

## **8. Event Marketing and Experiential Marketing in the Scope of Culture and Arts**

Magdalena Wszolek

*Together with pacing market saturation contemporary consumers started to be much more discerning and selective, which has triggered off multiple changes in the marketing studies. Nowadays, these are experience and value economy that govern consumers' decisions and businesses' viability. In these new circumstances, marketing communications and their tools have gained an irreplaceable role of conveying value to people in a consistent, memorable and distinctive way by each touch point. The main goal of this paper is to show the potential of experiential marketing and event marketing with an insight into cultural approach, namely, into the area of arts, in the effective realization of integrated marketing communications. The major research question in this paper supposes that those tools in the area of arts facilitate building a consistent communications strategy and a brand image globally. To continue, it is assumed that the employment of various experiences and the creation of events in this scope provide the company with a strong community of attracted customers, and yield new opportunities and render the company distinct on the market. Since this paper is a preliminary stage, actually, intending to highlight the importance of investigating this matter further, the desk research in the form of case study has been performed on the analysis of the Red Bull case study, narrowed to their undertakings in the field of arts to show examples of the projects of cultural character.*

*Keywords: event marketing, experiential marketing, arts*

### **1. Introduction**

It has become generally accepted that marketing is not a set of randomly undertaken actions in order to satisfy consumer needs but it requires a huge effort to execute and plan accurately and consistently. Kotler and Keller (2007, p.2) noted that “*marketing is both ‘art’ and ‘science’ – there is a constant tension between the formulated side and the creative side*”. As a result of evolution of marketing concepts the most revolutionary and breakthrough one is the holistic marketing concept, which regards marketing in a multi-faceted and broad perspective and favors marketing activities, programs and processes. Another influential phenomenon has been identified by Hollensen (2010), namely, a great transition from transactional marketing (TM) to relationship marketing (RM), partially being created in contrast to each other. The evolution of marketing concepts led to production of different takes on brand, Heding et al. (2009) elaborate on various takes on approaches to brands, however, lately inclining to personality, community and cultural approach, approving of a central position of a brand in social interactions and seeing brand as a cultural artifact.

Amongst the wide range of competitors a firm strives for being heard in the marketplace and due to numerous conditions this striving has to be dealt with in a consisted, integrated and clear manner. (Clow – Baack, 2004) It is emphasized that since integrated marketing communications (IMC) foundation is to “*achieve the enhancement and coherence of marketing communications effort in achieving predetermined product and corporate marketing communications objectives*” (Pickton – Broderick, 2005, p. 26).

In this paper those altered focuses and significant turns have been clashed with opportunities that are evoked by current phenomena and trends in the world of arts and culture. Nowadays, culture recipients seem to be more frequently called cultural consumers, interested in arts, urged to be entertained and eager to try numerous and diverse conventions or styles. (Kolb, 2005) Since the relationship between culture/arts and business has not been investigated that much yet and, usually, they appear together while presenting the nature of cultural institutions and their promotional activities, rather than as means by which companies may gain profit, it is worth uncovering those undefined correlations. This paper has a purpose of identifying some cues for further investigation of culture and arts in relation to business purposes by revising previous literature, and the research question is whether these scopes may form a great potential for the utilization of marketing communications tools and brand management. This text being the preliminary stage of future research in the aforementioned matter, targets at delineating up-to-present discoveries and results, and subsequently, it proves those subjects’ feasibility by providing a desk research on the case study of descriptive character on the Red Bull company.

## **2. Literature review**

Culture is an area of human activity that has always been with people, but which has also been changed lately due to sociological, technological or economic reasons and proliferation of lifestyles. Among those recent tendencies one may notice expanding multitude of tastes and blurring boundaries between high and popular culture and currently changing myth of the artists’ top-down approach, deprived of customer-orientation. (Kolb 2005) Moreover, post-postmodern branding paradigm emerged, in line with which, consumers are creatures that express their selves by consumption of certain brand icons, capable of telling stories and shaping mainstream culture (Heding et al. 2009).

Taking a closer look at the matter of experiential marketing, it is worth beginning with presenting Smilanksy’s point of view (2009, p. 3) stating that it is a core approach to

accomplish contemporary communications objectives, whose gist is “*a two-way interaction in real-time, a live brand experience and thereby a significantly deeper consumer bonding process*”. Arts experiential consumption occurs when an individual undergoes a personal flow of feelings, thoughts, actions, sensations and references caused by a purchase, use or contemplation of a given piece of art. Looking from a perspective of arts experientialism, this kind of experiential marketing is believed to engage hedonic values, “with a sense of exhilaration, energy, fulfillment, and enjoyment or the so-called 3Fs of fantasy, feeling, and fun.” (Tao 2013, p. 1535) Among other reasons behind culture incorporation in experiential marketing may be given: namely, story-telling potential and community engagement. It is argued that human nature to learn through stories enhance interest, cognition and bonds, and the more passion drivers are shown the better the effect is (Darmer 2008). In the end, it is worth highlighting that the growth of online communities has improved customer experience management, which led to a new quality in creation and distribution of pieces of art (Salo 2012).

While discussing event marketing Saget (2006) highlights its strategic nature sought in the fact that event marketing is predominantly based on external and internal relationships and experience and learning process derived from all the elements of the surroundings and the internal environment. Events pose an opportunity for consumers to exist in brand hyperreality, become an active recipient of brand communication, when a brand or a company become so close and approachable that what happens is “*blurring the boundaries of the sacred and profane, (...) distorting the commercial and social*” (Crowther 2011, p.75). Upon intending to show the potential of culture and arts scope in terms of event marketing it should be clashed with the previously described experiential marketing. Indeed, event may be treated as an experience by interacting with the content presented to them at the very spot and memories that linger afterwards (Getz 2005). What may justify the use of culture and arts in event marketing is additionally the theory of carnivalesque of culture and the society of spectacle, where the eagerness to be placed in the hyperreality, being the mixture of the real and the created, is dealt with as a sort of escape from norms and restrictions. (Dziewanowska – Kacprzak 2013) The mechanism of event marketing functioning in the field of culture and arts has been depicted in the article by Vila-Lopez and Rodriguez-Molina (2013). It is suggested that this scheme is quite different from other areas, such as sport, since it indicates the pattern of participants’ behaviors by bringing a person to a subjective state of consciousness given the existence of symbolic meaning, hedonic responses and aesthetic area.

### 3. Methods

As this paper is a preliminary attempt to highlight the importance of analyzing the use of culture and arts in brand management through experiential marketing and event marketing the method of research was to select a company that may constitute an example of building the brand image on the basis of those tools in the given scope. The impact of their implementation was sought through analysis of various internet sources on the company. It includes professional websites and forums on marketing and brand management, as well as, those that simply describe actions of the company to the everyday users and Internet surfers. In this attempt it has been strived to observe how the use of the described tools matches the overall brand management and strategy, being partly an outcome of marketing communications strategy. What has been done is presentation of its general communications strategy, later on confronted with two selected, sponsored events in the field of culture and arts. The aim of such a clash is to show that this area should be thoroughly investigated and examined by conducting broader research on more companies and consumers.

The object of desk research - Red Bull: The creation of message and its positioning Red Bull constantly utilizes the phrase: 'revitalizes body and mind' or 'gives you wings', which is a successful attempt to convey the tangible benefits in a comprehensible and easy-to-grasp manner, suited to all the targeted audiences (Keller 2008). These are globally-accepted and culturally-free slogans, also present in commercials, ensuring message differentiation by revealing unique attributes and shaping a unique selling proposition (USP) (Grewal – Levy 2014). To outline Red Bull's marketing communications strategy it is based on four main pillars rotating around WOM, consisting of opinion leader programs, consumer collecting, communication and event marketing. What can be concluded on the basis of this draft is that the company's characteristic is IMC perspective because of the great level of interrelatedness between those elements (Figure 1). The preoccupation with creating buzz rotating around this model is very noticeable in the reference to events and sponsorships that the company engages with, hence, in order to get exposure, rich content is being created through all social media, Red Bulletin or website [www.redbullcontentpool.com](http://www.redbullcontentpool.com). In the experiential marketing of Red Bull, the value of authenticity is greatly pursued in delivering brand message, creating its own events rather than passively and solely depending on sponsorship The experiential nature of Red Bull's marketing might be also described as a mission to "*bring barely imaginable experiences into existence, and give them all the spectacle*" (Northcott 2009). Turner (2008) states that together with expansion and growing popularity this product managed to invent so-

called ‘cool factor’ by building such an intensive brand experience that consumers automatically associate it with something positive, which fortified a brand story as a cultural classic.

Figure 1 The scheme of Red Bull’s promotional strategy



Source: Cwięczek (2013)

### 3. Results: Red Bull – engagement in culture and art

Music and dance engagement became a significant contribution to consistent IMC and brand management of Red Bull. Since it is noticeable that among the competitors a domineering number of players occupy the field of sports, Red Bull has always sought for some other alternative ways to get expected interest and efficiency of its activities in experiential marketing and event marketing. The company has found accurate points and connotations in culture that relate and transfer the very essence of the brand. Since revitalization that the product stimulates concerns body and mind, thus, it also means creativity, any creation of art is well suited to this concept. In other words, not only the world of sports requires and welcomes the support of energy boost, but so does the art, being also the branch that involves high physical and mental endurance. Together with the revival, the symbol of wings may be moved to the artistic matter by enabling people to create, get

inspired, express themselves and reaching for some other levels of realization or consciousness.

### *3.1. Red Bull Music Academy*

To give a more in-depth insight into one of the cultural events, Red Bull Music Academy (RBMA) is treated as an initiative that lets for exploration and a forum of music history, technology and its business as such, where ideas and knowledge are intended to be shared. Coming to some organizational aspects, Boswijk et al. (2007) describe it as an annual event, revealing long-term orientation, which is held in a different place and country each year and participants are divided into groups on the basis of some similarities in musical terms. This undertaking is being greatly integrated into Red Bull's marketing approach and IMC, by being consistent with 'gives you wings' mantra and by providing a platform where zealous musicians may realize their dreams thanks to music as a tool of communication. In such a way, the brand positioned itself as a supporter of bringing unique ideas to life, people from diverse backgrounds in one place and music industry at hand. Inglis (2006) says that the fundamental objective is to organize RBMA in such a way that participants may feel the place, its potential is used to the full by uncovering its local flavor. What plays significant role is simultaneously its website, which is covered with multitude of articles, galleries, features, films and interviews, and RBMA radio, where certain collaborations and icons of editions may be reheard, as well as, profiles on Vimeo, YouTube, SoundCloud, Twitter, Bandcamp or Facebook. Multiple events connected with its activity are organized during the year in all engaged countries, which might be seen at the website in their categorization. Besides its presence in different clubs throughout the countries, it is simultaneously associated with several music festivals such as Sonar, Mutek, Movement, Montreux Jazz, St Jerome's Laneway Festival or Winter Music Conference, and it has its recording studios, letting for development of built musical network of contacts. (Red Bull Music Academy 2014).

### *3.2. Red Bull Flying Bach*

The project Red Bull Flying Bach is produced within the fields of music and dance, uniting and at the same time clashing the world of high culture, represented by Bach's artwork, and the world of street art by breakdance. The concept was to harmonize those two spheres, shaking international classical milieu by facing it with youth culture (Flying Steps

2014). Flying Steps is a dance crew, being the kernel of this initiative, established in 1993 by five b-boys from Berlin with the main choreographer, Vartan Bassil, bringing his crew to championship in Red Bull Beat Battle twice and Battle of the Year twice, too and its cooperation with Red Bull totals to more than 10 years (Flying Steps 2014). The premiere of this piece, Red Bull Flying Bach, took place in 2010, thanks to collaboration with an opera director, Christopher Hagel, whose artistic goals had always been connected with incorporating modern lifestyle into high art. The artists wanted to bring this union to the world by the means that would be understood everywhere (without spoken language), and with the universal content that should be received appropriately regardless of location (Red Bull Corporate Publishing 2013). The overall goal or message behind this production became making this fusion and meeting of high and street culture socially acceptable, and to motivate those both worlds to respect and learn about each other, as well as, to response to nowadays' perception and position of culture, remaining poor and unapproachable due to insufficient attention or strictness of school curriculums. Again, repeating mantra of Red Bull, gives you wings, it corresponds to rejecting those restricting frames and gaining freedom, and, in addition, the name of the crew of dancers featuring this piece is Flying Steps, perfectly matches. The audience who the event reached was mostly represented by age group 26-35 years old, and on average, it was 31,6. Since Flying Steps is a commercial entity, not a cultural institution, it did not have an obligation to educate, though it managed to prompt audience development and foster cultural mediation (Schmitt 2012). Next to it, the image of breakdance is linked to breaking rules, overcoming one's own bodily and psychological limits and norms of society (Kemble 2011). The piece's success may be also proved by obtaining an award, ECHO Klassik Sonderpreis, for outstanding achievements in classical music and Sold-Out Award awarded by Ticketmaster (Red Bull 2014).

#### **4. Conclusions and discussion**

This paper is only a preliminary phase of more developed examination of the use of culture and arts in the marketing communications tools and its subsequent impact on the brand management. It has been a limitation that only one company was presented, because it has not provided relevant and measurable outcomes. However, its purpose was to indicate this scope as an interesting and fruitful matter for new investigation and examination, and to identify interrelations that exist. Due to the fact that marketing studies, their paradigms and foundations have altered, marketing communications tools also call for redefinition and

reassessment. In this work, the light has been shed on the potential of experiential marketing, event marketing and sponsorship once clashed with the field of culture. Since culture has always been inherently related to experience creation and sharing something creative and genuine, and nowadays it is becoming more approachable and flexible from the business point of view, it may be viewed as a quite promising scope to occupy.

On the basis of this theoretical research and desk study on Red Bull, the main goal of identification of marketing communications tools in cultural initiatives shown on the example of Red Bull Music Academy and Red Bull Flying Bach. It is quite widely accepted by numerous marketing practitioners that the company employs marketing communications tools in an innovative and original way, which are accurately matched with current consumers' behavior, as well as, with the specificity of the product. In order to distract attention from ambiguity around the product's safety and utility, those tools which bring added value for consumers, such as excitement or community building, are mostly highlighted. Since the great part was devoted to the role of culture or arts in the chosen marketing communications tools, it needs to be underlined that the choice of art and growing involvement in the scope of dance and music make the company distinct and outstanding from other businesses. Since the common strategy is still to sponsor or create events and experiences in the field of sport and, once the culture is chosen the sponsors or organizers remain a little unnoticed and passive, Red Bull with its active contribution to each produced action acquires completely different status on the market.

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