CHAPTER – 8

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION
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This research has studied the applications of semiotics and has also outlined the shortcomings as well as strengths of semiotic analysis. Media like TV, print, radio, digital are channels of communication, but it is very important to study how different messages will be perceived over different channels before broadcasting them. Companies have been spending a large chunk of their profits in attempting to connect with their customers through means of Integrated marketing communications as it form the face of the Brand. Semiotics will help them understand the consumer’s process of meaning making, to an extent where they can gain mind space amongst the target market. This research has attempted to analyze media material of certain brands, verbal as well as non verbal. Meanings in media are communicated by signs and semiotics helps understand how signs work.

General recommendations that arise out of this researchers which would benefit researchers, advertising agencies and marketers are listed below:

- Marketing semiotics can be used to reposition brands, revamp the existing brand, and create new product categories and new markets for the brand.

- Marketing semiotic research should be treated as an important precursor to strategic brand building, as brands are sign systems that management should constantly monitor since it contributes to the gains by creating brand distinguishers.

- It is important to study the media text in terms of patterns and structures of signs which are communicated and understood.

- The study of cultural and social context is important, as media messages are understood with reference to the other surrounding signs and communication messages.
• The features that are specific to certain media should be capitalized upon and, the effectiveness of a particular semiotic element against that medium should be tested before disseminating messages into the market.

• As semiotics is influenced by “codes”, which is a system in which signs are organized in groups, it becomes necessary to study these codes which give social meaning to the consumer’s choices, and then come up with marketing strategies to build the brand.

• While designing marketing communications it is important to understand the concept of “Polysemy”, which means that multiple meanings of a semiotic element may exist. Hence, it is necessary to consider the extra associations – connotations that a message brings along with it.

• Semiotic analysis should be undertaken as it would reduce the complexity of reading an advertisement.

• Marketers should design communication that brings out a social significance so that it can act as a communicator of social index.

More specific recommendations for the brands, based on the study of this research are listed below:

• The Vodafone and Reliance communication images were tested for the semiotic element of Signs against the brand building parameters. It was observed that Vodafone fared much better than Reliance communication. The “Apostrophe” sign used in the image for Vodafone helped the brand connect better with the audience on all parameters. The sign increased the recall, helped talk about the brand, aroused positive connotations and made it a preferred brand.

  **Recommendation:** Based on the observations it is seen that signs are easier for the brain to identify, and require comparatively less time for analysis as against text, numbers and other similar content.
It is recommended that companies should make use of better, innovative and intelligent sign elements in the communication with which the customer can identify and associate even without reading the name of the brand.

- The Apple and Blackberry Brands were checked for the semiotic element of symbol and logo against the brand building parameters. It was observed that Apple was superior to Blackberry. The Apple symbol was much more likable as compared to the Blackberry symbol based on the feedback received from the respondents. The reason being that the symbol stands apart amongst the clutter of other technology based symbols. Since, it is a fruit and awakens curiosity. The symbol speaks about the history of the brand which almost all respondents were aware off as their curiosity questioned the symbol and its meaning. Blackberry on the other hand could not establish that strong connect with the customer. The respondents felt that the symbol does not speak to them and frequently goes unnoticed. This could also be attributed to the brand being overshadowed by the popularity of Apple.

**Recommendation:** If a brand wishes to reposition itself it can do so by improvising on the symbol, and the way in which it is positioned before the customer. The products and technology also speak for the brand, so, creating a stir using a symbol that connects with the audience could be the first step for repositioning and bouncing back.

- **Recommendation:** Companies should not design complex jingles that are too long. The study shows that lyrics that are catchy attract the attention of the respondents. Also, the lyrics could use the techniques of repetition to increase recall. The lyrics and music in the jingle should be uniform, and one should not overshadow the other, thus diverting the focus from the brand.

- **Recommendation:** Taglines should be short and such that they encourage customer participation. Rhetorical taglines and taglines addressing the customer as, “YOU”, are inviting and provoke the reader to recognize himself and
reciprocate. e.g.: “Will YOU be the next one?” or the tagline for L’Oreal, “Because YOU’RE worth it”. The taglines should be such that they correlate well with the product. Taglines should be integrated with the Jingle or the advertisements for enhanced effectiveness.

- **Recommendation:** Packaging appeals the visual and tactile senses. Hence, the packaging shapes, colors, material used, text on the packaging, graphics, etc., should be rendered critical while creating a design. Customers value safety and quality, and hence incorporating information of the contents along with the symbols indicating health and safety, recyclability will impact the customer’s perception of brand quality in a positive manner. Using packaging material that gives a feel of safety along with graphics that give a sense of social gratification are recommended.

- **Recommendation:** Colors increase the vibrancy of communication. However, colors are also associated with emotions and culture. Colors seem to have a language of their own and communicate a lot of emotions. Hence, color codes should be tested based on the culture and the kind of message that needs to be conveyed. Colorful images attract attention and hence vibrancy is recommended only after studying the type of industry.

- **Recommendation:** It is recommended that characters and mascots increase the memorability of the brand and therefore could be used to increase the brand presence. Characters should be created in a way that they are relatable to all age groups. Industry of operation should be taken into consideration before making use of Characters or mascots.

- **Recommendation:** Marketing communication designed in the local language will help a brand penetrate better in the target market as compared to the communication designed in international languages. It has been observed that even the translated version of marketing messages have worked well for brands.
• **Recommendation:** Communication being “Polysemic” has several meanings. It is imperative to consider the possible connotations that would arise through the communication message before launching it eg, Dove beauty bar brakes the beauty code by coming up with a campaign of wrinkled and wonderful. Stating that beauty is not restricted by age made the communication more meaningful and the connotations that respondents associated with this made the advertisement popular.

The society is dynamic and a more liberal generation is sprouting up. The communication that breaks the stereotypical codes and gives way to a modern connotation would definitely make a deeper impact in the near future.