A.

"They would see us as an extension of Company A… they talk to the guys (Company C) much more now too" Informant 4, Project Director, Marketing Agency, Company B.

It was apparent however that Company C had reservations about what it meant to be part of a collaborative relationship and was suspicious of reasons for it.

"I'd like to see them (Company A) give us our own bit of input" Informant 8, Sales Manager, Sales Company, Company C.

"Giving walk lists (a schedule of which houses to call upon), isn't about just giving the salespeople a tool. It's a far bigger project that Company A are using for something else too" Informant 7, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C.

Finally, the host company's most senior participant was sensing that collaboration was not quite working at this mid-point.

"I feel a lot of advice is falling on deaf ears and they don't want to listen to it... there's difficulties but there is a lot more dialogue going on" Informant 1, Head of Retail Sales, Host Company A. This exhibits tensions rising between parties, with one side indicating "advice" not being listened to whilst the other side implies that advice is perhaps more about increasingly closer control.

Expectations: This refers to the various expectations respondents had in relation to outputs from the changes being implemented i.e. the core subject matter of this case study, and included qualitative and quantitative views.

At this point of the case study, it appears that there is a sense that previous expectations in terms of timescales may have been over ambitious due at least partially to a longer than anticipated lead in time being required and a lack of clear measurement techniques. It appears that whilst all discussed and agreed that greater collaboration was required, the detail of what this meant in practice was different at a stakeholder level.

The views below highlight three key issues that emerged, namely, expectations previously being held that skills of each party were high enough to operate this project effectively, and that opacity should

be reduced through greater collaboration. Finally, there was at this point still an expectation that sales may increase, but coupled with a feeling that it might take longer than planned for the project to work from a sales perspective.

"There is either going to be a positive bump or it will stay static... I wouldn't anticipate a huge bump as the retailers are quite slow to change" Informant 6, Data Analyst, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"It's really difficult to know what's driving it (increase in sales)" Informant 3, Marketing & Advertising, Host Company A.

"We've a more targeted approach… we should be able to see (the effect of planning marketing and sales together) next time (December)" Informant 4, Project Director, Sales, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"If you have got an imbalance between the capability of the two partners I'm not sure its ever going to really work" Informant 1, Head of Retail Sales, Host Company A.

Measurement: This theme incorporates attitudes toward existing measurement techniques, and to any perceived or desirable changes in qualitative and quantitative performance.

The overriding output was that sales volume was used as the key metric, although there were recognitions that sales quality was not important as a KPI, and perhaps this needed to change.

"Everything is focussed on numbers and sales and they (Company A) are very driven by that… I would love to see something close to the UK model where they are really tight on the brand side of things" Informant 5, Account Manager, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"Sometimes I think the emphasis is put on the wrong KPIs" Informant 7, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C.

A common view at the mid-point from this case study period was that relating sales activity to marketing spend was broadly something that was still not undertaken. Interestingly, whilst all stakeholders had views on measurement, they tended to differ on requirements, possibly for their own personal/organisational reasons.

"They want to bridge the gap…. And measure marketing spend with sales… to get to a real cost per acquisition and cost per sale" Informant 4, Project Director, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"It hasn't really happened… relating sales volumes back to marketing" Informant 6, Data Analyst with Marketing Agency, Company B.

There were also almost unanimous views that sales quality had improved and that this was visible due to better measurement approaches.

"Quality… they (Company A) are tracking it but they are not focused on it" Informant 6, Data Analyst with Marketing Agency, Company B.

"Yeah… quality has certainly turned around" Informant 3, Marketing & Advertising, Host Company A.

"Well the quality of sales would (has gone up) have went up" Informant 8, Sales Manager, Sales Company, Company C.

"...and I am seeing better productivity and that's success to me" Informant 2, Sales Controller, Host Company A.

Trust: Covers respondent views on whether trust has increased or reduced between stakeholders during the case study period. Trust was a highly recurrent theme and Company C in particular raised concerns about a drive for openness from Company A being really about learning trade/tacit secrets so that they could replace the agent with their own staff. From a Company B and Company A perspective a lack of trust was pronounced in relation to Company C for the first time at this point.

"Company A don't really trust the agents or Company C" Informant 6, Data Analyst, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"Do we trust them (Company C) more, no, we manage them more closely" Informant 4, Project Director, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"(Speaking about Company C being concerned)… Are they (Company A) going to move everything in house?" Informant 3, Marketing & Advertising, Host Company A.

Researcher: "Is there a trust issue Between Company C and Company A?"

"Is there a trust Issue? Yeah". Informant 8, Sales Manager, Sales Company, Company C.

"I'm not sure they trust Company A anymore" Informant 1, Head of Retail Sales, Host Company A.

Overall, it is clear from the views articulated that trust levels have fallen on all sides and in the absence of improved communication, perceived opacity is resulting in suspicion.

Sales and Marketing Communications and Integration: Informant views on areas related to current sales and marketing communication materials are reported here. This theme also includes references to the concept of functional sales and marketing integration generally.

There was a clear divide between Company C and the other two stakeholders as to how the sales and marketing operation was now working. Both Company A and Company B informants spoke of improved processes and closer collaboration of sales driven marketing initiatives, with comments such as:

"We have managed to get a structure in place" (re. communications and marketing support) Informant 5, Account Manager, Marketing Agency, Company B and *"There seems to be more processes in place (which is good)"* Informant 3, Marketing & Advertising, Host Company A.

"(Between) Company A the integration has brought us much closer" Informant 5, Account Manager, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"Yeah… now there is a common and consistent message" Informant 2, Sales Controller, Host Company A.

"It made it a lot easier to get better, more consistent information and to be able to sense check it" Informant 2, Sales Controller, Host Company A.

"Without the communication flow you wouldn't know enough about recruitment, identify, selecting, training, inducting for example" Informant 1, Head of Retail Sales, Host Company A.

"*The agents are more welcoming to Company A contacting them… they tell Dave (boundary spanner) their feedback"* Informant 5, Account Manager, Marketing Agency, Company B.

However, Company C was of the view that nothing had changed... *"The marketing communications is still the same, the exact same"* Informant 8, Sales Manager Sales Company, Company C, and referring to whether sales and marketing communications have improved, *"I'm sure if I were to ask Company A they would say absolutely , I think it's the opposite"* Informant 7, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C.

Company C also felt that their views were either unsolicited or ignored. Again the concept of sales and marketing integration was reiterated as a positive goal by all, but the translation of this was seen as meaning different things to parties, particularly Company C.

Control: This theme relates to extent of control and perceptions of power asymmetry by various participants. After the second round of interviews, control is now undoubtedly a key issue.

Collaboration and sales and marketing integration, alongside increased compliance, appears to have led informants to see this alternative form of IMC as being about gaining greater control. Whilst

Company A alluded to this as an objective, their view of control was about performance predictability, whereas Company C saw it (Company A's motives) as being about controlling all behaviours in order to glean operational secrets from an agent. In essence these comments show a potential fault line developing and trust issues emerging.

The comments below display the broad range of views on how closer integration is being perceived as either a control mechanism or about monitoring and improving performance to everyone's benefit.

From a Company B and Company C perspective there were views consistent with a belief that control was a key objective from Company A.

"*There is a little bit of pushback (from the agents) as they have lost a little bit of power"* Informant 4, Project Director, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"All the retailers have the view that Company A are sitting in an ivory tower in Dublin" Informant 6, Data Analyst, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"The ambitions were always about control and predictability" Informant 1, Head of Retail Sales, Host Company A.

Company B also appeared to feel that more control was necessary from a compliance perspective.

"We are managing them better so they are less likely to pull strokes" Informant 4, Project Director, Marketing Agency, Company B.

Company C appeared to be becoming more convinced that Company A had other objectives not articulated at this point.

"I'm not sure what we are being measured on, but Company A have their own objective", Informant 7, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C.

"There is an element of looking over shoulders" Informant 7, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C.

4.5.2.1 Summary Review of Part Two of Three Stage Case Study

Boundary spanning, control, and collaboration were all seen as major themes three months after the new form of IMC was introduced. As referred to in stage one, it is now apparent that stakeholders are viewing closer integration as something that could be both positive and negative from their own

individual perspectives. Perhaps each had a different view as to what the ultimate outcome or goal would/should be for them. Certainly greater control was seen as a major issue and one seen as openly desirable now from Company A - although their meaning of control needs to be examined further.

As both boundary spanning and control emerged as highly frequent themes with informants, it is possible that participants were concerned about the effects of closer relationships. A highly frequent occurrence centred on the role or "tensile discursive positioning" of boundary spanners (Ellis and Ybema, 2010, p.279). This tensile positioning meant that staff in all three organisations effectively moved "into" and "out of" each other's organisations, and this yielded both positives and negatives for the individual in many cases, as this form of collaboration tended to mean work practices and perhaps aims of each were now more visible/interpreted more clearly by previously distant organisations. However the increased requirement for greater collaboration also seems to conform to Haytko's (2004) findings where she describes the importance of not only organisational relations but also individual relations - this seems to be borne out by data at this mid-point of the study where informants still agree with collaboration, but are showing signs that boundary spanning may mean intrusion into long standing work practices.

Measurement, whilst still a key theme, was seen as something that could be addressed by simply looking at the volume of sales and reduced churn at an aggregate level. Both Company A and Company C were less concerned about spend versus sales metrics at this point, whereas Company B were heavily focussed on this. It could be that this area is simply lower down the list of priorities for Company C and Company A.

At this midpoint stage it could be summarised that all parties still believed that this alternative form of IMC was practically an excellent idea, but the reality of delivery was now raising doubts and concerns about trust levels and desires for greater control, coupled with a perceived level of deliberate opacity from Company A.

4.5.3 Case Study - Third Tranche Patterns of Occurrence

The ranking of second order themes indicates a combination of when topics arose during the interviews and the degree to which informants placed emphasis on the topic as a key issue.

The order below is based on the frequency/number of occurrences of each second order theme.

First Order Themes	Second Order Themes	Patterns of Occurrence X = Number of sources Y = Number of occurrences
Organisational relationships stronger Organisational relationships weaker Hierarchy approach from Company A Partnership improved Perceived opacity Greater transparency Ivory tower reducing Partnership approach	Inter Firm Relationships (IFR)	X 8 Y 40
Trust still an issue Trust declined Trust improved Lack of goal congruence	Trust	X 8 Y 28
Communications improved Communications not improved MIS improved MIS needs to improve MIS success not proven	Marketing communications	X 8 Y 28

First Order Themes	Second Order Themes	Patterns of Occurrence X = Number of sources Y = Number of occurrences
Project moderately successful Project very successful Project more effective than before IMC including sales positive Implementation challenges Lack of role clarity	Project success	X 7 Y 27
Closer collaboration achieved Collaboration improved Not enough/greater collaboration needed	Collaboration	X 7 Y 18
Sales quality improved Sales assessment too soon Sales increased Sales lower during period	Sales	X 8 Y 16
Closer relationship between sales and marketing good	Closer relationship between sales and marketing positive	X 6 Y 15
Relationships improved Relationships worsened	Inter personal relationships (IPR)	X 5 Y 12
Boundary spanning positives Boundary spanning negatives Boundary spanning more senior communications relationships needed	Boundary spanning	X 5 Y 11
Measurement Improved Measurement not improved Pay for Performance (PFP) more likely	Measurement	X 6 Y 10

First Order Themes	Second Order Themes	Patterns of Occurrence X = Number of sources Y = Number of occurrences
Compliance improved Closer relationship between sales and marketing good Increased perceived opacity	Compliance	X 5 Y 10

Table 20 *Case Study Tranche Three Patterns of Occurrence. (Author).*

Case Study – Stage Three Outcomes*:* At this final stage, a number of new themes emerged, possibly reflecting both the dynamic nature of change as the organisations worked more closely together, and evolving attitudes towards sales and project success. The key new themes were: Organisational relationships, Interpersonal relationships, Compliance, Project success, and Sales. The first two themes arose as interpersonal and interfirm relations became perceived as significant in the success or otherwise of the project. Project success and sales also arise as themes in their own right appearing to reflect informant views that project success may mean different things to each informant, and that sales were not now necessarily the only measure.

Inter Firm Relationships (IFR): Boundary spanning here considers the relationship between stakeholder companies from a corporate perspective. This theme also covers informant views on perceived transparency and opacity within and between the three stakeholders.

In contrast with the area of interpersonal relationships, this was an area where there was little unanimity (as before) after this third phase. Overall it was felt that organisational relationships had improved, however there was a strong view that Company A continued to operate in a hierarchical and "Ivory Tower" fashion towards its sales partner, Company C. This was strongly asserted by both Company C and indeed reinforced (as possibly desirable) by Company A. Further, there was a feeling that levels of opacity had increased and that Company C in particular perceived there to be a hidden agenda in Company A's desire to develop greater collaboration.

"Yeah I think it's eh I think it's worked very well to be fair um it's brought a lot of transparency eh to the relationship between um Company A and the regionals or the key independents as we call them um and eh I suppose it's developed eh with the transparency some more trust between us um that we can see what they're doing and we're supporting them more and we can see where any marketing support we give these guys is actually going now" Informant 4, Project Director, Marketing Agency, Company B.

From a negative perspective, the following views were conveyed:

"The communication is a massive one um the retailers were really frustrated by what they saw as a bit of an apathy from Company A towards their issues so you know if they were complaining about their uniforms not being up to scratch or not branded or anything like that that Company A would have sort of looked at that and gone: "oh that's not a big issue just get them out on the doors" Informant 6, Data Analyst, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"Would say that the relationship has changed absolutely and utterly and completely um in the period um that I have dealt with them and most markedly in the past twelve months um from a situation where one felt um a certain level of co-operation to now being we just take the orders and we better go about implementing the instructions. Very kind of very dictatorial" Informant 7, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C.

Trust: This theme highlights respondent views on trust as an issue and any perceived changes relating to trust issues between stakeholders during the case study period.

Trust was a major factor with all of the informants. Whilst it was felt that trust had increased during this phase, there was also a greater volume of informant views at both an individual and company level with regard to the number of references, to show that trust was still an issue and needed to improve. There appeared to be a significantly different view on trust between Company C and the other two participants, with Company C increasingly questioning the existence of underlying reasons for this integration. From a Company A perspective there was a relatively openly stated (in this interview process) view that trust and control were linked and they made no apology for now saying they wanted a more hierarchal and controlling position.

Whilst still not totally positive, many of the informant assertions spoke of improving levels of trust, albeit fragile, examples being:

"I think Company A would agree I mean there is a very high level of trust between Company A and company B now, like we know that. The fact they are paying us to sit in their office and we hear a lot of conversations just proves that um and Company A obviously did the figures and knew that they couldn't pull this off on their own. The fact that they approached us and it's worked I think yeah I think like there's definite evidence there to prove that it's something that's useful and it's something worth doing um and like it is a good kind of string to add to your bow essentially" Informant 5, Account Manager, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"As to whether trust has increased... Um it's, it's one of those not a static thing with Company A um they do a lot of work to try and build a bit of trust and then they do something that completely erodes it and wipes it off the face of the earth" Informant 6, Data Analyst, Marketing Agency, Company B.

From a contrary perspective to the comments above, trust was still seen as a problem or issue, as illustrated by all these three quotes:

"There is still an issue I would think with trust um certainly we've probably used that maybe even more so to our advantage um by well I suppose the issue of trust is on both sides um Company A trusting the retailers to carry out the job in a compliant manner and the retailers trusting that Company A are going to stick with them or commit to working with them in the future. Um when you hear about um you know the (x retail) stores all coming in-house and certainly a lot of that information was kept from them until very, very last minute. So you'd expect that they would still have that element that "okay Company A is growing now and they've got this big office, how soon is it going to be before they start to look to bring everything in-house" so I think to a certain extent we talk about a future with Company A but I think possibly the people at the right level aren't having those conversations to comfort the people that need to have…" Informant 3, Marketing & Advertising, Host Company A.

"Nobody's looking for um contracts written in stone and that they're going to be sort of never ending um but there is a degree of suspicion that the extent to which Company A are pulling some operations back in-house as to where is that going to stop" (Informant 7, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C).

"(To) work together and get a productive joint output, it's been very, very hard to make that come to fruition and it's back to I think some of the things we talked about last day of just sometimes objectives are different even though it may be seen in this instance that if we have one common objective" Informant 1, Head of Retail Sales, Host Company A.

Marketing communications: In general it was felt that marketing communications from a collateral perspective (i.e. marketing materials) had neither improved nor worsened, although there were slightly more patterns of occurrence in favour of improved communication materials, meaning that assertions in general supported a slight improvement. Of greater importance from an attribution perspective were the views on the area of MIS. In general, there was a feeling that MIS had improved, but that there were still greater improvements required by all sides.

"Um I suppose in regards um marketing side of it um if it's brand awareness and stuff like that I think it has definitely improved getting the information out to the customer has certainly improved. In regards receiving material on our behalf for reps and leaflets um I still think there is a bit of work to be done in relation to the marketing on that side for sales material" Informant 8, Sales Manager, Sales Company, Company C.

"What BDM 1 and BDM 2 see of what's being used out in the field or BDM 2 comes back and says there are 15 boxes of leaflets sitting in a back office at x, they're not using them so either they're not fit for purpose or something has broken down in their understanding of what they should be using so I think it's probably allowed us to be more efficient as well in the quantities and the types of collateral we put out there and to really manage that a little more tightly" Informant 2, Sales Controller, Host Company A.

However, there were some significant detractors from these positive views.

"Yeah. If you include in marketing support the type of offers that we can put in front of customers to get them to come on board eh the volume and the value of those has significantly decreased" Informant 7, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C.

"If you take a fairly broad definition of marketing support it has definitely worsened (sic)" Informant 7, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C.

"The only negative I would have and this would probably be more of a personal view um would have been it would have been good to have a little bit more and even from the Company A marketing team have a little bit more of the input into what was happening in marketing and the marketing support. A lot of it comes from the UK um a lot of it can't necessarily be translated. I mean things like creative um look we went to all the effort of having of integrating this and having this special project for Company A, it would have been nice to do some special communication programme" Informant 5, Account Manager, Marketing Agency, Company B.

Project Success: This theme incorporates informant comments on interpretation of levels of success or otherwise of the project overall. After this phase it was felt that the project had been successful, to varying degrees. All of the themes here were included in the broader section and in general the integration of sales and marketing was seen as a positive outcome. More than a third of informants also felt that it was too soon to judge the effectiveness of the project.

"I think it's worked well. I think well I personally feel like I know a lot more about what's going on and I feel a lot more involved. I think Company C would probably say they feel the same that there's more

of a like an integration I suppose between the two. Everybody is a lot more closer knit and it's not a case that you only know part of the picture, it feels like you know the bigger picture essentially and I think it's worked well" Informant 5, Account Manager, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"Think it's been good for both probably less measurably so than probably people would like to see because there's been a lot of other factors that have been affecting sort of sales volumes and that sort of thing that you know it would make it hard to put a definitive number on it" Informant 6, Data Analyst, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"I think like yeah like I think the project um as an exercise has been very successful um whether the um whether both parties would agree with that eh I'm not sure. Personally I think it's been a massive success um with Company A it's often their approach and their stance with these guys but equally they have got transparency and trust as a result and sales I mean quality of sales has improved and it think that eh that alone eh is a good measure of success" Informant 4, Project Director, Marketing Agency, Company B.

Researcher: "So if I were to summarise it and again please correct me if I'm saying the wrong thing, do you think that it was a positive thing, the outcomes were broadly positive?"

"Yeah" Informant 3, Marketing & Advertising, Host Company A.

"But yeah absolutely it's been massively useful to have that resource to have that support um and it's had real quantifiable results which is great you know it's not, it's not anecdotally It feels like it's actually concrete the improvement that kind of thing" Informant 2, Sales Controller, Host Company A.

The only detractor comment is as below, and it focussed mainly on sales volume issues.

"I think the quality of sale has changed a little bit but not dramatically. I mean in terms of the KPIs that I'm seeing and just comparing notes with some of the other agents um I think there's been a little bit of an improvement but nothing dramatic I mean you're not seeing a KPI that might have stood at 10% suddenly going down to 5% or something it's still staying um if you take 3 month churn or something you're still seeing levels of 6%/7%" Informant 7, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C.

Collaboration: This refers to various forms of collaboration that respondents saw as desirable or not.

The overriding perception from all parties was that collaboration had improved between each of the parties, but between Company C and Company A in particular - *"I think it has moved away from*

being perceived by our staff side as being um a sort of a supervision to being more of a collaborative type role" Informant 7, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C.

In no case was collaboration seen as having lessened during the case study period and the following quotation sums up a generalised view:

"There's a lot more um integration between say the Company A retail team and the retailer teams in terms like the BDEs (Business Development Executives/Managers) so like BDM 1 and BDM 2 who'd be working closer. There's more of a not a hierarchy but a reporting structure that you know if Company C have an issue they didn't just have to ring someone in Company A who would probably fall off the radar, but they could talk to BDM 2 and Dave who could either try and handle it or would escalate it as necessary" Informant 6, Data Analyst, Marketing Agency, Company B.

Sales: This relates to sales of services by Company C during the case study period and refers to sales volume and quality of sales, i.e. churn levels.

As confirmed to a large extent in other informant comments, it was felt that sales volume had not risen dramatically, but that the quality of sale had improved and that a longer period would possibly see volume increase too, particularly as a result of integrating the selection/recruitment and training of sales staff.

An illustrative comment relating to sales and sales quality is, *"They definitely have, the quality of the sales has gone up a lot um from eh from where it was. They had massive issues with drop out and a big one that they had was just general sales being rejected from their call centre because they were either being put in twice or being put in already customers' names being put into the same account details, bad debt that kind of thing and all that's been weeded out now"* Informant 6, Data Analyst, Marketing Agency, Company B.

A further example is, *"The quality of sale has changed a little bit but not dramatically. I mean in terms of the KPIs that I'm seeing and just comparing notes with some of the other agents um I think there's been a little bit of an improvement but nothing dramatic I mean you're not seeing a KPI that might have stood at 10% suddenly going down to 5% or something it's still staying um if you take 3 month churn or something you're still seeing levels of 6%/7%"* Informant 7, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C.

Similarly, comments indicating that the case study period was too short to measure sales accurately were common, an example being, *"Yeah it's probably is too soon, it's only been six months um and like the plans that Company A have got for Ireland are so big that I wouldn't imagine they are too*

worried about it yet" Informant 5, Account Manager, Marketing Agency, Company B. Similar quotations also reflect the short timing of the project as affecting evaluation as well as underestimating the length of time it would take to implement the project.

"I would think so more on the time side of things. It hasn't really um I suppose it's not been a long time and sales haven't been great from our point of view but certainly there have been several things that have affected the sales number um I think I'm working with people and certainly um you know on their recruitment which is what the guys are doing now and on training certainly the sales people that we have out there are better" Informant 3, Marketing & Advertising, Company A.

"Yeah absolutely it's been massively useful to have that resource to have that support um and it's had real quantifiable results which is great you know it's not, it's not anecdotally It feels like it's actually concrete the improvement that kind of thing" Informant 2, Sales Controller, Host Company A.

Closer Relationship with Sales and Marketing Positive: This theme focuses on informant views as to whether a closer relationship has emerged between sales and marketing activities and relationships. The overwhelming view after this third stage was that developing a closer relationship between sales and marketing was a good thing, and also that this has been achieved during the case study period. However, there were slightly differing views on what was seen as positive, and these are discussed in conjunction with other contributory factors in the summary of this chapter.

A selection of representative views are included below:

"From a measurement side of things absolutely because we can see what worked and what didn't work eh and we can see it a lot faster, it's not something you've to wait for Company A to share with you, it's not something you have to ask for, it's something we have, we own, we compile ourselves so we can see if something that we've done has had a good affect somewhere then we can roll it out somewhere else" Informant 6, Data Analyst, Marketing Agency, Company B.

Researcher: "Would you think it's a good thing to bring the two closer together?" "Yeah now absolutely because they go hand in hand I mean" Informant 3, Marketing & Advertising, Host Company A.

"Yeah absolutely I mean I have always said you know on the sales side of things you know talking about the marketing side of things was it really okay but yeah absolutely I mean and all I can speak to you on is just the experience that we have had and obviously it's been on a small scale um so you'd want that to be bigger" Informant 2, Sales Controller, Host Company A.

"I know these pauses are going to sound weird in your interview it really makes you think but put it this way whenever I hear of a company saying "well I need to go and talk to the marketing department" I just roll my eyes and go "well what are you talking about". How on earth can you have these two things separated that doesn't make any sense and we here internally have the integration I think going really, really well so in terms of how the simple sort of dynamic why above the line get pulled through the line how that all links up with all of our sales planning, so we now live and breathe that as a team here" Informant 1, Head of Retail Sales, Host Company A.

There was unanimity about the benefits of integration on sales and marketing conceptually and specifically in relation to this case study subject matter.

Inter Personal Relationships (IPR): This theme covers the area of interpersonal relationships and focuses on attitudes/perceptions of respondents to other stakeholders and the development of same during the case study period.

There was an overwhelming feeling that interpersonal relationships had improved by the end of this phase of the case study. All stakeholders felt that relationships had improved, but there were still interpersonal difficulties during implementation.

Researcher: How would you comment on the project overall?

"Company C would probably say they feel the same that there's more like an integration I suppose between the two everybody is a lot more closer knit and it's not a case that you only know part of the picture, it feels like you know the bigger picture essentially and I think it's worked well" Informant 5, Account Manager, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"Yeah I think us with Company A, we are a lot more comfortable, we're a lot more at ease with them um I mean we go into meetings that other agencies in similar situations would never be anywhere near (um I think) that" Informant 6, Data Analyst, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"Company C feel as if they're being heard and being listened to and Company A feel that they've still got kind of a level of autonomy there as well with someone on the road" Informant 5, Account Manager, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"Personal relationships are good, but relationships between the two companies are strained" Informant 7, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C.

Researcher: "Is the difficulty (of integrating IMC including sales) in the implementation or…?"

"I think some of it is in some respect personality and you do get personality clashes and you get really positive personalities that help it run through" Informant 1, Head of Retail Sales, Host Company A.

Boundary Spanning: As in the earlier stages, boundary spanning relates to the role of staff whose duty it was to build and develop a close relationship between all three of the stakeholder companies, but in particular between Company B and Company C. Issues raised highlight informant views as to how effective these individuals were and on how they were perceived as having moved "in and out" of organisations.

Overall, boundary spanning was seen as a being both popular and effective with respondents. In a number of cases the perceived lack of a more senior boundary spanning contact in Company A was seen as an issue with respondents (from Company C in particular). In the main, negatives referred to the perception that the boundary spanners were in reality messengers from Company A, although the positives heavily outweighed the negatives.

From a positive perspective all parties could see the benefits of the boundary spanners across a number of different areas:

"I think like any process that (it) has evolved and um and it's bedded down far better now um once BDM 1 himself has become familiar with the internal processes - if an issue arises in the field that we want to highlight, we're likely to get a far better outcome now at this point um because he knows who to go to, he knows what the process is" Informant 7, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C.

"They know who I work with and I think it's definitely a positive thing even like the marketing department in Company A in-house if they're busy or they have a lot on, I can contact the retailers myself, we were never able to do that before so it's definitely a positive" Informant 5, Account Manager, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"So I think we're a lot closer now down to that level you know we have put all our concrete training in place and having BDM 1 and BDM 2 out in the field they see the face of Company A so every single sales agent will have met somebody from Company A" Informant 2, Sales Controller, Host Company A.

There were some negative comments however, nearly all from Company C who was concerned about interference in their operations.

"Well first of all I think that the likes of Dave's role (as a BDE/BDM) is far too much still of the policeman type role" Informant 7, Managing Director, Sales Company, Company C.

***Measurement**:* This theme focuses on comments toward existing and potential measurement techniques.

The area of measurement methodologies appears not to have changed much during the third phase of the case study, even though it was highlighted earlier on. In general there was a consensus that quality of sales had improved, but that overall sales probably had not, and that it was too soon to measure the effect of the project. With regard to measurement techniques, little change or progress was reported, and this is further discussed later. A number of informant comments illustrate these findings:

"They definitely have, the quality of the sales has gone up a lot um from where it was. They had massive issues with drop out and a big one that they had was just general sales being rejected from their call centre because they were either being put in twice or being put in already customers' names being put into the same account details, bad debt that kind of thing and all that's been weeded out now" Informant 6, Data Analyst, Marketing Agency, Company B.

"In terms of measurement it seems from talking to um briefly with Informant 1 and with Informant 6 internally that whilst the figures aren't out there and haven't really seen any significant change in terms of improvement or otherwise in terms of sales (volume) - one of the things is that quality seems to have improved" Informant 3, Marketing & Advertising, Host Company A.

"But yeah absolutely it's been massively useful to have that resource to have that support um and it's had real quantifiable results which is great you know it's not, it's not anecdotally It feels like it's actually concrete the improvement that kind of thing" Informant 2, Sales Controller, Host Company A.

"Do I think it's good, I'd say moderately successful, I'd say moderately successful in terms of sort of the output that I can put my hands on, but there's areas I've been thinking about sometimes proving a negative " Informant 1, Head of Retail Sales, Host Company A.

Compliance Improved: This theme represents stakeholder views in relation to a stated desire by Company A to implement greater compliance and control. Whilst most views were positive, however a few of the staff at Company C were less favourably disposed to the compliance changes as it appeared to them to limit previous profitable practices that may not have been goal congruent, as exhibited by the following informant views:

"Absolutely like the rules have always been there and haven't changed, they weren't, they were just, it was a case they weren't being policed. Um before we had in this case BDM 1 on the ground eh to actually monitor it um the rules were in place but they just weren't adhered to" Informant 4, Project Director, Marketing Agency, Company B.

Researcher: "Has compliance improved at all?"

"Yes....massive changes in compliance.... (better) feedback in a way you don't get from a spreadsheet too" Informant 1, Head of Retail Sales, Host Company A.

Company A in particular appeared to be happy with almost all aspects of compliance changes, commenting, *"Yeah absolutely. I mean overall there were operational things that we put in place independent of having BDM 1 and BDM 2 out there which have had a massive impact on quality because we basically changed how the sale was made and we're going to be doing more of that when we move to the call centre here, but the sheer fact of if you even put the recruitment piece aside because that is very new and it is very early days, but the quality and the miss selling had reduced massively"* Informant 2, Sales Controller, Host Company A.

The above is supported by a further comment from another Company A participant*, "…. it's really around (being) the eyes and ears and resource on the ground - so they tell us what's going on out in the field, not snooping but they can give us feedback in a way that you're not going to get it from spread sheets so yeah we can see it from both hard and soft metrics that the quality has gone up significantly"* Informant 1, Head of Retail Sales, Host Company A.

4.5.3.1 Summary of Part Three of Three Stage Case Study

Organisational relationships, measurement, trust and project success, were key themes in the third phase of this case study.

Organisational/interfirm relationships were seen overall as improving by two of the stakeholders (Company A and company B), however Company C staff appeared to feel that relations between the three companies had worsened since the start of this case study. At all three stages of this case study there appeared to be differing perceptions as to what the desired outcome should be in specific terms and as to what specific duties would be filled by each party. This confirms that there is no single view as to how IMC "should" be structured and implemented. This in turn implies that structures vary from company to company, which concurs with the findings of Le Meunier-Fitzhugh and Piercy (2008/2009) when findings showed that no one structural model worked best for sales and marketing operations.

Linked to this was the area of trust which again seemed to be a greater issue for both Company A and Company C. It became increasingly apparent that whilst Company A were focussed on gaining greater control and driving compliance, Company C became increasingly concerned that the overall objective from Company A was to gain sufficient insights to allow them to take over and "in source" the route to market. As informants suggested in prior stages, the issue of poor communication, particularly at a senior level, appeared to be causing a lack of trust and this lack of communication and its effects are in line with Malshe (2011) who proposed that horizontal and vertical communication bridges were required to facilitate effective communication between sales and marketing. This implies that Company A would need to consider improved senior level peer to peer communications (a major issue with Company C in particular).

Measurement and success were closely related themes with all parties indicating that the project was successful in many ways, but feeling that outside of sales quality, insufficient measures had been created and put in place, perhaps leading to assumptions that other measures were being used and not shared, thereby adding to trust issues.

At this final stage it could be summarised that all parties still believed that this alternative form of IMC was an excellent idea but, as at the mid-way stage, issues of trust seemed to be a major issue, and that the importance of interpersonal relationships across organisation boundaries is vital at all levels. This concurs with the findings of Haytko (2004) where she found that business/personal relationships were both vital to client/agency relations.

Theme	**Company A**			**Company C**			**Company B**		
	May	**Sept**	**Dec**	**May**	**Sept**	**Dec**	**May**	**Sept**	**Dec**
Tranche	**1**	**2**	**3**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**1**	**2**	**3**
Boundary spanning		32	2		24	6		33	3
Closer relationship between sales & marketing good	2		7			1			7
Collaboration	10	17	6	4	20	5	11	40	7
Control & compliance	14	33	5	3	9	2	15	28	3
Expectations		4						5	
Interpersonal relationships			2			0			10
Marketing communications	3	2	14	6	2	9	4	2	5

Theme	Company A			Company C			Company B		
	May	Sept	Dec	May	Sept	Dec	May	Sept	Dec
Tranche	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Measurement	12	14	6	4	4	1	27	15	3
MIS Required	6			8			10		
Misc	1		1	0	1		1		
Organisational relationships			7			10			23
Project success			13			4			26
Structural	8			5			27		
Trust	0	11	7	1	8	4	1	9	17

Table 21 *Patterns of Occurrence Comparisons by Stakeholder Organisation during entire Case Study Period. (Author)*

Table 21 was created by further grouping together similar themes that occurred during the case study period. The chart highlights issues that arose or were mentioned during the interview period.

The topics of boundary spanning, organisational relationships, collaboration, control and compliance, structure and trust were themes that were particularly significant in terms of credits to nodes.

Project success, as expected, only arose at the third phase of the case study.

Interestingly, there was no apparent difference between the stakeholders with regard to trends during the case study period, implying that issues were almost equally significant (even with differing views) to all parties at the same point in time.

4.5.4 Overall Summary of Case Study Patterns of Occurrence

There were no marked differences between stakeholders in terms of emerging themes or the timing of their emergence. To put it another way, in the main, each organisation's staff were concerned about the same generic issues at the same time during the case study period, but sometimes understood these issues in widely divergent ways. For example, informants had different views within the theme of trust, with it either increasing or decreasing over a particular period.

Perhaps also to be expected, was that similar themes emerged (and in some cases disappeared) from all informants' views during the case study period. Again, it should be noted it is possible for informants to agree on a subject such as greater collaboration being required, but equally to

disagree on what that means in practice, and that one of the benefits of the qualitative method adopted is that this is captured within the transcripts or interpretation and some of the selected quotations used earlier.

From a trust perspective a typical reference from Company A was *"It's easier (than) it was before as it was certainly very difficult before we had a field based presence. It's still a challenge because you know you're still dealing with completely separate independent companies who run their own businesses as they see fit um so there are challenges to the amount of information that you'll ever get from them on a consistent basis and on an accurate basis".* This could be contrasted with a comment from a Company C informant where they indicated a feeling of perceived opacity from Company A - *"Just sometimes you feel like it's been are you answering the same as me, you know, and people are a bit uncomfortable. Let me give you a scenario… just say I had a meeting in the morning with a BDE (Business Development Executive), a question is asked to me and I give a definite answer, whether it be yes or no, then that BDE could meet one of my colleagues twenty minutes later and ask the same question".* This highlights that neither party fully trusts the other in relation to supplying key information. It was also noticeable that there was still little or no interaction at a senior level between Company C and Company A in particular, or between Company B and Company A. According to Cater (2008 p.1), social bonds need to be developed at both a business and personal level as they "positively influence openness of communications and trust". These findings were in agreement with those of Ford and Hakansson (2005) who note the importance of social business interactions, and informant views in this study show a lack of communication and interaction, at least at a senior level.

The theme of boundary spanning roles was constant throughout the latter stages of the case study period, and despite some reservations at various points it was seen by all parties as having been useful and successful. However the interpretation of "successful" again meant different things to informants, for example with Company C seeing it as being about giving them a greater voice within Company A to change things to their way of thinking, whereas Company A saw a key objective as being about gaining insights and control. From a Company B perspective the view and objective of boundary spanning was to close the gaps between sales and marketing activity. In essence these boundary spanning challenges were in agreement with the findings of Hopkinson (2003) and Ellis and Ybema (2010, p.293) where the latter stated that "In particular, they (boundary spanners) must cope with (re)constructions that position atomized actors competing within markets on the one hand, and as part of supposedly close inter-firm relationships on the other". Viewing this through the lens of this study, it can be seen that boundary spanning roles were challenging insofar as the

employees were employed by Company B but frequently put under pressure to adopt the foreign or transient employee role by either/both Company A and Company C.

From a collaboration perspective there was consensus that collaboration had improved, but when examined more closely there was certainly a sense that it was perceived as being pushed or forced, for example *"the co-creative (approach) is something we try and push but unfortunately you don't get eh currently I'm not getting the response that I would like from them"* Informant 1, Head of Retail Sales, Host Company A. This was almost seen as a typical response by many informants whereby all parties were keen to support the concept of collaboration and indeed felt it had increased, yet each built boundaries around their own areas to some extent, which implied that this was impacting on successful implementation.

A typical informant comment concerning measurement of implementation was *"We're constantly looking at our reporting and looking at our data and looking at our analysis. I think maybe it's not the fact that it's (sales) changed so radically since the BDEs (Boundary Spanners) came on board, but that there's layers to that information now or there's better interpretation of it. So we're seeing a number that comes out of our systems and the guys are "well actually I know from being out in the field…"* Informant 1, Head of Retail Sales, Host Company A. This type of comment implied that measurement techniques were improving from both a quantitative, but particularly from a qualitative/MIS perspective also. Generally speaking, all informants saw improved measurement and attribution techniques and transparency as desirable, but in common with most of the other theme comments, each stakeholder had slightly differing views on what was a reasonable measure at the outset.

As one would expect, many of the themes are interrelated and control, as an example, is frequently related to trust. To illustrate, Company A and Company C were in agreement that greater and more formally coded control mechanisms appear to have been implemented, although Company C saw this as a negative outcome of the case study as evidenced by (from Company A): *"Yeah, I'm conscious once I look back this conversation I probably used words like control, emm, I can't remember, lots of controlling type of language I'm sure"* and from Company C, *"Um that there is an element of looking over (our) shoulders".* These themes attracted a high frequency in terms of informant numbers and recurring views. In some ways it was at this stage that it became more apparent that there were misunderstandings across both client and agencies as to what IMC and inter-organisational relationships in this case were meant to be in practice.

In essence there were overall distinct patterns of similarity when analysed both at theme level and by company, and therefore patterns of difference were quite low. However, behind the explicit themes there were implicit insights to be gained, for example, views on why Company A wanted to gain greater control of the outsourced sales function.

It could be argued that the findings from the case study and the earlier exploratory interviews underline the view of Laurie and Mortimer (2011) that there is a gap between current academic texts and practitioner activity in relation to IMC definition and implementation.

The next chapter focuses on the theoretical, methodological and management implications of this study.

CHAPTER 5 - Discussion and Conclusions

5.1 CHAPTER INTRODUCTION

This final chapter will discuss the theoretical, management and methodological implications of this study. The chapter concludes with an acknowledgement of some of the limitations of this research, together with suggestions on areas that could benefit from further research.

Theoretical, managerial and methodological implications are intertwined throughout this chapter due to the inductive and emic methodology adopted. This reflects that the study benefits from being both deductive (in that its foundation is based on existing literature), coupled with being inductive (based on interpreting informant views during IMC implementation).

5.2 RESTATEMENT OF AIMS

This research was undertaken in order to seek "thicker" descriptions of IMC in practice as referred to by Ardley (2008, p.381) where he suggested that it was now time to adopt the use of interpretative approaches in order to help address the "arms length interest in academic research from practitioners", also discussed by Hackley (2003, p.315) - which Ardley asserted clients and agencies still seem to hold. In similar vein Laurie and Mortimer (2011, p.1464, 2012, 2013) proffered that there were significant differences in how academics and practitioners perceived and defined IMC and further indicated that these differences created barriers to IMC implementation - it therefore being important to carry out further research encompassing client perspectives on IMC and the role they see their agencies playing in implementation. Similar calls were also made by others, (eg: Cornelissen 2003, p.230 and Luck and Moffatt 2009, p.321).

This research sought to extend existing studies on IMC, with a specific objective of assessing attitudes towards, and implementation issues of outsourced sales, as part of the IMC mix. The inclusion of the sales function in IMC was chosen as it allowed for examination of a new structural form of IMC from planning through to its implementation. The inclusion of sales as part of IMC is also currently a popular topic within the sector, with both clients and agencies indicating a desire to measure and reward agencies on outcomes rather than behaviours.

A review of the literature confirmed that there has been little research of a qualitative, inductive nature carried out into IMC management and implementation with or without the inclusion of sales. Existing academic studies have been largely positivist and frequently appeared to test pre-existing notions of what IMC is. My intention here, therefore, was to add new findings to the literature by

adopting an appropriate complementary methodology, giving voice to non-formally coded/tacit activities and incorporating informant views on alternative forms of IMC. In addition, a review of the practitioner literature highlighted that the subject of IMC, particularly its definition, content and structure, coupled with implementation/management, is highly topical for managers, who are also keen to explore the inclusion of sales as part of IMC, in an effort to see revenue streams relate to performance.

Hence prior to this research a situation existed whereby we had academic descriptions of what IMC is, and its desirability from a client perspective e.g. (Horsky, 2006, p.381), and how it theoretically operates, coupled with little empirical research on issues surrounding implementation.

As part of the iterative process of engaging with the literature to help make sense of emergent findings, a further spur to this research was the lack of relevant studies surrounding the role of Inter Firm Relationships (IFR) and Inter Personal Relationships (IPR) during implementation of IMC - involving (and not involving) outsourced sales and marketing partners. My intention was to extend the work of Haytko (2004), where she discussed the importance of both IPR v IFR, whilst at the same time researching the inclusion of sales in the IMC mix which also had yet to be reflected in academic literature; the latter perhaps indicating a perceived divorce between outsourced sales and marketing in research to date.

5.3 DISCUSSION AND INTEPRETATION - SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Informant views from stage one interviews with practitioners from both the client and agency side were utilised in order to help frame the stage two structure, but these results also proved to be illuminating in their own right, on a number of themes, but one in particular, namely that of IMC definitions. Other key themes and findings from stage one centred on commercial terms /measurement, risk, structure, credibility and remuneration. Each of these is discussed below.

Results from the subsequent implementation (case study) phase of this research indicate that there are a number of key findings that influence perceptions of the relative merits of alternative modes of IMC provision and the success of IMC via external third party agencies. These key findings concern credibility, remuneration/measurement, sales and marketing collaboration, trust, IPR/IFR and organisational structure). These are discussed in the next section - along with analysis on how these outcomes compare with existing academic literature.

The overarching key finding and contribution from this research surrounds the impact of IFR and IPR during implementation, (which had yet to be researched within an IMC environment) and these

could therefore be seen as the overarching themes, with several other contributory themes / factors acting as secondary findings. These other influencing themes include IMC definitions, structural issues, trust, credibility and measurement and remuneration.

Possibly as expected, the definition of what constitutes IMC (i.e. its perceived categorisation) greatly affects both the client's views on opportunities/requirements and consequently agency definitions were found to vary considerably.

However, other and perhaps more unexpected (in the light of extant IMC literature) significant factors also emerged particularly during the case study implementation phase, including the interdependency of client and agency organisational structures, coupled with staff roles in both client and agency companies.

From an implementation perspective, the results from this study showed that positive Inter Firm Relationships (IFR) and positive Inter Personal Relationships (IPR) were both seen as critically important to IMC success, alongside the setting of clear objectives and integrated IMC measurement techniques.

The section below commences with interpretation of the stage one findings and then moves on to stage two findings.

5.3.1 Stage One: Exploratory Interview Insights

A notable feature of the exploratory stage interviews was the lack of consensus on what defined IMC. This lack of consensus was found both within and across the two groups, i.e. clients and agencies. This appears to support the work of Laurie and Mortimer (2011, 2012, 2013) where they reported that a lack of clear categorisation or definition was commonplace. This research has sought to extend Laurie and Mortimer's (2011) paper through the use of complementary methodologies (semi structured interviews and case studies) thereby contrasting the content analysis approach that Laurie and Mortimer (2011) adopted. A consequence of this lack of clear definition was that many of the participants did not see the potential strategic impact of IMC (Kliatchcko, 2008), although there was an appreciation that the message unification approach (Laurie and Mortimer, 2011, p.1476) had evolved to some extent.

The subject of IMC delivery also arose and (in general) it was not seen as vital if one or several agencies were involved in its delivery. Notably (for reasons that became clear in stage two) implementation of IMC was not seen as an issue worthy of much consideration by both clients and agencies.

Overall there was agreement that commercial (risk and reward type) models were desirable, as was the inclusion of sales in some cases. Clients, in particular, raised issues about the credibility of a single agency delivering multiple services. In general, the popularity of themes does not indicate that there was consensus at all times between client and agency side informants, but simply that the same subject matter/themes arose.

5.3.2 Stage Two: Implementation Phase Insights

Many of the stage one client side informants had either not witnessed the introduction of IMC in their organisation (not being in their current position at the time) or it was implemented on a tactical piecemeal basis and therefore seen as a marketing department function as against a companywide initiative (Kliatchko, 2009).

Markedly significant differences arose when comparing exploratory interview stage one views to those at the case study implementation stage - thus underlining the views of Cornelissen and Lock (2005), Ardley (2008) Luck and Moffat (2009) and Laurie and Mortimer (2011), who each indicated that research during IMC implementation could well unearth new issues, as existing research is augmented by a move from analysing (mainly) self reported expert informant views via surveys, to gaining emic insights gained at various stages of IMC implementation.

The lack of clear definition and strategic views of IMC (meaning that both clients and agencies were uncertain of what could/should be delivered under an IMC banner) reported by informants in stage one was further underlined during the case study implementation phase, where differing perceptions of IMC became tangible at both the outset and, more strikingly, during the implementation phase - when it became apparent that each stakeholder group had different views of what IMC meant in practice. This may possibly be because agency views were still linked to marketing communication, whereas the client in this case study appeared to see it more strategically, meaning a requirement to structure the organisation in such a manner as to ensure that, for example, data was generated and shared across an entire company and not held by a single marketing department.

There was agreement with the literature on the ideal structure to deliver IMC as being through a single agency, which was seen as something that was highly desirable - thus agreeing with Horsky (2006, p.381), but this was also seen as increasingly difficult to achieve in practice due to the perceived increasing number of services required to be included in a “full” IMC offering.

However this broad agreement appeared to lessen as the three case study stages progressed, as informants raised topics which had not been unearthed either in the exploratory stage or in the IMC literature, such as Credibility, Measurement and Remuneration, Sales and Marketing Collaboration, Trust, IPR, IFR, as well as the significant influence of Organisational Structures. These new emergent issues are examined below.

5.3.2.1 Credibility

The subject of credibility arose frequently, particularly being raised by client side informants - who questioned the capability of a single agency to deliver all of the various IMC services (as they defined them) via a single company. A view commonly held by clients was that undertaking a capability assessment of agencies was increasingly difficult to achieve accurately. IMC was frequently referred to as a "jack of all trades" proposition, indicating that it was not credible to deliver all IMC services through one company, although this could be temporal. The alternative to the use of a single agency most frequently suggested was an adaptation of the "orchestration approach" (Schultz, MacDonald and Baines, 2012, p.2) whereby a single agency becomes responsible for managing not only its own campaign elements, but a range of satellite companies, although this too was seen to have its challenges in terms of agency "turf wars" (Kliatchko, 2005, p.13). Interestingly, clients from stage one and the client in the case study of stage two did not specifically seem to demand a single IMC agency as they believed it was likely to be sub optimal, but were happy to have multiple agency relationships managed by one of the specialist agencies.

5.3.2.2 Remuneration and Measurement

These themes were closely linked in exploratory stage one research findings, where there was a general consensus that sales should ideally be seen as a measurement objective and linked to rewards, i.e. increasingly rewarding agencies based on outputs rather than behaviours. However what was new in this study was an examination of the inclusion of the sales function as part of an outsourced IMC offering, which had been not included in prior IMC research and the strong desire stated by informants to link behaviour, outputs and rewards. The subject of sales inclusion arose forcefully and spontaneously throughout both stages of this research, even though it is not included in conventional IMC literature. It is possible that the fact that clients regard sales as an inherent part of IMC may be part of a miss communication or misunderstanding between clients and agencies.

Allied to this were discussions focussing on actual measurement techniques, and tellingly, the only significant barrier raised to output based remuneration by virtually all informants centred on a lack of clear and industry recognised measurement tools that clearly and reliably related cause and

effect. Additionally, many informants also expressed confidence that measurement techniques were improving, particularly due to the availability of the more measurement friendly digital tools which incorporated greater attribution characteristics. This interpretation supports the views of Hackley (2010, loc. 2814) where he proposed that Digital Marketing is really a form of "mediated salesmanship" which facilitates (for example) sales being made, therefore bringing closer the establishment of a closer relationship between agency behaviour and sales levels, which he refers to as "the holy grail of advertising research". The findings of this study (in relation to the potential inclusion of sales in the IMC mix) are also in line with Hackley (2010, loc. 6288) where he discusses the use of e-marketing and the agency's role in making sales and proving ROI. Mediated and measurable sales therefore could increasingly be made by an agency acting on behalf of their client.

5.3.2.3 Sales and Marketing Collaboration

One of the key objectives of the case study was to observe the implementation of an outsourced, integrated sales and marketing programme, which necessitated the use of one sales company and one marketing company working together in an integrated manner. The subject of sales and marketing collaboration has been academically analysed on many occasions, but to date not in respect of an outsourced IMC collaborative model. The results from this study support the findings of Le Meunier-Fitzhugh and Piercy (2010, p.299) where they indicated that collaboration between sales and marketing was critical to improving business success, and that managing interfunctional conflict was critical. Informants in this study certainly indicated that increased collaboration was beneficial to IMC. The "thought world differences" between sales and marketing as referred to by Homburg and Jensen (2007, p.124) were evident throughout this study, but informant views did show that having boundary spanners (discussed in 5.4.2.5) represent agency (sales or marketing) interests to the host company was indeed effective, and this was seen by all informants involved as a positive development, as they gained a greater understanding of the content of peer roles and objectives. The results of the case study also support, perhaps as envisaged, the views of Kotler, Rackham and Krishnaswamy (2006, p.76), where they spoke of the necessity to integrate activities, processes and systems for greater collaborative success. There was general consensus that economies were achieved in terms of reducing marketing communications costs through less wastage and more timely communication. From a qualitative perspective, the integration of sales and marketing in this case was seen almost overwhelmingly as positive.

5.3.2.4 Trust

Trust as a theme became more prevalent as the case study progressed, perhaps because it was not foreseen as a potential issue either during exploratory interviews or at stage one of the case study - again underlining the benefit of the emic approach of this research, as it focussed on themes arising and developing during implementation. Trust, in this study, appears to relate to the clarity and openness of objectives, and it was apparent that a lack of clearly communicated objectives coupled with a lack of senior level boundary spanning interactions meant that at least two of the three parties in the case study felt trust had declined significantly as the case study reached its conclusion. In essence, the absence of clearly stated and shared goals, coupled with previous high levels of tacit working procedures, appeared to generate lower levels of trust as controls were introduced and created perceptions of an "ivory tower" approach to collaboration and/or covert objectives.

5.3.2.5 Inter Personal Relations (IPR) and Inter Firm Relations (IFR)

In relation to IPR and IFR this research partially fulfils the requirement for research across the buyer/seller dyad, i.e. clients and agencies, as proposed by Haytko (2004).

Perhaps the most significant areas in this research were Inter Firm Relations/Inter Personal Relations (IFR and IPR) and these themes were highly prominent throughout the case study, yet importantly had not been raised during the pre-case study interviews, indicating that this is an issue not considered in advance by potential IMC management and staff. These topics have rarely been discussed in existing IMC literature, where IMC implementation had also yet to be observed in practice.

At an individual (IPR) level the findings confirmed the potential issues that boundary spanners encounter, in particular the "Tensile discursive positioning" that is frequently evident (Ellis and Ybema , 2010, p.280). Findings from this dissertation showed that boundary spanners regularly struggled to maintain positive relationships across all three firm boundaries and more tellingly across their numerous interpersonal boundaries.

The importance of interpersonal roles was highlighted throughout this study, and indeed the high level of interpersonal effectiveness reported represented a concern for Company A , as evidenced by a Company A informant stating that they potentially "had reduced control" over individual boundary spanners with a potential consequence being that the high level IPR developed by an individual could outweigh the inter firm relationship, with a risk to the client's business if the individual left the company. This finding concurred strongly with Haytko (2004,p.327) where

boundary spanning roles were considered potentially so critical that allowing a "surrogate manager" role (i.e. allowing too much power to be held by a boundary spanning staff member) to develop could actually put the inter firm relationship at risk.

Informant views during the case study also highlighted that boundary spanners were often challenged as to where their loyalties should lie – a topic that was also highlighted in Hopkinson's (2003, p.1965) findings where she reported that an individual sees themselves either as closer to the customer or the host company. The consequent tensions result in boundary spanners constantly reconstructing themselves vis-à-vis organisation relationships and these tensions were frequently underlined in the case study. Interestingly, as the frequency of views on IPR declined over the case study period, the volume concerning IFR increased, implying that issues were seen as relating to organisations rather than individual boundary spanners.

5.3.2.6 Organisational Structure

Another theme that emerged and grew in significance during the case study phase was that of organisational structure, in relation to both client and agency organisations. In particular, agency side informants reported that it may well be more challenging to deliver an IMC service (from an agency perspective) to a client organisation that is itself structured in silos, that is, with separate sales and marketing functions, or separate trade and consumer departments. Clients also commented in a similar manner. This concurs with Laurie and Mortimer (2011, p.1475) who argued that agencies in particular would not restructure (from an organisational perspective) correctly for IMC unless it was a requirement of their clients, and it was therefore necessary for the client organisations to take the lead and become integrated themselves. This implies that a mirrored structure of client and agency may be beneficial, i.e. an IMC relationship with an integrated client organisation structure together with an integrated agency structure and vice versa.

5.4 MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are a number of implications from this study for management considering implementation of IMC through outsourced partners. Firstly, the organisation structure of both client and agency organisations arose more frequently as an issue as the stage two implementation phase progressed. An implication is that agencies need to consider the prospect of how their organisation structure mirrors that of their client. Whilst there was nothing to suggest that there was a "one best way" approach to IMC organisational structure it was apparent that positive IPR and IFR are perhaps more difficult to maintain if boundary spanning contacts become needlessly complex and result for example, in external agency staff becoming caught up in internal client side political and turf war

issues. Therefore, if a client company is structured into silo departments then it may well be that an outsourced specialist will be easier to manage and work with, rather than a fully integrated agency. For example, if the sales and marketing departments operate separately then it may be more appropriate to seek separate outsources sales and marketing service providers. The opposite may also apply, with fully integrated client operations seeking out fully integrated agency operations. As discussed earlier, the client acting as an interpretive audience is relevant here, in that clients will need to understand not only their own structures and limitations, but those of the agency (or agencies) they contract with. In essence, this research has pointed to considerations of structure as being important at the IMC planning stage and potentially this consideration is one that has company-wide implications.

Secondly, the inclusion of sales as part of the outsourced mix was perceived as having worked well by most informants and whilst this was the first study to address this specific issue during implementation, it does suggest that the inclusion of sales could usefully be considered in other appropriate circumstances, such as where sales can be directly attributed to agency activity/behaviour. From this research it was apparent that some organisations naturally saw sales as being part of the integrated mix, whereas others were far more rigid in their views and saw sales and marketing as two separate disciplines. It is difficult to be sure as to whether this rigidity was the result of historic structures and behaviours or because it made more commercial sense - this would be a useful topic for further research.

Additionally, a noticeable outcome of the research was that prior to the case study commencement date, informants from both the exploratory phase and case study phase reported that they did not envisage any specific problems arising during implementation. This indicates that, from an IMC perspective, there is little awareness both academically and in practice of many of the key issues that affect successful IMC implementation. In essence many, but not all, of the issues have been examined theoretically elsewhere and (as a result of this research) have been confirmed empirically.

However, during the case study implementation period issues concerning definition, trust, measurement and organisational structure all arose frequently.

This research has strongly highlighted that inter firm and inter personal relationships are extremely important areas for consideration in the planning stages of IMC implementation. It is the author's contention that based on this research it is an even more important consideration if structural change is envisaged, such as merging a sales and marketing department or hiring an integrated agency that includes sales.

Based on the findings from this research it therefore would be important for management to consider the collaborative setting and sharing of clear objectives and measurement techniques with all stakeholders from an IPR and IFR perspective, prior to commencement. This is required in order to allow for operational issues to be addressed at the planning stage (i.e. incorporating formal and tacit operations) and to facilitate employee/partner engagement at all levels. Informants from both client and agency perspectives strongly indicated that high levels of management communication were a prerequisite, and this included senior level peer to peer communication. This latter point is in accordance with the findings of Ellis and Hopkinson (2010, p.422) where they describe the importance of clear and consistent communications from both "the organisation" and its staff. This was reinforced by informants frequently after the implementation phase, stating a desire to see structures of both client and agency organisations change in order to deliver IMC most effectively. The engagement referred to above may also help to address issues surrounding trust which arose throughout this study, but particularly as implementation progressed. It would appear that where there is a lack of internal engagement and involvement by staff at all levels, issues with trust may arise. This internal communication may also need to be complemented by external communication with an agency partner(s) to ensure that planning and operations are discussed with a wider stakeholder group, in order to ensure objectives and operational plans are clearly understood by all of those involved. From this research it appeared that where communication is lacking it may lead to perceived opacity in concealing perceived "real objectives" of management and consequently lead to a lack of trust developing.

At a personal level, it would appear that individuals need to have a clear understanding of how their roles interrelate (both formally and from a tacit perspective) with those of colleagues both in their own organisation or department and with external partners such as agencies. This has particular resonance for those in boundary spanning roles such as those in client companies working across functions and departments and agency staff working with other agencies.

From a practitioner perspective, results from this research strongly indicates that the desire expressed by both clients and agencies to relate income more to outputs such as sales increasingly may be met through the improving measurement tools that digital technologies now offer. This could mean that not only does the client see proven return on investment, but that the agency finally moves further up the value chain, something that practitioners have been demanding for some time in order to combat what some perceive as a commoditisation of many agency services. However, just as planning was seen as vital in IMC implementation, the area of attribution measurement requires considerable planning. This research has focussed on relatively straight

forward attribution, with little marketing support and a direct sales force (meaning sales could be attributed to an individual/function more easily). It is more difficult if one considers a FMCG (Fast Moving Consumer Good) brand with high levels of media communications, sales promotion and retailer activity. Therefore just as there appears to be no one best way to structure for IMC it may well be that, currently, there is also no one best way to create a one size fits all approach to attribution and agency remuneration.

As indicated earlier, there does not appear to be a single best way for an agency to structure itself, either as a single agency or through the adoption of an orchestration approach. In a market as small as that of Ireland, it may be that IMC service offerings depend to a large extent on specific client requirements rather than a clearly categorised offering. Hence agencies may well buy in/resell services more frequently than in other larger markets. There is however a clear feeling from clients that it is not realistic for many agencies to be perceived as supplying all IMC skills from internal resources, and where this was promised by an agency it appeared to the client as not credible. There was though an acceptance that an agency hiring in resource in order to deliver a specific campaign is credible providing the agency "orchestrated" any outsourced partners on behalf of the client.

5.5 CONCLUSION AND CONTRIBUTION

According to Laurie and Mortimer (2011, p.1464) "Misunderstandings can create barriers to full implementation (of IMC), and it is the responsibility of the industry as a whole to address this and enable meaningful dialogue to take place and progress to be made." The purpose of this study was to contribute to addressing these shortcomings, by seeking a greater understanding of both views on IMC from clients and agencies and for the first time on implementation of a specific form of IMC. Laurie and Mortimer also referred to the requirement "to create dialogue between agencies, clients and academics", and again the purpose of this dissertation was to facilitate this dialogue.

A number of contributions have been made to existing literature, one being the confirmation from participants that integration of sales and marketing in an outsourced IMC environment worked well, at least within the specific confines of this case study.

A further significant finding concerned a claimed desire by participants to integrate sales into the IMC mix, coupled with reasons given for its lack of inclusion. The main reasons given concerned a lack of accurate measurement and attribution, and a conclusion could be that with measurement models improving, this could be a key driver to greater adoption of IMC including sales in the future.

The agreement and setting of clear objectives for IMC was also seen as vital and this case study highlighted that without such clearly stated goals, issues of trust become prevalent. Coupled with clearer objective setting, this research also indicated that there is a requirement for greater levels of peer to peer boundary spanning communications, particularly at a senior inter-organisational level.

At a strategic level, this study's findings concur with those of Laurie and Mortimer (2011, 2012, 2013) whereby they pointed out that organisational structure mirroring requirements need to be set by clients rather than agencies. It was noticeable that this issue did not arise in the exploratory study when issues around implementation were discussed, but arose during stage two, the implementation phase.

However, perhaps the most significant finding concerned the influence of IPR/IFR, and boundary spanning roles in particular. Informant views strongly supported the view that both positive inter firm relationships and inter personal relationships were vital when implementing this form of IMC, perhaps due to the extensive non- coded forms of tacit working often required to introduce a new form of IMC. Further, from a sales and marketing perspective, it is apparent from this study that inter personal and inter firm collaboration was vital to success and collaboration was seen both theoretically and practically as positive by all parties in this study.

From a methodological point of view, a contribution was also made due to evaluation and monitoring taking place during the case study rather than a measuring post event through a self reporting mechanism.

Consistent with the epistemological orientation of this study, the structure and service offering of an agency could be viewed as a form of social construction with management and staff shifting the positioning of an agency depending on the current staff employed, with clients being part of an interpretive community. In this case the perception of an agency as a full service IMC agency rests to a large extent on the client's perception of IMC.

This revelatory research (Yin 2009, p.185) therefore represents an initial exploration in a new domain, with research results indicating that there are still significant definitional gaps on what IMC is, and that implementation of IMC via multiple outsourced partners results in significant IFR and IPR challenges, as well as significant potential benefits. This research emphasises the critical nature of boundary spanning roles in the delivery of the particular form of IMC covered in this study. It also highlights other critical areas including trust, organisational structure and IMC measurement and remuneration, each of which could now benefit from further IMC research. Tangentially, this research also highlights how the integration of sales into IMC (when enhanced by appropriate

measurement techniques) may drive greater income/effective remuneration models for both clients and agencies.

In summary, this dissertation undoubtedly concurs with Laurie and Mortimer (2012) where they assert that the IMC debate has moved on from being about definition, to examining implementation and arriving at best practice which can be shared. I would assert that this dissertation has extended the debate by focussing on implementation of IMC and by highlighting newly reported insights. The methodology adopted (i.e. a participant Observant case study during IMC implementation) was also a valuable extension to existing studies.

Key findings surround the important issue of boundary spanning roles and inter firm / inter personal relations, the positive but complex area of including sales in the IMC mix and associated measurement and reward structures. Other findings relate to the credibility of an agency offering "full" services and that clients still have differing definitions of IMC and its strategic role.

5.6 LIMITATIONS

Whilst there have been contributions to both the existing literature and potentially to managerial/operational practice as a result of this study, there are also some limitations.

The outcome of this study potentially results in transferability of findings into practice as against generalisability.

When attempting to make generalisations about types of social situations using small scale, qualitative approaches, the notion of "reasonable extrapolation" (Patton, 2002) should be applied, where the potential relevance of my reading of the data can be carefully extrapolated to other IPR/IFR contexts. Extrapolations are "modest speculations on the likely applicability of findings to other situations under similar but not identical situations. Extrapolations are logical, thoughtful and problem oriented rather than purely empirical, statistical and probabilistic" (Williams and May, 1998, p.142).

As this research is based on exploratory interviews and a single case study it may be that there is no one best way to achieve sales and marketing collaboration (Biemans, Brenic and Malshe, 2010), but this research has resulted both in a greater understanding of IMC and its implementation issues, which may lead to better management decision making - both of which were key objectives over and above the prediction of future events. Whilst it was justifiable to use a limited number of informants, this study could benefit from replication to ascertain if findings are more generalisable.

The adoption of a participant observant methodology also has potential limitations, in particular the potential influence of the participant on behaviours during the case for example, and whilst every effort was made to overcome this potential drawback it is likely that some influence persisted.

A limitation is that in stage one not all levels of integration were covered in terms of the organisations taking part. This limitation is possibly offset by informants having prior experience and views of all aspects of IMC, however I have still taken the view that it is prudent to point this out as a limitation.

The duration of the stage two case study ideally would have been longer in order to ascertain how some areas such as sales and attitudes changed over an extended period. It was apparent that sales, as an example, did not increase substantially during the period, as implementation issues delayed full operation of some aspects of IMC. Whilst this proved to be highly valuable to the research (highlighting implementation issues) it did mean that despite informant views that sales would increase as a result of integration, it could not be proven as part of this research.

A further potential limitation is that Business Development Managers (BDMs) were recruited during the period of the stage two research via the host company, but their views could not be included directly for operational reasons. Whilst their views were incorporated via their line manager (who was a key informant throughout) it could be that some of their nuanced opinions have not been incorprated here.

5.7 FUTURE RESEARCH

Informants also raised the issue of mirrored client and agency structures as being potentially an important determinant of success, and it would be useful to conduct further research to examine this area specifically. Additionally it would also be interesting to assess if new companies structure themselves differently to mature organisations in relation to IMC, possibly reflecting it being easier to structure rather than restructure for a variety of reasons.

Measurement techniques arose frequently, and were often cited as a barrier to IMC implementation due to a lack of reliable methodologies linking performance (outcomes) to inputs (behaviours). As such, it would be useful to gain greater insights into the area of IMC integration measurement and to carry out additional research on the area of agency IMC related income. The area of outsourced sales related income is a current topic of debate with some negative views expressed in newspapers, (Brignall , 2014, p.2), and whist viewed by informants at all levels in this study as desirable, the

subject has also received adverse press commentary with at least one major utility provider withdrawing all outsourced door to door teams as a result of complaints of high pressure sales tactics and a culture of “sales at any cost”. However, it should be noted that many sales are now made by digital means, which may help to overcome some of these issues. It seems to indicate greater levels of compliance issues arise if IMC agencies are to be rewarded for sales performance. In essence this indicates that greater advance implementation planning may be required, something that this research has highlighted as being often overlooked when implementing IMC in general.

Holders of marketing positions in this research appeared frequently to be clear on what constituted a specific marketing function, yet subsequent informant views ultimately highlighted wide variances. This view that there is still little account taken of what marketing people do in practice is further underlined by Ardley and Quinn (2014, p.109) where they also point to “the pluralistic ways in which marketing practitioners constitute their work.” Therefore, it may well be that from an IMC context not only do inter firm and intra firm (departmental) understandings need to be clear, but so too should inter personal understandings. Each of these areas would benefit from further research, as it would be interesting and useful to explore if these variances exist in similar IMC studies.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Sample Interview Request Letter (similar used for all stages)

09 January 2012

John Canacott
49 Clarinda Park East
Dun Laoghaire
County Dublin
Ireland

Dear Mr. XXXXXX,

My name is John Canacott and I am currently conducting research for my Thesis which will hopefully lead to the award of a Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) from the University of Durham in the UK. My research interest is in sales and marketing agency communications and specifically the integration of services coupled with the potential effects on performance/remuneration.

Research outline

Traditionally, many companies have outsourced a range of marketing and sales services to external companies who specialise in certain disciplines. PR, Advertising, Direct marketing and Sales are commonly outsourced.

My main research will examine the current status of outsourced sales and marketing activities in the B2B and B2C sectors in Ireland, and will focus on what I believe is a significant gap in academic research .

Specifically, the main research will focus on examining to what extent agency performance increases when marketing outsourced activity is fully integrated and delivered *by a single* outsourced agency partner, and will examine various key integration variables.

Significant amounts of relevant academic research already exists on both advertising (and other marketing communication disciplines) and sales – examining amongst others, key areas such as specific discipline efficiencies and effectiveness for example. Indeed a lot of research also exists on IMC (Integrated marketing Communications) agencies, but very little academic research has been carried out in Ireland on IMC in general.

Request for an Interview

As you are undoubtedly one of Ireland's leading Agency marketers, I would be most grateful if you would agree to be interviewed regarding your opinions and perceptions related to this subject area.

Format of questions, information sought during the conversation

The interview will follow a semi-structured format to enable the issues and themes outlined above to be explored and to this end I have developed a set of open-ended questions or themes which I would appreciate being able to discuss with you. The purpose of these questions is to gain a deeper understanding of the key issues and understandings of IMC and Integration by listening to your views based on your opinions and/or experiences.

Time for interview

It is foreseen that the interview should take approximately 30/45 minutes.

Your permission is requested to tape the interview

Unless you have an objection, it is my intention to record the interview.

Anonymity

Excerpts from the interview may be used or quoted within the dissertation document but these comments or views shall at all times be referred to *anonymously* and at no time shall anything you say be attributed to you without your prior consultation, consent and specific agreement.

It is however proposed that a list of interviewees be provided in the Appendices of the document and your consent is sought for the inclusion of your name in this list.

Interviewees' right to terminate interview or not answer questions

It is understood that as interviewee you may not wish to answer specific questions and that you may wish to terminate the interview at any stage without providing reasons.

Summary of research findings

Should you have an interest in this research area, I would be delighted to provide you with a summary copy of the research findings in due course.

I hope that you will agree to my request for an interview. I will be in touch over the coming days to see if we can arrange an appointment.

Thanking you in advance

Yours sincerely,

John Canacott MBA

Appendix 2

Questions and Rationale - Client side Stage One Interviews (prompts in italics)

Thanks for agreeing to this interview, it is much appreciated. This interview is being recorded and you can of course stop at any time you wish. The topic is around the area of outsourced sales and marketing services and its integration and effectiveness and to evaluate alternative modes of service provision. Ideally I would like you to share your views and opinions in relation to your current role and your views in general on the subject.

Rationale (this is an introduction aimed to put the interviewee at ease)

Lots of people define IMC differently; can you give an outline of what IMC means to you?

Continuity of voice/message

Agency structure

Services included

Services excluded

Rationale: There are lots of different ways to define IMC. The purpose of this question is to frame the interview and to scope out some of the key typical dimensions (Kliatchcko (2005, 2008), Shultz (2007), Laurie and Mortimer (2011, 2012, 2013)

Describe the way your organisation currently uses agencies or of experiences you have had.

Integrated fully/partially

Totally separate

Sales and marketing together?

Rationale: This is to find out the structural relationship used/experienced

Do you think IMC is a fad or here to stay?

Rationale: Idea is to ascertain if IMC is seen as strategically and structurally valid as against tactical usage (Schultz 1996, 2007)

How much of a challenge is it to manage multiple agencies?

Communications input

Communications output

Turf wars

Rationale: Management time issue scoping (Schultz (2007), Kliatchcko (2008), Laurie and Mortimer (2011, 2012, 2013)

Do you believe that performance would be improved if you could use a single agency?

Why

Why not?

What kinds of performance?

Rationale: Open question to ascertain if the single agency concept is attractive (Schultz 2009)

Would this include sales?

Rationale: Does the interviewee see the marketing mix as including sales (Narayandas 2002, Laurie and Mortimer 2011, 2012, 2013)

How do you currently measure agency performance, is it by behaviour or outcome?

Behaviours: Print /production margins/hourly rates

Outcomes: Market share, recall/recognitions, attitudes, reduced CPA for example.

Rationale: Current measurement scoping (Narayandas 2002)

Do you currently use sales outcomes as a way of measuring or rewarding your agency?

Would you like to be able to?

Rationale: Current measures

If a company were considering moving to an integrated outsourced solution what would be the issues to consider, internally (i.e. within your company) and externally (i.e. in your nominated agency) of integration?

Internal: Structures/HR/staffing /interdepartmental conflict

External: Agency risk in handling all business/agency expertise

Rationale: Structural issue perception (Kliatchcko 2008, Laurie and Mortimer 2011, 2012, 2013)

What would you see as the potential benefits if any of full integration?

Reduced fees, goal congruence, speed to market/flexibility

Rationale: Benefit perception (Schultz, Laurie and Mortimer)

Do you feel that sales could be positively affected if they were included in the outsourced model?

Rationale: Benefit perception (Narayandas 2002)

Do you find it confusing as to which agencies offer which services?

I.e. DM/SP/Digital/Advertising/PR

Rationale: IMC Categorisation (Kliatchko 2008, Laurie and Mortimer 2011, 2012, 2013)

What would the key issues be if outsourcing sales to your marketing agency?

Rationale: Verifying question 9

Internal structures/HR/staffing /interdepartmental conflict

Rationale: Structural issue perception

Are you satisfied with current measurement techniques which measure things like attitude rather than sales related outcomes?

Rationale: Benefits perception (Schultz 1996)

Would you prefer an agency that could and would earn some of its income based on performance?

Rationale: Benefits perception

Why do you think that agencies don't typically offer all services including sales in the B2B sector bearing in mind that the promotional marketing mix includes sales?

Rationale: Open question

Can you think of any potential negatives relating to integration?

Rationale: Reverse engineered question. (Kliatchcko 2008, Schultz 1996, Laurie and Mortimer 2011)

Are there any other thoughts you would like to share on the topic of working with external agencies offering integrated services, or on the process of integration?

Note: A similar questionnaire was created for the agency side interviews with appropriate alterations made to reflect respondent knowledge/roles. See appendix 3.

ENDS

Appendix 3

Questions and Rationale - Agency side Stage One Interviews

All questions below are based on the relevant published literature (mainly papers by Schultz (1996) Kliatchko (2005) and Narayandas (2002) combined with my own experience in the area). I have indicated below the main papers to which questions relate where appropriate**.**

Questions and Rationale (prompts in italics)

Thanks for agreeing to this interview, it is much appreciated. This interview is being recorded and you can of course stop at any time you wish. The topic is around the area of outsourced sales and marketing services and its integration and effectiveness. Ideally I would like you to share your views and opinions in relation to your current role and your views in general on the subject.

Rationale (this is an introduction aimed to put the interviewee at ease)

Lots of people define IMC differently; can you give an outline of what IMC means to you?

Continuity of voice/message

Agency structure

Services included

Services excluded

Rationale: There are lots of different ways to define IMC. The purpose of this question is to frame the interview and to scope out some of the key typical dimensions (Kliatchcko, Shultz)

Describe the way your agency is currently structured and any experiences of change?

Integrated fully/partially

Totally separate

Sales and marketing together?

Rationale: This is to find out the structural relationship used/experienced

Do you think IMC is a fad or here to stay?

Rationale: Idea is to ascertain if IMC is seen as strategically and structurally valid as against tactical usage (Schultz 1996)

How much of a challenge is it a) for clients to manage multiple agencies and b) to offer multiple services?

Communications input

Communications output

Turf wars

Rationale: Management time issue and skills offering scoping (Schultz 1996, Kliatchcko 2005)

Do you believe that performance is\would be improved if you provide multiple services?

Why

Why not?

What kinds of performance?

Rationale: Open question to ascertain if the single agency concept is attractive (Schultz 1996)

Would/should/could this include sales?

Rationale: Does the interviewee see the marketing mix as including sales in the real world (Narayandas 2002)

How do you currently measure agency performance, is it by behaviour or outcome?

Behaviours: Print /production margins/hourly rates

Outcomes: Market share, recall/recognitions, attitudes, reduced CPA for example.

Rationale: Current measurement scoping (Narayandas 2002, Schultz 1996)

Do you currently use sales outcomes as a way of measuring or rewarding your agency?

Would you like to be able to?

Rationale: Current measures

If a client side company were considering moving to an integrated outsourced solution what would be the issues for them to consider, internally (i.e. within their company) and externally (i.e. in your nominated agency) of integration?

Internal: *Structures/HR/staffing /interdepartmental conflict*

External: *Agency risk in handling all business/agency expertise*

Rationale: Structural issue perception

What would you see from a client perspective as the potential benefits if any of full integration?

Reduced fees, goal congruence, speed to market/flexibility

Rationale: Benefit perception (Schultz 1996)

Do you feel that sales could be positively affected if they were included in the outsourced model?

Rationale: Benefit perception (Narayandas 2002)

Do you feel clients find it confusing as to which agencies offer which services?

I.e. DM/SP/Digital/Advertising/PR

Rationale: IMC Categorisation (Kliatchko 2005)

What would the key issues be if you were to offer outsourced sales to your marketing agency?

Rationale: Verifying question 9

Internal structures/HR/staffing /interdepartmental conflict

Rationale: Structural issue perception

Are you satisfied with current measurement techniques which measure things like attitude rather than sales related outcomes?

Rationale: Benefits perception (Schultz 1996)

Do you think clients would you prefer an agency that could and would earn some of its income based on performance?

Rationale: Benefits perception

Why do you think that agencies don't typically offer all services including sales in the B2B sector bearing in mind that the promotional marketing mix includes sales?

Rationale: Open question

Can you think of any potential negatives relating to integration?

Rationale: Reverse engineered question. (Kliatchcko 2005, Schultz 1996)

Are there any other thoughts you would like to share on the topic of offering integrated services, or on the process of integration?

What differences would you expect to see over coming five years?

ENDS

Appendix 4 Ethics Flowchart and Checklist

Durham Business School

Ethics in Research

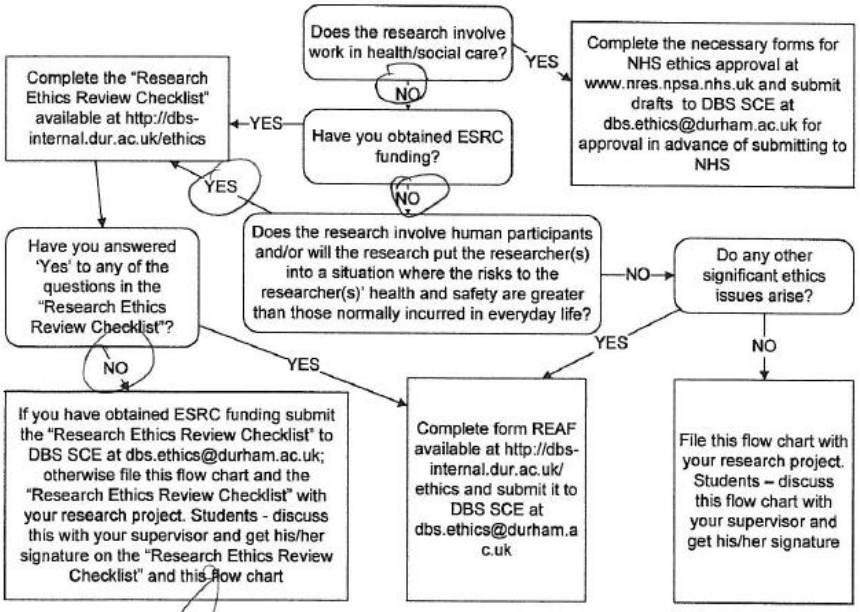
Process flow chart for students and staff undertaking research

Note: all research can potentially raise ethical issues. The focus here is on research involving human participants, but consideration should also be given to ethical issues that may arise in connection with research that does not involve human participants. In all cases research is governed by the University's "Policy for the maintenance of good practice in research" which is available at http://dbs-internal.dur.ac.uk/ethics and should be read in conjunction with this process flow chart. This process flow chart applies to each discrete research project and it is suggested that this flow chart is completed for each such project.

Please complete the details as requested below and highlight either 'YES' or 'NO' after each box to show your route through the flow chart. "DBS SCE" refers to Durham Business School's Sub-Committee for Ethics throughout.

Title of Project: ..... INTEGRATION of OUTSOURCED SOLES + MARKETING SOURCES.

Name of Principal Researcher or anonymous code of student: ..... JOHN CANACOTT



Signature of Principal Researcher or Supervisor:

.....

Durham
Business School

RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW CHECKLIST

This checklist should be completed for every research project that involves human participants. It should also be completed for all ESRC funded research, once funding has been obtained. It is used to identify whether a full application for ethics approval needs to be submitted.

Before completing this form, please refer to the University's Policy for the Maintenance of Good Practice In Research available at http://dbs-internal.dur.ac.uk/ethics/default.aspx. The principal investigator or, where the principal investigator is a student, the supervisor is responsible for exercising appropriate professional judgement in this review.

This checklist must be completed before potential participants are approached to take part in any research.

Section I: Project Details

1. Project title: INTEGRATION OF OUTSOURCED SALES + MARKETING SERVICES

Section II: Applicant Details

2. Name of researcher (applicant) or anonymous code of student: JOHN CANAGH

3. Status (please delete those which are not applicable)

~~Undergraduate Student~~ / ~~Taught Postgraduate Student~~ / Postgraduate Research Student ~~/ Staff~~

4. Email address (staff only): .....

5. Contact address: 49 CLARINDA PARK EAST DUN LAOGHAIRE COUNTY DUBLIN IRELAND

6. Telephone number: +353 86 2412162

Section III: For Students Only

7. Programme title: DBA (9)

8. Mode (delete as appropriate)

~~Full Time~~ / Part Time / ~~Distance Learning~~

9. Supervisor's or module leader's name: DR NICK ELLIS

10. Aims and Objectives: Please state the aims/objectives of the project

TO ASSESS/DISCUSS KEY ISSUES RELATING TO INTEGRATION OF MARKETING AND SALES SERVICES through INTERVIEWS with SENIOR AGENCY SIDE STAFF

11. Methodology: Please describe in brief the methodology of the research project

SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS with 10/12 AGENCY EXPERTS/LEADERS IN IRELAND. INTERVIEWS will be RECORDED.

12. Risk assessment: If the research will put the researcher(s) into a situation where risks to the researcher(s)' health and safety are greater than those normally incurred in everyday life, please indicate what the risks are and how they will be mitigated

NOT APPLICABLE

Supervisor: Please tick the appropriate boxes. The study should not begin until all boxes are ticked:

☐ The topic merits further research

☐ The participant information sheet or leaflet is appropriate (where applicable)

☐ The procedures for recruitment and obtaining informed consent are appropriate (where applicable)

Comments from supervisor:

Section IV: Research Checklist

Please answer each question by ticking the appropriate box:

		YES	NO
1	Does the study involve participants who are particularly vulnerable or unable to give informed consent? (eg. children, people with learning disabilities, your own students)[1]	☐	☑
2	Will the study require the co-operation of a gatekeeper for the initial access to the groups or individuals to be recruited? (eg. students at school, members of a self-help group, residents of a nursing home)[2]	☐	☑
3	Will it be necessary for participants to take part in the study without their knowledge and consent at the time? (eg. covert observation of people in non-public places)	☐	☑
4	Will the study involve discussion of sensitive topics? (eg. sexual activity, drug use)	☐	☑
5	Are drugs, placebos or other substances (eg. food substances, vitamins) to be administered to the study participants or will the study involve invasive, intrusive or potentially harmful procedures of any kind?	☐	☑
6	Will blood or tissue samples be obtained from participants?	☐	☑
7	Is pain or more than mild discomfort likely to result from the study?	☐	☑
8	Could the study induce psychological stress or anxiety or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in normal life?	☐	☑
9	Will the study involve prolonged or repetitive testing?	☐	☑
10	Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants? [3]	☐	☑
11	Will the study involve recruitment of patients or staff through the NHS?[4]	☐	☑

[1] Vulnerable persons are defined for these purposes as those who are legally incompetent to give informed consent (i.e. those under the age of 16, although it is also good practice to obtain permission from all participants under the age of 18 together with the assent of their parents or guardians), or those with a mental illness or intellectual disability sufficient to prevent them from giving informed consent, or those who are physically incapable of giving informed consent, or in situations where participants may be under some degree of influence (e.g. your own students or those recruited via a gatekeeper - see footnote 2)

[2] This applies only where the recruitment of participants is via a gatekeeper, thus giving rise to particular ethical issues in relation to willing participation and influence on informed consent decisions particularly for vulnerable individuals. It does *not* relate to situations where contact with individuals is established via a manager but participants are willing and able to give informed consent. In such cases, the answer to this question should be "No"

[3] In experiments in economics and psychology in particular it is common to pay participants. Provided such payments are within the normal parameters of the discipline, the answer to this question should be "No"

[4] Research in the NHS may be classified as 'service evaluation' and, if so, does not require NHS research ethics approval. In such cases, prior written confirmation that the research is considered to be service evaluation is required from an appropriate authority, and on receipt of this the 'no' box may be ticked and this form used for ethics approval. Advice and assistance is available from dbs.ethics@durham.ac.uk.

If you have answered 'no' to all questions: Undergraduate, MA and MSc students should retain a copy of the form and submit it with their research report or dissertation. Work that is submitted without the appropriate ethics form will be returned unassessed. MPhil/PhD students and members of staff should retain a copy for their records. In each case Durham Business School's Sub-Committee for Ethics (DBS SCE) may request sight of the form.

If you have answered 'yes' to **any** of the questions in Section IV, you will need to describe more fully how you plan to deal with the ethical issues raised by your research. **This does not mean that you cannot do the research, only that your proposal will need to be approved by the DBS SCE.** You will need to submit your plans for addressing the ethical issues raised by your proposal using the ethics approval application form REAF, which should be sent to the committee at dbs.ethics@durham.ac.uk. Form REAF can be obtained from the School Intranet site at **http://dbs-internal.dur.ac.uk/Pages/Default.aspx** or using the student / visitor access:

http://dbs-internal.dur.ac.uk/ethics
Username: **dubs\ethicsvisitors**
Password: **durham**

If you answered 'yes' to **question** 11 in Section IV, you will also have to submit an application to the appropriate external health authority ethics committee, but only **after** you have received approval from the DBS SCE. In such circumstances complete the appropriate **external** paperwork and submit this for review by the DBS SCE to dbs.ethics@durham.ac.uk.

Please note that whatever answers you have given above, it is your responsibility to follow the University's "Policy for the Maintenance of Good Practice In Research" and any relevant academic or professional guidelines in the conduct of your study. **This includes providing appropriate information sheets and consent forms, and ensuring confidentiality in the storage and use of data.** Any significant change in the question, design or conduct over the course of the research should result in a review of research ethics issues using the "Process Flow Chart for Students and Staff Undertaking Research" and completing a new version of this checklist if necessary.

Declaration

Signed
(staff only, students insert anonymous code): .....

Date: 20/12/2011

Student / Principal Investigator

Signed: .....

Date: .....

Supervisor or module leader (where appropriate)

If you have answered 'no' to all questions: Undergraduate, MA and MSc students should retain a copy of the form and submit it with their research report or dissertation. Work that is submitted without the appropriate ethics form will be returned unassessed. MPhil/PhD students and members of staff should retain a copy for their records. In each case Durham Business School's Sub-Committee for Ethics (DBS SCE) may request sight of the form.

If you have answered 'yes' to **any** of the questions in Section IV, you will need to describe more fully how you plan to deal with the ethical issues raised by your research. **This does not mean that you cannot do the research, only that your proposal will need to be approved by the DBS SCE.** You will need to submit your plans for addressing the ethical issues raised by your proposal using the ethics approval application form REAF, which should be sent to the committee at dbs.ethics@durham.ac.uk. Form REAF can be obtained from the School Intranet site at http://dbs-internal.dur.ac.uk/Pages/Default.aspx or using the student / visitor access:

http://dbs-internal.dur.ac.uk/ethics
Username: dubs\ethicsvisitors
Password: durham

If you answered 'yes' to **question** 11 in Section IV, you will also have to submit an application to the appropriate external health authority ethics committee, but only **after** you have received approval from the DBS SCE. In such circumstances complete the appropriate **external** paperwork and submit this for review by the DBS SCE to dbs.ethics@durham.ac.uk.

Please note that whatever answers you have given above, it is your responsibility to follow the University's "Policy for the Maintenance of Good Practice In Research" and any relevant academic or professional guidelines in the conduct of your study. **This includes providing appropriate information sheets and consent forms, and ensuring confidentiality in the storage and use of data.** Any significant change in the question, design or conduct over the course of the research should result in a review of research ethics issues using the "Process Flow Chart for Students and Staff Undertaking Research" and completing a new version of this checklist if necessary.

Declaration

Signed
(staff only, students insert anonymous code) .....

Date 30/12/2011

Student / Principal Investigator

Signed .....

Date 30/1/2012

Supervisor or module leader (where appropriate)

Appendix 5

Questions and Rationale for Stage Two Interviews (prompts in italics)

Aide Memoire

Thanks for agreeing to this interview, it is much appreciated. This interview is being recorded and you can of course stop at any time you wish. The topic is around the area of outsourced sales and marketing services, collaboration/integration and effectiveness, and to obtain views on alternative modes of service provision. Ideally I would like you to share your views and opinions in relation to your current role (in relation to Company A) and / or your views in general on the subject.

Rationale: An introduction question. Ellis and Ybema (2010), Laurie and Mortimer (2011)

Describe the way you currently use external agencies in terms of making sales and marking services? (Company A only)

What does marketing entail?

How does the sales function work?

Rationale Hackley (2010), Laurie and Mortimer (2011), Ellis and Ybema (2010), Biemans 2010 marketing /sales configurations: hidden marketing, sales driven marketing, living apart together, marketing/sales integration

Describe your role/involvement with Company A from a sales (or marketing) perspective?

What does it entail?

What does it exclude?

Rationale boundary setting Hackley (2001), Ellis&Ybema 2010, Laurie and Mortimer (2011)

What helps you particularly to do your job well?

Structure/collaboration ref lemeunier 2009

Autonomy

Integration of tactics

Strategy integration

Feedback

Analytics

Tangible support

Sales closing

Training

Rationale: vertical and horizontal communication Malshe (2011)

What are the things you feel work particularly well?

Suggestions on improvements?

Would you see closer collaboration between sale and marketing entail?

Beimans 2010

What would you expect the impact to be on key metrics such as sales levels, subscriber numbers and other metrics? Why do you think these changes would occur?

Overall, do you think that closer collaboration is a positive or negative thing and why?

Homburg 2007 Thought world differences between sales and marketing

Lemeunier 2009

Does sales and marketing work closely to help define and locate potential buyers?

Kotler 2006

Lead gernaration programmes Kotler 2006

Ends

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