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**TRANSFORMATIONS
OF PROMOTIONAL
TECHNIQUES BY
DIGITAL RESOURCES¹**

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Abstract: Six agencies associated with Promotional Marketing Association (AMPRO), active and recognized in the sector, were interviewed, between January and April 2021, to give their opinion on the impacts and transformations of the digital age in the way of doing sales promotion in Brazil. The survey was part of PUB-USP 21/22 (United Scholarship Program for Undergraduate Students of ``Universidade de São Paulo``). A brief overview of the interviews makes up this article.

Keywords: Sales promotion; *Live Marketing*; digital; *online*.

INTRODUCTION

Modern marketing requires more than simply developing a good product. The company that wants a continuous and structured marketing program must consider that they need to build a lasting relationship with consumers (actual or prospects) based on efficient communications that add value to the brand and generate a positive impact on society.

Sales Promotion or Live Marketing, as the activity is currently called in our country, requires the company to develop an integrated marketing communication concept which includes, in addition to promotional techniques, advertising, personal selling, signage of store (with point of sale material, product packaging and other merchandising resources) and other types of brand communication, with the purpose of selling the brand and/or building its image.

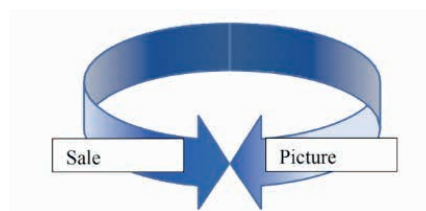


Figure 1: Sales Promotion Objectives /*Live Marketing*

The relevance of this research on the impacts and transformations of the digital age on sales promotion activities in the country is due to the fact that the main references on sales promotion describe the same and traditional techniques, dating from a period prior to the daily practice of digital communication.

The study sought to answer two basic questions, from the perspective of national professionals who are working in the area:

- a) how the well-known - and already consolidated - sales promotion techniques assimilated digital resources?
- b) how and for whom do brands use offline promotional resources?

METHODOLOGY

By indication of the professional Elza Tsumori, president of the Brazilian Chamber of Events Industry and secretary of the Brazilian Academy of Events and Tourism, as well as advisor to AMPRO² and Person of the Year Award Caio, six agencies were selected for an interview, all associated with AMPRO and with highlights mentioned by Promoview³, POPAI Brazil⁴ or Promo/Live Columnists Award⁵. It is them:

1. Zicard Trade Marketing: The Zicard

² The Promotional Marketing Association (AMPRO) was created in 1993 with the purpose of bringing together and representing all segments of promotional marketing in Brazil. Available at: <https://ampro.com.br/>. Accessed on: February 8, 2022

³ Promoview is a content platform specialized in Brand Experience. Available at: <https://www.promoview.com.br/>. Accessed on: November 9, 2021.

⁴ POPAI Brasil is a non-profit association, dedicated to the development of Retail Marketing at the point of sale. Available at: <http://popaibrasil.com.br/>. Accessed on November 9, 2021.

⁵ The Columnists Award is an initiative of the Brazilian Association of Marketing and Advertising Columnists (ABRACOMP), with the objective of highlighting national Marketing Communication works. Available at: <https://columnistas.com.br/>. Accessed on: November 9, 2021.

agency (<https://zicard.com.br/>), located in São Paulo – SP, was selected for the interview because it is a hub agency for business, loyalty, sales and digital communication. With technological integration in thousands of points of sale throughout the national territory, the agency operates in several areas such as marketing, communication and sales by reading the bar codes of activated products. João Carlos Hernandez Zicard Vieira, director and president of the agency, was interviewed on January 10, 2022.

2. U.M.A creative diversity: The agency U.M.A (<https://uma.ag/>), located in São Paulo - SP, was chosen due to the fact that it is one of the few promotional agencies that specialize in the issue of diversity and ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance). The agency's CEO, Ronaldo Bias Ferreira Junior, was interviewed on January 13, 2022.

3. ExperienceRemix: The ExperienceRemix agency (<https://www.experiencieremix.com.br/>), located in Curitiba - PR, is known as an experience agency, whether in the physical, digital or hybrid environment. With more than 10 years of uninterrupted operations, the promotional agency is part of Tudo Com, an independent and multidisciplinary communication group, alongside Vivas Comunicação and Hubox, two other agencies of the group. Conrado Octavio Asinelli da Luz, director of service and planning at the agency, was interviewed on January 18, 2021.

4. B/Ferraz: The B/Ferraz agency (<https://bferraz.ag/>) is part of a global network, with knowledge, talents and local operations, which operates in Brazil, Mexico, Argentina and the United States. The organizational design follows the principles of the Agile group, which guarantees, through proprietary tools and methodologies, the optimization of resources, with transparency and flexibility. André Kovadloff, creative director of the Agency, was interviewed on February 10,

2022.

5. V3A Comunicação: The V3A agency (<https://v3a.ag/>), located in Rio de Janeiro - RJ, believes that each briefing is, in essence, a message, having the challenge of transforming it into a unique experience and engaging, designed from the beginning to impact and generate the greatest possible number of shares. Cláudio Maestralli Moraes, Communications Coordinator at the V3A agency, was interviewed on March 7, 2022.

6. DBPV Agency: DBPV (<https://dbpv.com.br/>), located in Curitiba – PR, aims to create connections between brands and their audience to generate impactful results. It considers that each client is unique in its business model and brand purpose. Edmar Danilo Prigol Filho, director of strategy at the agency, was interviewed on April 11, 2022.

With the consent of the interviewees, a questionnaire was applied in the form of an interview, carried out and recorded through Google Meet, by the interviewer Eric Sussumo Shimabukuro. The interviews took place between January and April 2022, based on the following agenda:

- a) What was your professional path leading up to your current position?
- b) Tell me a little about the current Agency.
- c). Speaking of your industry: how many people do you work with and what do they do?
- d) How do you define Sales Promotion or Live Marketing? And what do you prefer to call the activity now?
- e) Did digital resources change promotional creation, that is, did they change the way of promoting?
- f) Have new digital promotional techniques been created? Which?
- g) How and for whom are offline promotional resources used?
- h) Does your agency have a promotional case that you can describe to me, from

planning to results?

i) What kind of promotions do your customers most ask you and your team to create?

In order to answer the questions addressed in the introduction to this article ((the transformations of promotional techniques by digital resources and the reasons for maintaining offline promotional mechanics), we will make an overview of the answers, especially questions “e”, “f”, “g” and “i”, which more directly affect the objectives of the research in question.

IMPACTS AND TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE DIGITAL AGE

According to Zicard, the important thing is to understand the role of the brand and its consumers in this digital scenario:

[...] there is the consumer on one side, the brand on the other, the midfield that is the digital, the physical, the store, the supermarket, the wholesaler, the retailer and the wholesale. In short, the whole universe that works within the ecosystem and that somehow the brand has to try to touch and get to know each of these players and be present a little in each of them. (ZICARD, testimony, 10 Jan. 2022).

The other respondents also agree with this position, since the brand must determine the creation project for the client, whether it is a typical promotion action, an institutional campaign, or an experience of engagement with the brand, regardless of the need. immediate sale. This is how the interviewees understand the current change in the sales promotion agency: no more one-off campaigns; no more jobs and tenders every two years, but full service for the brand.

The main transformations pointed out by the interviewed professionals were:

⁶ The Individual Taxpayer Registry (CPF) is the taxpayer registry maintained by the Federal Revenue of Brazil and was created in 1968.

use of metadata; synchronicity; absence of geographic barriers; no separation of communication activities into pre-established “little boxes” or on and off; lives; home office; media diversity and creative diversity; segmentation and gamification. We will talk about each of these transformations through excerpts from the most relevant testimonies of the interviewees.

The individual knowledge of the people who engage in any promotion, through metadata, is the differential that currently characterizes the Zicard Trade Marketing agency:

In the past, you thought about promotion and you had a promotion area that did promotion; when the promotion ended, I thought about another promotion; another promotion was over and I thought about another promotion. So, I think that digital technology, in general, gives us conditions to work either through a promotion, that is, through an event, bringing the knowledge of these people, the knowledge of this public, the knowledge of these consumers and using this knowledge you didn't have to build future relevant strategies for that same audience. (ZICARD, testimony, January 10, 2022).

As an example, the agency cites the construction of a big asset:

We have a digital command center where our client sees each sale and each CPF⁶ who is buying, as long as this CPF is within my consumer base and is part of the loyalty club. And at that moment I talk to the consumer, at that moment I give points, cashback, I do promotions, I increase the product index, I increase the average ticket, I bring other consumers through that consumer who is buying because I deliver to that consumer advantages, benefits, economics and opportunities for him to bring his WhatsApp friends network into our agency's database, because everyone is winning all the time and it is an operation that everyone wins.

[...] It is from that moment on that we can understand how much money we have to invest depending on the channel, depending on the consumer group, depending on the product mix, that is, we have an ROI true, a return on investment that comes from the product being paid for by the end consumer. (ZICARD, testimony, January 10, 2022).

Ronaldo Ferreira JR, from U.M.A, believes that digital maximizes funds and has the possibility of placing all people in a company in the same synchronicity:

Previously, I would venture to tell you that we spent more or less 60% of the budget on infrastructure and 40% of the budget on strategy, entertainment, on the soul of the event. So, of course, when I no longer need to spend 60% of the budget on hotel or transport, I can allocate this resource to improve this content, this strategy and amplify this on digital, so it's a cheap thing. Now we do awards where you put on the same screen a guy from Colombia with another from the United States and Brazil, for example, who are the three finalists of a competition. (FERREIRA JR, testimony, January 13, 2022).

In the view of Conrado Octavio da Luz, from the Remix agency, anyone can currently, with the help of Google, hold an event, as the platform released contacts to everyone with internet access. Therefore, Remix has repositioned itself as an experience agency. To cite a promotional example, Conrado da Luz remembered the case for ` `Editora Positivo` ` , in partnership with Britannica Digital Learn, which is the British digital encyclopedia, and described it like this:

We want you to create a cool event and we still don't know what it's going to be, if it's going to be a lecture, if it's going to be dinner, if it's going to be lunch, or where it's going to be. So, they sent us this challenge with a budget, which I don't remember at the time how much it was. And then we took it and said "wow, we need three situations: a speaker, a nice chef and a nice place for

events. And we started researching, for example, speaker Cortella, chef Alex Atala, and a series of seating options. Then when we got to these three items, we saw that the budget was not enough to buy all three; the money was enough to buy two. Either I have a good speaker, good food, and a bad seat, or I have a good seat, a bad speaker, and good food, or a good place, a good speaker, but bad food. And then we thought: if we get the gastronomy guy to give a lecture, this could be an interesting thing, we can reduce an element. (LUZ, testimony, January 18, 2022).

The event, based on the theme of tradition and innovation, unfolded with chef Helena Rizzo presenting the cocktail dishes and the setting showing data from the encyclopedia: for example, during the starter, a cashew ceviche - chef Helena Rizzo would enter and speak, in five minutes, as she had made ceviche, a traditional dish from Peru with an innovative ingredient (cashew). Meanwhile, on huge screens, encyclopedic images of Peru, the Incas and their history were projected. According to Conrado, the event was "light", with "very expressive feedback." (LUZ, testimony, January 18, 2022).

André Kovadloff, from the B/Ferraz agency, speaking specifically of impacts on awards, remembered a promotion for Club Social brand cookies:

We did a campaign here, which was a promotion for Club Social, we joined the four biggest operators in Brazil and we did a promotion called "It stopped, you lost". Every package you opened had data for your cell phone. It was hard for you not to win; for sure if you opened one you would win, and we distributed a lot of data, it was a hell of a thing, it was a lot of data, so, we had one gig, three gigs, five gigs, it was an incredible promotion and it gave a lot of results. It's a different way of doing it. (KOVADLOFF, testimony, February 10, 2022).

Another example presented by André was a new way of offering a discount for an air conditioning brand:

We had a piece of media that, as the day's temperature rose, we had a different message: so, up to 24 degrees there was an "x" message; from the 25th to the 30th we had another message and from the 30th to the 35th we had another message; then we had a promotion that if you hit so many degrees on the day we would give you a 10% discount. (KOVADLOFF, testimony, February 10, 2022).

Cláudio Maestrali Moraes, from V3A, advocates a compromise between digital and offline:

I think we've now reached the halfway point; there is a middle way, I think that now the people who were radical offline understood that they really need digital and need it a lot, and the people who were radical online understood that they need the middle way. So, you are seeing companies with digital DNA that are going offline too, it is getting halfway there. (MORAES, statement, March 7, 2022).

Edmar Prigol Filho, from the DBPV agency, calls all promotional campaigns promo and defines them as follows:

[...] here we talk a lot about promo, we put everything in the promo, it is the question of what is the benefit and what is the exchange that the consumer will have; so we want the consumer to do something, an action, buy a product, register on the platform or on the website, take a selfie, fill out a check in, and for that we need to give something in return, so what does the will we give in return? What's the benefit? When you don't have that benefit, when you don't have anything to give in return, not just in terms of prizes, but in terms of content, action or experience, it's usually no longer a promo campaign, it ends up becoming an institutional or sales campaign, but when there is this exchange, we consider it to be part of a promotional campaign. (PRIGOL FILHO, testimony, April 11, 2022).

As for the issue of digital transformations, Edmar points out three challenges: new media; creative diversity and gamification:

[...] When we started to be able to segment digital media, through cookies, this already brought a whole new dynamic of reaching the right person at the right time, and no longer doing mass media and hoping that a person would see it and be interested, so, we manage to direct the message much more. And even within a campaign, we can divide between several different audiences. [...] And the other point that I find very interesting is that, with digital resources, there was a democratization in the participation of this type of message, so, nowadays everyone has a cell phone, 4G is very comprehensive in Brazil, and it's very easy for anyone to participate in a promotion because they have their cell phone in their hand, take a selfie, create some type of content and send it without having to write a letter; it's much easier nowadays. [...] And what I want to bring, which was new, was the whole concept of gamification⁷, to bring more and more consumer participation to the promo and make it a different experience. That way, he will no longer just fill out the registration form, he will go through the phases of the website, the little game, and when he completes the little game he will be participating in the draw. So, this concept of gamification is quite recent and has brought new dynamics that make the person not feel like participating in a promotion, but rather being involved in that dynamic. (PRIGOL FILHO, testimony, April 11, 2022).

OFFLINE PROMOTIONS

On the use of offline resources for promotion, everyone recognizes that we cannot go back: the world has changed; the pandemic forced companies of all sizes to adopt new ways of delivering their offers, otherwise they would disappear from the market. But Conrado da Luz, from Remix, as

⁷ Gamification is the application of game strategies and logistics in everyday activities with the aim of increasing the engagement and participation of the people involved. The concept is based on game thinking, that is, the interaction of gamification with other knowledge from the corporate and design environment.

a representative of an experience and events agency, prefers face-to-face activities to online activities. André Kovadloff, from BFerraz, Claudio Moraes, from V3A, and Edmar Prigol, from DBPV, say that this division between on and off is outdated, as the public of a brand normally circulates between these two worlds, despite the country being very diverse. in conditions of access to digital facilities.

sales, but for value, for brand image, where the emotional can speak louder than the simply functional. It was possible to observe that all interviewees agreed with the importance of the coordinated and integrated practice of all communication elements, online or offline, with the purpose of not only selling products, but creating and developing brand value and a lasting relationship with customers.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Sales Promotion or Live Marketing is a matter of terminology, not concept, respondents agree. For all of them, what comes before the name is the brand and its need for communication. That is, the brand's communication with its consumers and fans comes before the decision to adopt or not a promotional mechanic for it.

Everyone expects to no longer operate punctually, by job or by competition, but to develop continuous work for the brand.

Zicard does not agree with the expression Live Marketing, as he believes that this expression is associated with events, live actions and what Zicard wants to bring to promotion professionals is the conscious use of metadata, in favor of the continuous relationship of the promotional agency with your customers/brands. Ronaldo also defends a non-predatory market, in which agencies respect each other and do not try to act only for remuneration or success in a competition. Conrado remembers that, no matter the name, he needs to explain what he does, because people don't know what Sales Promotion or Live Marketing means.

What all respondents agree on is that it is no longer possible to separate creation into watertight and isolated boxes, what matters today is the binomial brand + communication.

Through the interviews, the digital came to highlight the role of communication in building a market that is no longer just for

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