Optimization of marketing communications of trade enterprises in modern conditions

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Abstract. The main directions of development of marketing communications of commercial enterprises in modern conditions are analyzed in the article. The purpose of the article is to reveal and substantiate the prospects of development of marketing communications of commercial enterprises and offer the directions of their optimization taking into account the tendencies of digitalization of economic processes. The methodological basis of the research represents the complex approach, which allows studying the components of marketing communications as a part of the marketing system which can give the economic and communicative results more than separate components of this system and also justify the recurrent interconnection of functional dependence of marketing communications. It was proved that marketing communications should be considered not only in terms of the use of appropriate tools, but also taking into account the information component of sales channels. Recommendations on the application of omni-channel strategy for the development of marketing communications of commercial enterprises have been proposed and justified. It was found that for the effective functioning of commercial enterprises the application of a combined approach, which includes both omni-channel and traditional sales channels is required.

1 Introduction

The current situation of uncertainty and constant variability of the external environment requires the management of enterprises to develop and implement a modern communication policy able to create conditions for innovative development in the trade services market, ensure effective cooperation with stakeholders, form a positive image, and also increase the competitiveness and sales level of commercial enterprises. However, the features of the transformation of marketing communications in the modern conditions of managing commercial enterprises are not fully defined and require methodological study in the new harsh economic realities. All of the above emphasizes the severity and timeliness of the stated problem.

The purpose of the article is to substantiate the prospects for the development of marketing communications of commercial enterprises in modern conditions of development with consideration to the trends in the digitalization of economic processes.

Research objectives:

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– to clarify the main theoretical and methodological aspects of marketing communications;
– to systematize the main types of marketing strategies of enterprises and offer the most effective for trading enterprises;
– to analyze the approach to evaluating the effectiveness of marketing communications;
– to suggest directions for optimizing marketing communications with allowances made for the trends in the digitalization of economic processes.

Development features of marketing communications of commercial enterprises were studied in the papers of Busich B., Khati S.R.Kh., Ivanova N., Leonov S., Plotnikova L.I., Rakhmanova A.K., Savin S., Ugolkov I.E., Vovk O., Yang K. et al. [1-9].

2 Materials and methods

The methodological basis of the study is an integrated approach, including appropriate methods for analysis and evaluation of the overall marketing information system and the processes occurring in it in a modern commercial enterprise. Thus, the use of a systematic approach makes it possible to explore each element of marketing communications as part of an overall marketing information system. Such a synergistic effect, indeed, provides a greater result than the one that the individual components of this system provide. Moreover, a systematic approach ensures substantiation of the recurring relationships of the functional dependence of marketing communications. The validity of using this approach is due to the rapid changes taking place in the external, including the digital environment, causing transformations in the system of marketing communications of commercial enterprises and the need to transfer management from functional to process.

The substantiation of the use of system and process approaches to marketing communications of commercial enterprises makes it possible to formulate the principles for the use of marketing communications, which are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Principles of using marketing communications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Content of the principle</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purposefulness</td>
<td>compliance with the mission and goals, focus on solving marketing problems and finding customer satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimality</td>
<td>reasonable specialization, ensuring unity in marketing activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination</td>
<td>ensures the integrated use of marketing communications, which contributes to the synergistic effect of the tools used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>ensures the rationality of financing programs for the use of marketing communications</td>
</tr>
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Source: compiled by the authors.

Compliance with the principles outlined will contribute to the improvement of the effectiveness of marketing communications of commercial enterprises.

3 Results

Effective marketing communication requires compliance with the requirements of the communication environment, which consists of two subsystems: communication and information. The communication system of the enterprise performs the function of communicative interaction and the function of communicative influence. The communication function provides insight into consumer needs to promote the company’s product to the end consumer, and the communication impact function encourages consumers to buy a product based more on its competitive advantage, brand strength, and
loyalty. The information subsystem provides the influence of marketing communications on the formation and strengthening of the enterprise’s customer focus, determines the type of consumer behavior in the target segment, forms a positive image of the enterprise and contributes to the formation and growth of customer loyalty.

Changes in the marketing communication policy of both manufacturers, suppliers, and intermediaries are due to the globalization of markets, increased competition, and the rapid development of Internet technologies, which make significant changes in the communication policy of enterprises.

Today, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences, as well as other political threats and risks, the requirements for the communication policy of enterprises have changed. In the process of achieving goals related to meeting the needs of consumers, new barriers arise in the form of the maximum restrictions on their movement both within the country and abroad. Maintaining its competitive position and consumer segment depends on how quickly each company can adapt to new conditions. The corresponding restrictions that have arisen in connection with these situations have led to a change in the purchasing power of consumers, which goes through several stages: cognitive, emotional and behavioral. Representatives of the main consumer segment go through all these stages, and the main task of marketers is to determine the stage at which the main consumer segment is, and respond and promote their products and services in a timely manner in accordance with this.

The development of information technology makes it possible to form a single digital trade space in the framework of making a decision to purchase a product. The digitalization of many aspects of human life has become especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic. Strategically targeted businesses have adapted relatively quickly to new conditions and changing ways of meeting the needs of consumers through the use of digitalization and have been able not only to maintain their level of competitiveness, but also to significantly expand the customer segment.

In marketing, there are four levels of relationships between businesses and consumers, depending on the chosen sales channels. The peculiarity of using each level is shown in Figure 1.

The first level of interaction is single-channel retail, which uses one sales channel. However, with the development of digitalization, the popularity of this interaction channel has decreased, as the increasing number of competitors use the online environment for commodity circulation. Due to this development, the dual-channel sales channel has become more efficient, as it includes the simultaneous sale of both online and offline goods and services.
With the growing use of modern gadgets, an inter-channel (cross-channel) type of communication is actively developing, which involves the use of mobile and digital tools for buying and selling goods and services, in addition to online and offline technologies. In this communication, the customer uses all available means to purchase the same product at the same time. However, this system has its drawbacks due to the limited use of communication channels, which reduces customer satisfaction. Given this experience, today most companies in the retail sector use an omnichannel strategy based on the relationship between all sales channels, which ensures the synchronization of information and actions. With limited resources, many retailers are moving to online sales channels. At the same time, it should be understood that such sales channels differ significantly from traditional ones – logistics, customer behavior, return rules, quality and speed of service.

The effectiveness of the omnichannel marketing communications (MC) system of a trading company can be described for evaluation in the form of a recurrent coefficient as follows:

\[
MC = \frac{fA(OEa)E_{pa}E_{tva}C, csv_{a}dsv_{a}np)}{fSP(csv_{a}cps_{w}, p, eso, ibe), fDM(is_{due}), fPS(csv, tsv), fP(EE_{pa}dpr, ep)}
\]  

(1)

where the functional components are: advertising \((A)\) – \((OE_a)\) – the overall effect of advertising, \(E_{pa}\) – print advertising effect, \(E_{tva}\) – television advertising effect, \(C\) – coverage, \(csv_{a}\) – change in sales volume due to promotional activities, \(dsv_{a}\) – dependence of the sales...
volume of a commercial enterprise on the amount of advertising costs, \( np_a \) – net profit of the enterprise from advertising activities);

sales promotion (\( SP \)) – (\( csv_{sp} \) – change in sales volumes due to the use of sales promotion measures, \( cps_{sp} \) – change in the profitability of sales of goods due to the use of sales promotion measures, \( p \) – the impact of price on informing buyers, \( eso \) – special offer effect, \( ibe \) – impulse buying effect);

direct marketing (\( DM \)) – (\( IS_{dm} \) – increase in sales of goods through the use of direct marketing measures);

personal sales (\( PS \)) – (\( csv \) – change in sales volumes, \( tsv \) – time spent by employees in relation to sales volume);

public relations (\( PR \)) – (\( EE_{pr} \) – economic efficiency of PR, \( dpr \) – degree of public response, \( ep \) – the effect of publishing information about the company).

With the transition to omnichannel marketing communications, one of the obstacles to their widespread use is the increase in the cost of their implementation and the reluctance of some companies to use this type of service. The transition to such communications is a complex process and requires appropriate financial resources, but at the same time, it contributes to the inextricable interaction between the client and the company based on all available channels, which is a significant factor for consumers when making a purchase decision, including a second one. The issue of developing effective logistics channels is also acute, as a competitive advantage for commercial enterprises, based on a quick response to consumer requests, optimizing the delivery of goods and services, increasing turnover, and reducing the cost of fixed assets.

Today, various means of automating interaction with customers have become widespread, namely the use of bots, artificial intelligence, SCOR (Supply Chain Operations Reference)-models, CRM (Customer Relationship Management)-platforms. To establish effective marketing communication, it is advisable for commercial enterprises to use the SCOR model, which makes it possible to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of logistics activities, identify problem areas and develop appropriate measures to eliminate them. Modern CRM platforms are used to identify the consumer, which allows you to automate these processes.

The implementation of these measures should take place in several stages, namely:

- ensuring accounting and recognition of consumer devices;
- introduction of end-to-end remarketing principles;
- attribution of consumers at all stages of cooperation between the seller and the buyer;
- consumer management based on the use of LTV (Life time Value – customer life cycle).

The development of such processes in an enterprise can be considered from the point of view of introducing and integrating digitalization into the company’s business processes, training employees in new technologies. The main factor in the effectiveness of these processes is the staff, whose qualifications must be constantly improved, because. Today, the key factors for the success of a trading company are the speed of responding to consumer requests, its quality recommendations (reviews), accounting and implementation of preferred sales channels (online, offline, instant messengers, social networks), as well as the reliability and identity of information in selected sales channels. The relationship and integration of channels is an important principle of using marketing communications, which are included in omnichannel strategies, which requires constant monitoring of the state of commercial enterprises, taking into account changes in the market environment.

Monitoring and modeling the processes of changing consumer behavior allows you to establish the appropriate points of contact and interaction with them, which ultimately will allow you to establish and prevent the outflow of customers, adjust your business strategy, maintain and increase new consumer segments. Depending on the data received, it is
necessary to improve marketing communications in favor of more popular sales channels that have a larger target audience.

4 Discussion

Today, in all studies devoted to the development of marketing communications of commercial enterprises, great attention is paid to the management of economic relations and communications in order to obtain competitive advantages and create conditions for sustainable development.

The authors of the study “Green competitiveness of enterprises: substantiation of quality criteria for digital marketing communication channels” [9] study an omnichannel approach that combines traditional and digital marketing communication channels and takes into account the interests of stakeholders.

The authors of another article “Development of an individual model of integrated marketing communications for the economic well-being of an enterprise” [6] explore the possibilities of solving the problems of integrated marketing communications related to organizing planning and management, ensuring the priority of consumer opinion, and creating individualized goods and services. A study by Croatian scientists “Electronic integrated marketing communication of micro-enterprises” [1] defines the organization of integrated marketing, and then, based on the studied possibilities of Internet technologies, integrated marketing communication as an organizational model of an effective process.

The authors of the article “Assessing the effectiveness of content in the framework of online and offline marketing communications of an enterprise” [8] found that only high-quality content can provide a company with a high level of customer conversion and significant visibility of its website in various search engines.

The authors of the article “Crowdsourcing as an effective technology of marketing communications in the innovative development of enterprises” [5] suggest using crowdsourcing technology based on the use of resources (potential, group intelligence, principles of self-expression and self-realization of the individual) using information and communication technologies.

Synthesizing the theoretical achievements of these researchers and the results obtained by the authors of this article, it can be concluded that effective marketing communication is determined by the effectiveness of communicative interaction, communicative impact, as well as the formation of a customer-oriented enterprise.

For commercial enterprises in the conditions of modern restrictions, it is necessary to use an omnichannel strategy, since it is it that expands the possibilities of marketing communications through the use of the maximum possible interconnected channels of interaction with customers. Of course, to evaluate the effectiveness of such a complex system of strategic decisions in the field of marketing communications, an indicator is required that will simultaneously take into account many factors affecting efficiency. The review of studies presented in the article allows us to conclude that this problem remains unresolved to date. Therefore, it seems appropriate to use an algorithm that connects several consecutive members of a certain numerical sequence, or a recursive equation, to evaluate the effectiveness of a marketing communications system. Therefore, the corresponding recurrent coefficient is considered herein. It should be noted that the use of this coefficient may be associated with certain problems, which include the complexity of the calculation, the difficulties of collecting and systematizing information, the subjectivity of the results of calculating intermediate and final indicators, etc.

5 Conclusion
Thus, a study on the prospects for the development of marketing communications of commercial enterprises showed that today most companies are faced with the problem of optimizing their work, increasing its efficiency. With limited resources, companies are forced to constantly look for new ways to optimize costs, and often these areas are associated with marketing communications, since the costs of them are the first (on the list) costs that the company’s management seeks to cut. The solution to this problem in the system of marketing communications is to expand the online service for the sale of goods and services. However, it is necessary to maintain a differentiated client-oriented approach, since a fairly high proportion of the consumer segment – conservatives who do not use digital tools, preferring offline service – will play a certain role in the Russian market for a long time to come.

References

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