Promotional documents
Based in part on a lecture by Robert Hartland

Today’s lecture

- Why promotional documents are an IM concern
- The scope of the ‘form’
  - E.g. promotion as advertising to sell
- These forms as typical documents (information products in this case)
- Media options – pros and cons
- Advertising and ICT: an example

Promotion as an IM concern

DISSEMINATION of information (along with managing creation, capture, storage, retrieval and access) is what information system’s do!

- Getting information out to those who have an interest in it (or a right to see or know about it)
- Promotion does not necessarily mean ‘selling’
- Many organisations have a need to promote their services
- Identifying audiences
- Reaching them in cost-effective ways

The scope of the form?

Any document in any medium intended to make an audience aware of a particular product, service, event etc.

The scope of the form?

From HUGE and costly promotional campaigns
(e.g. Vanilla Coke, Terrorism Awareness, ‘Finding Nemo’)

The scope of the form?

To a party invitation, a noticeboard announcement, FOR SALE note stuck inside a car window

And everything in between
What does ‘awareness’ mean?

- **MORE THAN** providing information to interested parties, e.g.
  - a unit website
  - a publication
  - a posting to discussion group

What does ‘awareness’ mean?

- **INvolves** raising awareness with a view to
  - persuading
  - changing attitudes
  - creating a desire for
  - enlisting support for
  - implanting an idea etc.

In any medium?

**Promotional documents include:**

*Spoken word: ‘spruiking’, marketing phone calls, radio advertising, product/service related radio interviews, the voice in TV commercials etc.*

In any medium?

**Promotional documents include:**

*Text: classified advertisements, ‘copy’ accompanying graphic advertisements, spam, direct mail, postings to listserv etc.*

In any medium?

**Promotional documents include:**

*Images (including graphics): TV, billboards, print versions, logos/brands, product placement in entertainment forms*

An audience?

- That segment of a population identified as **most** likely to be interested in or affected by a product, service, idea
  - Bread is sold to almost everyone
  - Ferraris are sold to the young(?) and wealthy?
Promotional campaigns?

- A co-ordinated group of different promotional documents and strategies developed to raise awareness within a target audience (or market)

Advertising intends above all *to sell*

But similar documentary forms are used to encourage people to:

- Behave in socially responsible ways
- Support charities
- Vote for a particular candidate or Party
- Attend demonstrations or conferences

What does any documentary form need to be ‘successful’?

- An audience which is ‘ready’
- A medium which is affordable and readily available
- A market large enough to make production worthwhile
- An appropriate political/social climate
- A technology which allows it to be created

Audiences for commercial advertising

Groups with:

- a disposable income
- access to technologies and media which channel advertising
- a need or ‘desire’ (often created by the advertiser!!!)

Media

Advertisers have always been quick to exploit each communications medium as it has arisen:

- Clay tablets to email!!
- Most campaigns run across multiple media

Markets (i.e. a product’s *audience*) in the West

- Long been an aristocracy anxious to consume
- 18th C. – emergence of the middle class
- 19th C. – a burgeoning middle class
- 20th C. – a working class with a disposable income and leisure
CONSUMERISM:
A social, political and economic system which depends on the constant production and repeated consumption of goods and services on a large scale.

Technology
- Print
- Graphic representation
- Radio
- Television
- The Internet
- plus every possible combination of these!!

Eight principal media
- Magazines
- Television
- Newspaper
- Radio
- Internet
- Direct mail
- Billboards and posters
- Miscellaneous Media (pens, mugs, beer coasters etc.)

Advantages of
1. NEWSPAPERS
   - Large (?) circulations
   - Market close to advertiser’s place of business
   - Ability to manipulate copy regularly and frequently

Advantages of
2. MAGAZINES
   - Access to generalist or specialist markets
   - Therefore giving advertisers access to their most likely customers (i.e. targeting)

Advantages of
3. TV AND RADIO
   - Potential for a huge audience
   - Diversity of audience means particular markets can be targeted by selecting particular times and/or programs
Advantages of

4. DIRECT MARKETING

• Highly personalised and detailed appeal

Advantages of

5. BILLBOARDS AND POSTERS

• Exploit the potential ‘reach’ of mass-transit systems and pedestrian populations ‘on the move’

Advantages of

6. MISCELLANEOUS MEDIA (point of sale advertising)

– Dealer displays, promotional giveaways, matchbooks, Calendars, Business cards, Etc.

Advertising ‘techniques’ include:

• Repetition across a range of media
• Trade marking as a promise of quality (e.g. Nike, Chanel)
• Price appeal (Sale! Bargain!)
• ‘Scare copy’ playing on fears of crime, poverty, sickness etc.

Advantages of web-based promotion

• A global market
• Low cost
• High levels of interactivity leads to ‘value-added information’?
• Find and buy from the one site

Spam … has no single agreed-upon definition

• Is an annoying ‘joke’ from a relative or acquaintance spam?
• Is a hoax virus warning spam?
• How about this? — ‘unsolicited commercial e-mail’ (Judge 2002: 60)
• Or this? — ‘all forms of unsolicited promotional e-mail’ (Spinello 1999: 186)
• Is it really that new?
Spam

- A lot of debate in the media and academic circles concerns the ethics and regulation of spam
- For Saban and associates (2002: 29), it is ‘the weakest form of cybercrime’
- Many (eg Judge 2002: 60) claim that it costs businesses billions of dollars each year, and undermines consumer confidence in electronic commerce (Saban et al. 2002; Stead & Gilbert 2001)

What does spam advertise? (Cranor & LaMacchia 1998: 80)

400 messages received at two subdomains across March to May 1997 were classified as follows:

- 35% money-making opportunities
- 11% adult entertainment etc
- 10% direct e-mail marketing
- 9% ‘how-to guides’ etc
- 7% IT-related services
- 3% non-commercial and/or possibly solicited
- 25% ‘other products and services’

‘Only 36%’ explained how to be removed from mail list

So why is spam so widespread?

Because it often succeeds in its own terms:
- It is cheap to send (especially compared to snailmail)
- It shifts much of the cost burden to the recipient
- It can make a return even in the face of a low response rate (Mangalindan 2002)

Cheap to send

‘Serious bulk mailers invest a few hundred dollars in specialised software capable of sending 250,000 messages with forged headers per hours and harvesting email addresses from Usenet, the Web, and online services’

(Cranor & LaMacchia 1998: 76)

‘It’s just as cost effective to send to 6 million e-mail addresses as to 1 million e-mail addresses, so why bother being selective?’

(quoted in Spinello 1999: 186)

Shifts burden of cost

‘Sending spam can cost $0.0005 per recipient; direct mail can cost $1.21 per recipient, or about 2,400 times more’

(Judge 2002: 60)

Returns despite low response rate

‘Ms. Betterly quickly discovered that she could make a profit if she got as few as 100 responses for every 10 million messages sent for a client, and she figures her income will be $200,000 this year.’

(Mangalindan 2002)
Relevance to IS and IM?

- Dissemination
- Identifying an audience (cf. user centred design principles)
- Selecting the most appropriate documentary forms and media
- Responding to technological change
- Working effectively

Information Systems should do these things. Information managers should manage it!!

Exercises for Lab 10

- Practice using Expanded Academic database (required for Assignment 2)

Exercises for Tute 10

- Provide some advice on promotion for:
  - A school-based fundraising activity
  - A government information campaign

Next lecture

Document management and records

Further reading

J. Heineman (2002) 'e-mail communication', Communication World, December.