



Chapter

2

Before You Get Started

Most texts will tell you that you just can't start creating an ad from scratch. Of course you can. And you just might get lucky the first time. But can you repeat that success? That's why we need to discuss the foundations of marketing communications. First, a few definitions.

Advertising, MarCom, IMC, or What?

Everyone knows what advertising is, right? George Orwell said it was “the rattling of a stick inside a swill bucket.”¹ H. G. Wells claimed, “Advertising is legalized lying.”² For a less cynical take, Professor Jef Richards of the University of Texas says, “Advertising is the ‘wonder’ in Wonder Bread.”³ You've probably learned that advertising is paid communication to promote a product, service, brand, or cause through the media. Is direct mail advertising? Well, if you consider mail a medium, yes. How about a brochure? Probably not; however, it can be mailed or inserted into a magazine as an ad. The Internet? Yes and no. A Web site by itself is not really advertising although a banner ad on that site is. Social networks? They can be a vehicle for ads, but they are even more effective when they influence consumer behavior without obvious advertising. Public relations? No, because the advertiser is not paying the editor to publish an article (at least not directly). Confused? Don't feel alone. Many marketing professionals can't make the distinction between advertising and other forms of promotion.

MarCom (Marketing Communications)

That's where the term *MarCom* arose. MarCom to some people takes in every form of marketing communication. Others describe MarCom as every form of promotion that's not traditional advertising. Traditional advertising usually covers print (newspapers, magazines), television, radio, and some forms of outdoor advertising. “Nontraditional” promotion includes direct marketing, sales promotion, point of sale, public relations, e-mail, online advertising, search engine marketing, mobile, social networks, guerilla marketing, viral/buzz, word of mouth, and



Words of Wisdom

“Marketing was really better called ‘advertising.’ Marketing is about communicating the values of a product after it had been developed.”⁴

—Seth Godin