

# 7

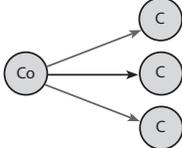
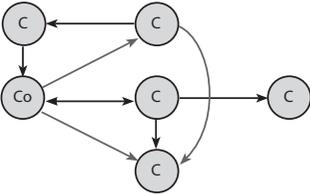
## Digital Content Planning

Marketing communications are messages sent to a target audience in order to achieve marketing goals. Marketing communications should inform, persuade and remind the target audience about the product and services that the brand offers (Bell and Taheri, 2017). Prior to the widespread adoption of digital technology the direction of these messages was depicted as a one-to-many model whereby marketing communications were formulated and sent by the brand to be received and decoded by the customer. However developments in digital communications channels enable consumers to engage not only in communication with a brand but also with each other.

### Communication models

The digitisation of marketing communication challenges the existing one-to-many marketing communications model. To reflect the changing communications landscape, marketing communication models have evolved from a one-to-many to a many-to-many communication models (Table 7.1). The *one-to-many* model represents a broadcast communication process where a message is formulated, sent, received and decoded. This does not account for the interactivity that characterises digital media. Interactivity can be represented by a two-way communications model, where the source sends a message which is received and a response is sent, this is called a *dialogue*. A many-to-many model is where consumers can interact with other consumers and with the brand (Hoffman and Novak, 1996). This is called a *trialogue* (Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick, 2012).

**Table 7.1:** Communications models. Adapted from Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick, 2012

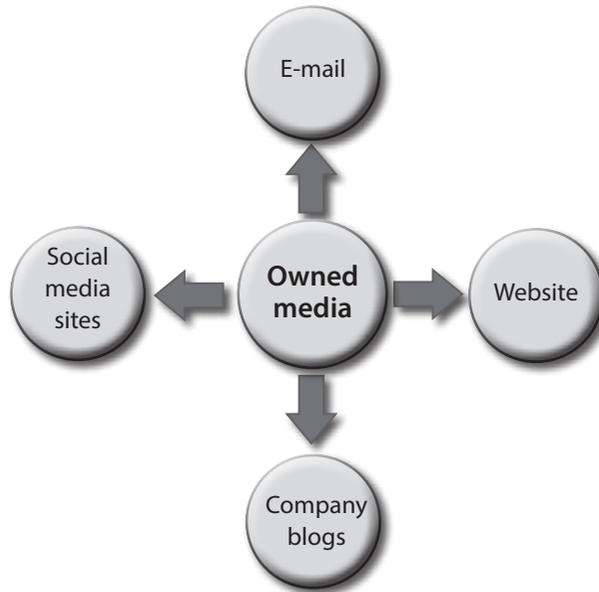
Communication model	Description	Example
One to many model 	One source contacts many receivers with one message, the medium does not allow the customers to respond to the brand	Television advert
One to one model 	One source contacts each recipient with a different personalised message and the customers can each respond to the source through the same medium	E-mail advert
Many to many model 	One source sends a different message to each participant, customers can each send a message to each other, response to each sender- receiver can be made through the same medium	Social media post

Reactions to online communications in the form of a dialogue and triologue are instances of *online consumer engagement* (OCE). OCE is a key measurement of the success of digital marketing communications (Morgan-Thomas and Veloutsou, 2013). OCE can be either active or passive. *Active engagement* behaviour would be participating in message creation, content sharing and commenting on the content provided by others (Casalo et al., 2007); and *passive consumer engagement* behaviour would be liking a fan page and viewing content.

Selection criteria for an organisation's communication channels are the level of control that each channel allowed to the marketer (Fill, 2009). As the level of interactivity decreases the degree of control increases, for example, earned media has the highest level of interactivity and the least amount of control. There is brand risk associated with the lack of message control in digital environments since social media enables consumers to complain or praise the products of an organisation and take a more active role in creating and sending communications within the brand space (Ward and Ostrom, 2006). Lack of control of social media activity by other users is a common fear among marketers (Pfeffer et al., 2014). We will now consider each of the three digital classifications in more detail.

## Owned media

Owned media is branded content which is present online because the company has established ownership of specific digital pages. Owned digital media includes e-mail, website, company blogs and social media sites (Figure 7.1).



**Figure 7.1:** Range of owned media

*E-mail marketing* usually takes the form of newsletters that are sent to a database on a periodic time (Table 7.2). Sending and receiving e-mails is the top online activity among adults in the UK, and it is expected to reach 90% usage among Internet users by 2019 (Office for National Statistics, 2016; Campaign Monitor, 2017). E-mail marketing is an effective way to reach prospects and to manage existing customers' relationships. Whenever running an e-mail marketing campaign, it is important also to consider the average expected opening and click-through rates, as evidence from e-mail marketing providers find that these vary depending on the industry. For example, according to MailChimp (2017), a popular e-mail marketing supplier, the click-through rates (CTRs) of restaurant industries is among the lowest (1.25%) whereas Hobbies and Media and Publishing industries are among the highest industries regarding CTRs (5.13% and 4.70% respectively). Such benchmarks help a digital marketer to plan and evaluate an e-mail marketing campaigns.