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Restaurant brand management in wartime

■ **Abstract.** Full-scale military operations taking place since 2022 in Ukraine have had a negative impact on all sectors of the economy, including the restaurant business. An important factor that helps Ukrainian restaurants to work and develop is the brand. Therefore, the issues of restaurant brand management taking into account wartime conditions are gaining relevance. The purpose of the research is to determine the characteristic features of branding of restaurant business entities in the context of military operations. The article used such scientific methods as: bibliographic analysis, analysis and synthesis, grouping and comparison. Data from the State Statistics Service of Ukraine were used to analyse the food and beverage sector. The data cover the period from late 2014 to early 2023. The Ukrainian food and beverage sector has been analysed (including an assessment of changes in business situation, analysis of the level of employment and fluctuations in demand in this sector) to determine the peculiarities of functioning and prospects for the development of restaurant business. The problems faced by Ukrainian restaurant enterprises during 2022-2023 are outlined. It is substantiated that management of the restaurant brand is important to ensure its operation in the conditions of military operations and further for post-war recovery. The features and functions of the restaurant brand are determined, and the factors affecting the restaurant brand in crisis conditions are systematized. The implementation of foreign experience in promoting the restaurant brand, including the promotion of services in social networks and other online channels, has been proposed. The results of the research are of practical importance for Ukrainian restaurants as they can use them to adjust their overall strategy of development and their brand promotion measures

■ **Keywords:** catering establishments; food sector; crisis conditions; label functions; factors influencing the image of the company

■ INTRODUCTION

Due to the military operations on the territory of Ukraine, most industries faced a significant decline in consumer demand, an increase in operating costs, high risks, etc. The restaurant business appeared to be one of those areas that most of all felt the negative impact of war. However, despite

the difficult situation, the restaurant business is gradually recovering in Ukraine. This process is uneven, taking into account territorial characteristics (in the west of Ukraine and in Kyiv), and the type of activities: coffee shops, bakeries, restaurants of the luxury segment have recovered

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the fastest. Some establishments have reoriented their work to prepare meals for the Armed Forces of Ukraine, territorial defence and internally displaced persons. According to V. Danylenko-Kulchytska (2022), the Ukrainian restaurant business, having not had time to recover from the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, faced even more serious problems as a result of the Russian invasion. At the same time, the war crisis practically did not affect the western regions of Ukraine, which, however, felt the rise in prices, and there are also difficulties with logistics. It should be noted that a significant part of the restaurant business to one or another degree supports the Ukrainian army. One of the means to solve the issues of restoring the restaurant business is by implementing the experience of those countries that also suffered from military operations. I. Banyeva & O. Velychko (2022) also pay attention to the uneven recovery of the restaurant business in Ukraine and focus on the need to reorient it to provide budget services in the context of post-war recovery.

The restaurant industry was significantly negatively affected by the quarantine caused by COVID-19. As a result, there was a reduction in the number of restaurants. H. Haponenko *et al.* (2021) note that the Ukrainian restaurant business quickly adapted to changing conditions by introducing delivery services, offering new menu items such as non-alcoholic wine, vegan food, craft meals and drinks, seasonal product menus, mono-product orientation, introduction of dark kitchen format, etc. The global pandemic has shifted the focus of research to the specifics of restaurant operations in crisis conditions. For example, B. Li *et al.* (2021) noticed that Chinese restaurants used different innovation strategies during and after COVID-19. A. Madeira *et al.* (2021) point out that COVID-19 has caused many problems in restaurant business, such as the lack of appropriate government measures to regulate this area and the developed strategies of what to do, and difficulties in forming working capital during the pandemic.

During the war, the hotel and restaurant business faces much more threats than development opportunities. M. Kulyk *et al.* (2022) noted that at the same time, in the restaurant business, Ukrainians are attracted by flash mobs and ideas aimed at supporting the Armed Forces of Ukraine, and B. Polotaj & B. Gmur-Klumenko (2022) also noted the growth of social responsibility of the Ukrainian restaurant business. K. Protsak & M. Peredrii (2022) emphasize the idea that, in a sense, the crisis is an impetus that opens up new opportunities for development. V.H. Hranovska *et al.* (2021) stress the importance of implementing innovative approaches in the hotel and restaurant sector. The Ukrainian restaurant business is characterized by such modern trends as food delivery and takeaway, digitalization and automation, menu reduction, creation of mono-menus, etc.

One of the tools to ensure restaurant activities in crisis conditions is a brand management strategy. A restaurant brand is a set of associations and perceptions associated with it among customers and the general public. It can be created due to various factors such as product and service quality, interior design, advertising and many others. A restaurant brand is a combination of elements such as: name, logo, slogan, colours, atmosphere, style of service and other elements that define the unique identity and style of the restaurant. The problem of promoting one's own brand is

an urgent task for establishments in the restaurant business. These questions were raised in the scientific works of the world's leading scientists. In their study, A.O. Dandis *et al.* (2022) concluded that brand experience, the impact of word-of-mouth advertising have a significant positive effect on the willingness of fast-food restaurant visitors to pay more, and also increase repeat purchase intentions. C.G. Oñate *et al.* (2019) found that cultural emotions give the best results when determining the effectiveness of an advertising campaign. According to the observations of N. Jin *et al.* (2016) restaurant customer satisfaction and loyalty largely depend on brand prestige, and C. Wei *et al.* (2022) concluded that brand trust has a positive effect on customers' willingness to visit a restaurant.

While there is plenty of research on restaurant branding, most of it is focused on working in a stable economy. However, there are very few recommendations regarding the organization of the restaurant industry during the war, which confirms the relevance and timeliness of this research. In this context, the purpose of the article is to determine the peculiarities of restaurant brand management in the conditions of military operations.

■ MATERIALS AND METHODS

In order to achieve the defined goal and solve the tasks in the research process, the authors used a differentiated theoretical-methodical and practical-analytical scientific toolkit, based on the use of the following scientific methods. Bibliographic and comparative analyses were used to analyse research in the problem area by Ukrainian and other scientists. General scientific methods of analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, comparison and generalization were used to define and formulate the functions of the restaurant brand, to substantiate the peculiarities of the factors that influence the Ukrainian restaurant business in the conditions of military operations. Based on a comparative analysis of literary sources of different researchers, common features of restaurant brand functions and factors influencing the restaurant business were identified, then these selected features were summarized and synthesized and presented in figures for more convenient visual representation using visualization methods. The statistical method of scientific research was used in collecting analytical information on analysing trends in the development of restaurant business enterprises and assessing economic sentiment by enterprises in various industries. Grouping and matching methods were used to build analytical tables based on data obtained from open sources. Dynamic changes in the business situation, the number of employees and demand for services of food and beverage service enterprises were analysed by the method of analytical assessment. The graphic method is aimed at visual representation of trends in economic sentiment by sectors of the economy, as well as the dynamics of the influence of factors restraining activities in food and beverage services. The systems method made it possible to combine the research with a single approach and, based on the obtained results, formulate proposals and recommendations for the restaurant business establishments in the conditions of war. The generalization method was used in formulating the research results. With the help of inductive and deductive methods, the conclusions of the

research were summarized and proposals for further scientific research were developed.

The research uses the following data: 1) State Statistics Service of Ukraine (2023), namely: Indicator of economic sentiment, calculated in accordance with the Methodology for calculating business expectations indicators (2021); Indicator of employee employment expectations, calculated in accordance with the Methodology for calculating business expectations indicators, Expected changes in demand for services (volume of sales of services) of enterprises in the service sector in the next three months, Assessment

of changes in the business situation in the service sector for the previous three months; 2) Internet portals HoReCa (Where restaurateurs live well..., 2023) and Statista (Restaurant delivery – Worldwide, 2023).

■ RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A brand is a unique identifier that allows a restaurant to differentiate itself from competitors and create a recognizable image in the eyes of consumers, so it has a distinctive ability. The importance of brand for the restaurant lies in the following (Fig. 1).

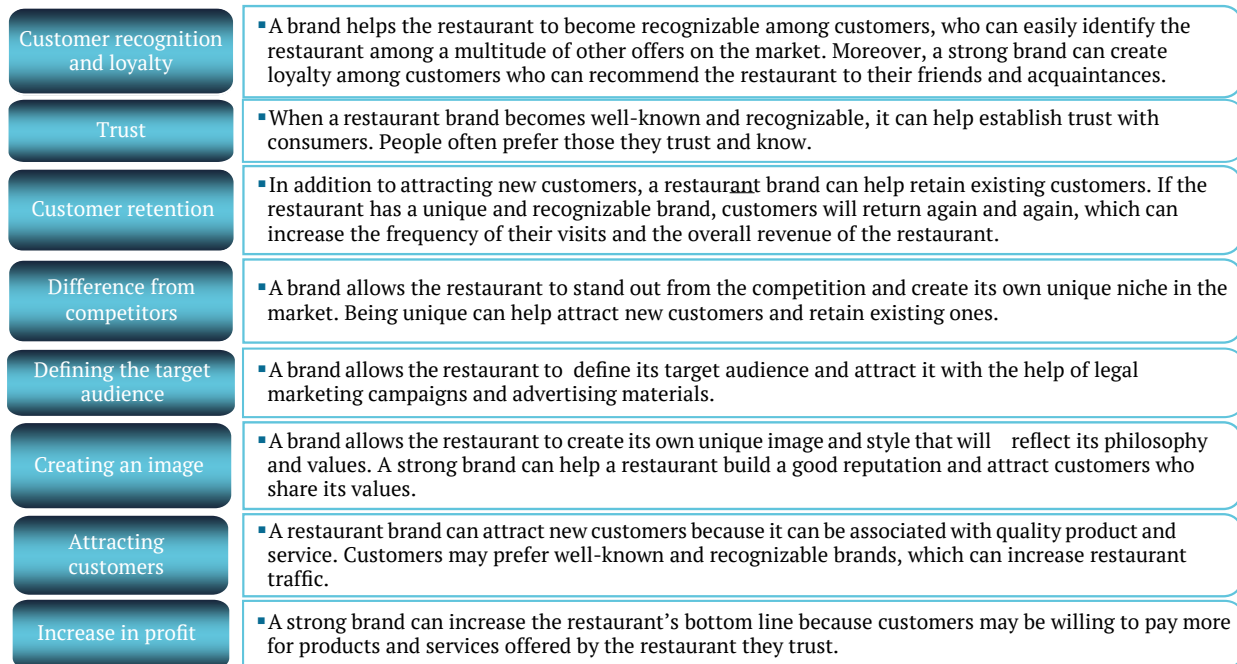


Figure 1. Restaurant brand functions

Source: developed by the authors

A restaurant brand plays an important role in restaurant activities, helping to attract customers, distinguish itself from competitors and create its unique image. The market in which Ukrainian restaurant enterprises operate belongs to the sector of food and beverage provision activities according to the State Statistics

Service of Ukraine (2023). It seems appropriate to analyze in more detail the trends in the development of this sector. The results of the assessment of changes in business situation in food and beverage service provision on a quarterly basis for 2014-2022 are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Assessment of business situation in food and beverage service activities

| data reports of enterprises / period | improved | remained unchanged | deteriorated | no response | balance |
|--------------------------------------|----------|--------------------|--------------|-------------|---------|
| 2014 | | | | | |
| October–December | 3 | 41 | 56 | 0 | -53 |
| 2015 | | | | | |
| January–March | 10 | 30 | 60 | 0 | -50 |
| April–June | 13 | 40 | 46 | 1 | -33 |
| July–September | 7 | 56 | 37 | 0 | -30 |
| October–December | 11 | 63 | 25 | 1 | -14 |
| 2016 | | | | | |
| January–March | 5 | 61 | 33 | 1 | -28 |
| April–June | 17 | 49 | 34 | 0 | -17 |
| July–September | 6 | 54 | 40 | 0 | -34 |
| October–December | 21 | 47 | 32 | 0 | -11 |

Table 1. Continued

| period \ data reports of enterprises | improved | remained unchanged | deteriorated | no response | balance |
|--------------------------------------|----------|--------------------|--------------|-------------|------------|
| 2017 | | | | | |
| January–March | 18 | 63 | 18 | 1 | 0 |
| April–June | 15 | 66 | 18 | 1 | -3 |
| July–September | 21 | 53 | 26 | 0 | -5 |
| October–December | 20 | 63 | 17 | 0 | 3 |
| 2018 | | | | | |
| January–March | 0 | 78 | 20 | 2 | -20 |
| April–June | 8 | 69 | 23 | 0 | -15 |
| July–September | 10 | 72 | 18 | 0 | -8 |
| October–December | 22 | 63 | 15 | 0 | 7 |
| 2019 | | | | | |
| January–March | 18 | 58 | 23 | 1 | -5 |
| April–June | 5 | 66 | 29 | 0 | -24 |
| July–September | 13 | 66 | 21 | 0 | -8 |
| October–December | 19 | 69 | 12 | 0 | 7 |
| 2020 | | | | | |
| January–March | 2 | 26 | 72 | 0 | -70 |
| April–June | 5 | 15 | 80 | 0 | -75 |
| July–September | 33 | 22 | 45 | 0 | -12 |
| October–December | 22 | 27 | 51 | 0 | -29 |
| 2021 | | | | | |
| January–March | 18 | 30 | 52 | 0 | -34 |
| April–June | 19 | 49 | 32 | 0 | -13 |
| July–September | 25 | 45 | 30 | 0 | -5 |
| October–December | 17 | 59 | 24 | 0 | -7 |
| 2022 | | | | | |
| January–March | 6 | 11 | 83 | 0 | -77 |
| April–June | 6 | 23 | 71 | 0 | -65 |
| July–September | 11 | 33 | 56 | 0 | -45 |
| October–December | 27 | 33 | 40 | 0 | -13 |

Source: compiled by the authors based on the data from the State Statistics Service of Ukraine (2023)

According to the results of data comparison presented in Table 1, it can be stated that the assessment of changes in business situation in the provision of food and beverages in Ukraine has been generally negative in recent years. The hostilities of 2022–2023 have even worsened the economic

expectations of business entities. To some extent, the level of employment reflects the state of affairs in the industry. The results of the assessment of changes in the number of employees at food and beverage service enterprises on a quarterly basis for 2014–2022 are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Assessment of employment at food and beverage service enterprises

| period \ data reports of enterprises | improved | remained unchanged | deteriorated | no response | balance |
|--------------------------------------|----------|--------------------|--------------|-------------|------------|
| 2014 | | | | | |
| October–December | 3 | 63 | 34 | 0 | -31 |
| 2015 | | | | | |
| January–March | 7 | 63 | 30 | 0 | -23 |
| April–June | 0 | 60 | 40 | 0 | -40 |
| July–September | 7 | 53 | 40 | 0 | -33 |
| October–December | 8 | 74 | 17 | 1 | -9 |
| 2016 | | | | | |
| January–March | 3 | 80 | 17 | 0 | -14 |
| April–June | 3 | 74 | 23 | 0 | -20 |
| July–September | 9 | 62 | 29 | 0 | -20 |

Table 2. Continued

| period \ data reports of enterprises | improved | remained unchanged | deteriorated | no response | balance |
|--------------------------------------|----------|--------------------|--------------|-------------|---------|
| 2016 | | | | | |
| <i>October–December</i> | 13 | 63 | 24 | 0 | -11 |
| 2017 | | | | | |
| <i>January–March</i> | 15 | 66 | 18 | 1 | -3 |
| <i>April–June</i> | 18 | 66 | 15 | 1 | 3 |
| <i>July–September</i> | 18 | 50 | 31 | 1 | -13 |
| <i>October–December</i> | 20 | 68 | 12 | 0 | 8 |
| 2018 | | | | | |
| <i>January–March</i> | 13 | 75 | 10 | 2 | 3 |
| <i>April–June</i> | 15 | 62 | 23 | 0 | -8 |
| <i>July–September</i> | 28 | 57 | 15 | 0 | 13 |
| <i>October–December</i> | 34 | 51 | 14 | 1 | 20 |
| 2019 | | | | | |
| <i>January–March</i> | 21 | 58 | 21 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>April–June</i> | 16 | 34 | 50 | 0 | -34 |
| <i>July–September</i> | 34 | 45 | 21 | 0 | 13 |
| <i>October–December</i> | 26 | 60 | 14 | 0 | 12 |
| 2020 | | | | | |
| <i>January–March</i> | 13 | 62 | 25 | 0 | -12 |
| <i>April–June</i> | 8 | 26 | 66 | 0 | -58 |
| <i>July–September</i> | 25 | 35 | 40 | 0 | -15 |
| <i>October–December</i> | 10 | 56 | 34 | 0 | -24 |
| 2021 | | | | | |
| <i>January–March</i> | 13 | 55 | 32 | 0 | -19 |
| <i>April–June</i> | 7 | 51 | 42 | 0 | -35 |
| <i>July–September</i> | 23 | 47 | 30 | 0 | -7 |
| <i>October–December</i> | 19 | 55 | 26 | 0 | -7 |
| 2022 | | | | | |
| <i>January–March</i> | 6 | 44 | 50 | 0 | -44 |
| <i>April–June</i> | 6 | 24 | 70 | 0 | -64 |
| <i>July–September</i> | 5 | 17 | 78 | 0 | -73 |
| <i>October–December</i> | 13 | 40 | 47 | 0 | -34 |

Source: compiled by the authors based on the data from the Statistics Service of Ukraine (2023)

As can be seen from Table 2, the level of employment in the provision of food and beverages also has a negative trend, which has even intensified as a result of war. Due to significant migration, the Ukrainian restaurant industry will experience a shortage of qualified personnel in

the coming years, which may negatively affect the pace of its development. Expected changes in demand for services (volumes of sales of services) of food and beverage service enterprises on a quarterly basis for 2014-2023 are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Expected changes in demand for services (of turnover) at food and beverage service enterprises

| period \ data reports of enterprises | improved | remained unchanged | deteriorated | no response | balance |
|--------------------------------------|----------|--------------------|--------------|-------------|---------|
| 2015 | | | | | |
| <i>January–March</i> | 6 | 44 | 50 | 0 | -44 |
| <i>April–June</i> | 17 | 43 | 40 | 0 | -23 |
| <i>July–September</i> | 7 | 43 | 50 | 0 | -43 |
| <i>October–December</i> | 26 | 47 | 23 | 4 | 3 |
| 2016 | | | | | |
| <i>January–March</i> | 11 | 43 | 45 | 1 | -34 |
| <i>April–June</i> | 22 | 61 | 16 | 1 | 6 |
| <i>July–September</i> | 17 | 43 | 40 | 0 | -23 |

Table 3. Continued

| data reports of enterprises period | improved | remained unchanged | deteriorated | no response | balance |
|---------------------------------------|----------|--------------------|--------------|-------------|---------|
| 2016 | | | | | |
| October–December | 23 | 54 | 23 | 0 | 0 |
| 2017 | | | | | |
| January–March | 11 | 57 | 32 | 0 | -21 |
| April–June | 29 | 45 | 26 | 0 | 3 |
| July–September | 21 | 58 | 21 | 0 | 0 |
| October–December | 24 | 52 | 24 | 0 | 0 |
| 2018 | | | | | |
| January–March | 15 | 52 | 33 | 0 | -18 |
| April–June | 10 | 65 | 23 | 2 | -13 |
| July–September | 12 | 58 | 30 | 0 | -18 |
| October–December | 23 | 57 | 20 | 0 | 3 |
| 2019 | | | | | |
| January–March | 29 | 46 | 24 | 1 | 5 |
| April–June | 23 | 37 | 39 | 1 | -16 |
| July–September | 23 | 37 | 39 | 1 | -16 |
| October–December | 44 | 37 | 18 | 1 | 26 |
| 2020 | | | | | |
| January–March | 12 | 50 | 38 | 0 | -26 |
| April–June | 8 | 18 | 74 | 0 | -66 |
| July–September | 18 | 38 | 44 | 0 | -26 |
| October–December | 18 | 45 | 37 | 0 | -19 |
| 2021 | | | | | |
| January–March | 15 | 41 | 44 | 0 | -29 |
| April–June | 15 | 30 | 55 | 0 | -40 |
| July–September | 17 | 46 | 37 | 0 | -20 |
| October–December | 20 | 45 | 35 | 0 | -15 |
| 2022 | | | | | |
| January–March | 24 | 45 | 31 | 0 | -7 |
| April–June | 6 | 39 | 55 | 0 | -49 |
| July–September | 24 | 35 | 41 | 0 | -17 |
| October–December | 17 | 39 | 44 | 0 | -27 |
| 2023 | | | | | |
| January–March | 13 | 47 | 40 | 0 | -27 |

Source: compiled by the authors based on the data from State Statistics Service of Ukraine (2023)

According to Table 3, it can be concluded that the largest drop in consumer demand in this area occurred during the pandemic caused by COVID-19, i.e., the worst expectations were for demand in 2020. In 2023, despite the general negative expectations, they are better than during the quarantine period. The dynamics of the influence of factors that restrain activities in food and beverage service provision, according to estimates formed on the basis of the data of proactively submitted reports of enterprises, is presented in Figure 2.

As can be seen from Figure 2, insufficient demand plays a significant restrictive role in restraining business activities in the food and beverage services sector, but a group of factors identified as “other factors” has been a key containment factor in recent years. At the same time, such factors as “shortage of labour force”, “shortage of space, equipment”, “financial constraints” do not play a decisive role in the implementation of this type of activity. Since the beginning of

2023, the restaurant business in Ukraine, especially in the territories located in close proximity to the places of hostilities, has been facing the following problems. A significant decrease in consumer demand, problems with logistics and a corresponding increase in delivery prices, as well as problems with the delivery itself, as roads may be blocked or destroyed; restriction of the work of restaurants in order to ensure the safety of the population; high risk of destruction or damage to buildings and equipment as a result of hostilities; economic volatility, including exchange rate fluctuations, rising prices for fuel, products and services. The number of visitors has decreased, there has been a decrease in the size of the average receipt due to a decrease in the income of population. A decrease in the number of corporate events due to the inability or unwillingness to celebrate events in restaurants; lack and difficulties in hiring qualified personnel, as many specialists leave the regions in search of safer and more stable conditions, reduction in the number of tourists, etc.

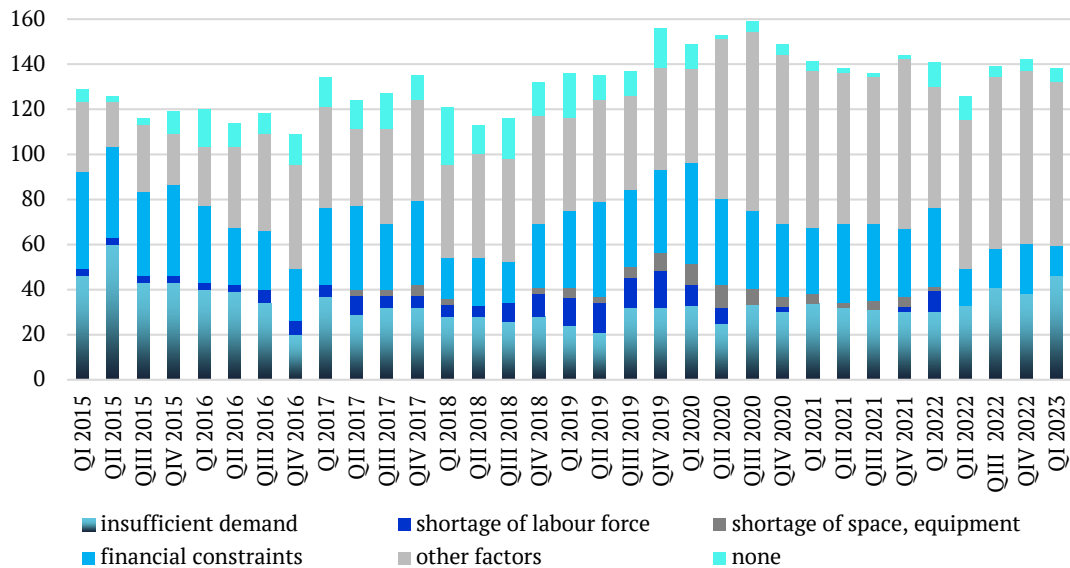


Figure 2. Factors limiting food and beverage service activities

Note: QI – 1 quarter; QII – 2 quarter; QIII – 3 quarter; QIV – 4 quarter

Source: built by the authors based on the data from the State Statistics Service of Ukraine (2023)

According to the HoReCa online portal (Where restaurateurs live well..., 2023), over the past year, attendance at restaurant establishments has decreased significantly in the frontline regions, as well as in Kyiv and the region amid an increase in attendance in almost all regions of Western and Central Ukraine. This is due to migration processes in the country caused by military operations, and it also shows that the demand for restaurant services does not disappear even in crisis conditions. Despite the complication of operating conditions, the Ukrainian restaurants are gradually resuming their work, adapting

to the crisis caused by hostilities on the part of the Russian Federation. The ways of restaurant promotion are changing, new dishes appear on the menu, adapted to local products and increased prices, the concept of order delivery and pricing policy is being revised, safe zones for visitors are being arranged, etc. – these and other measures allow the Ukrainian restaurant business to ensure its functioning in times of crisis conditions caused by the war. Prospects for the development of restaurant business are influenced in a certain way by the economic sentiment that prevails in society (Fig. 3).

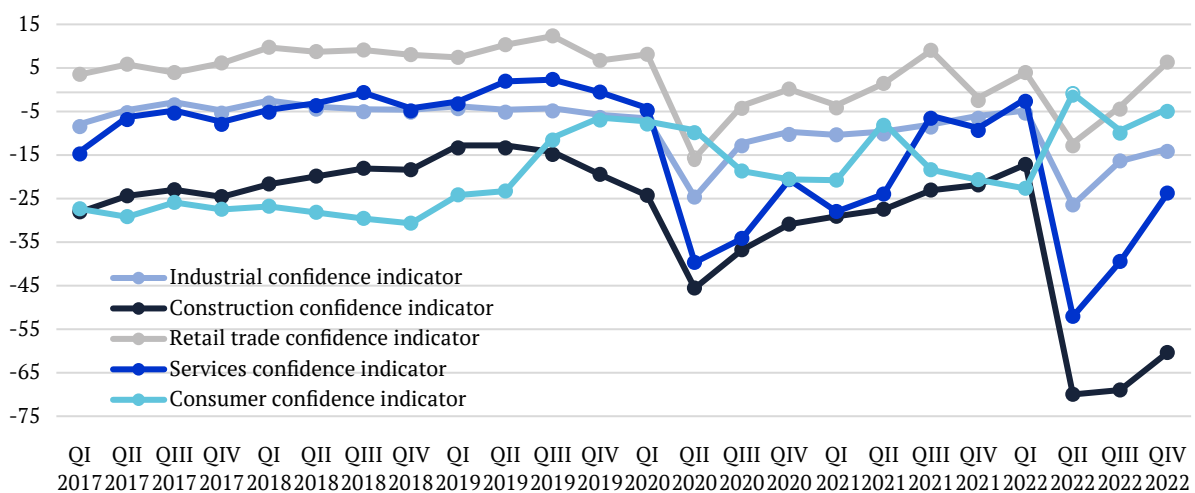


Figure 3. Economic sentiment indicator, %

Note: QI – 1 quarter; QII – 2 quarter; QIII – 3 quarter; QIV – 4 quarter

Source: made by the authors based on research by State Statistics Service of Ukraine (2023)

As can be seen from Figure 3, industrial confidence, retail confidence and consumer confidence of business entities have not undergone significant changes over the past year. The hostilities had the greatest impact on economic

expectations in construction and service sector, where, as can be seen from the graph, there was a significant drop in indicators. However, after a sharp drop in early 2022, economic sentiment is gradually returning to pre-war levels.

This indicates significant adaptive capabilities of the Ukrainian economy. But it should be noted that the promotion of

restaurant services during the war has its own peculiarities and requires consideration of a number of factors (Fig. 4).



Figure 4. Peculiarities of impact on restaurant brand during military operations

Source: developed by the authors

Despite all the difficulties caused by the war and related factors, according to preliminary forecasts, the Ukrainian restaurant business has positive prospects. According to the Internet portal Statista (Restaurant delivery – Worldwide, 2023), in Ukraine, revenue in the restaurant delivery segment will reach 7.10 million USD at the end of 2023, and in subsequent years will grow at an annual rate of 8.21% until 2027 (with a global growth rate of 6.28% per annum). The restaurant business should expect a post-war recovery associated with the reconstruction of the country, a corre-

sponding increase in income and the presence of deferred demand for restaurant services and products.

The problems of managing the restaurant brand and other public catering establishments were considered in the works of many scientists on examples of different situations and countries. Taking the pandemic caused by COVID-19 as an example, N. Messabia *et al.* (2022) prove that the crisis can exert both negative and positive pressure on the activities of restaurants. During the crisis, entrepreneurs explore new markets and acquire new skills, such

as flexibility, innovation, and adaptability. M. Nowacki & M. Nurkowska (2022) emphasize the idea that joint marketing strategies, price reductions, and the introduction of new services are the measures important for the restaurant to survive in crisis. J.Y.-H. Lo (2018) discovered that brand awareness has a positive effect on customer satisfaction of Cantonese restaurants in cities in Fujian Province, China, and further encourages repeat purchases. J. Xu *et al.* (2022) found that ideal authenticity has a significant effect on the brand image of time-tested restaurants in Beijing, while authenticity has both direct and indirect effects on brand loyalty. And this influence varies depending on the age of visitors. The study by E. Sezgin & M.O. Göde (2017) shows that both behavioural intentions and brand loyalty among fast food restaurant customers largely depend on service quality. H. Song *et al.* (2022) found that brand recognition affects brand trust and, accordingly, customer intentions of branded coffee shops and family restaurants. T.-J. Wu *et al.* (2015) point out that not only delicious dishes that represent Taiwan's national cuisine, but also the brand of catering establishments are essential to ensure the success and promotion of establishments to the markets of China and Southeast Asia. R. Odoom *et al.* (2017) emphasize the idea that social benefit, research, and entertainment are important for restaurant brand loyalty.

The Internet plays an important role in the recognition of restaurant brand and its promotion in modern conditions. Restaurateurs are increasingly using social media to advertise restaurant services. A positive consumer response to social media advertising ultimately helps attract customers, increase sales, and boost restaurant profitability. M.S. Alnsour *et al.* (2021) emphasize the importance of advertising on Facebook. Using the example of the restaurant sector in Jordan, scientists emphasize the importance of social networks in communication between establishments and customers. Based on the comparative analysis of consumer behaviour of restaurant visitors from the USA and Korea, J.-H. Kwon *et al.* (2020) found that social media content, such as Facebook and Instagram, and advertising have a significant positive effect on consumer engagement and brand trust. Moreover, according to the analysis, the attitude of consumers towards the brand of restaurants in Korea and the USA does not differ. S. Fissi *et al.* (2022) found a connection between brand communication on social media and the dynamics of engagement on Instagram of Italian restaurants awarded 2-3 Michelin stars. According to the authors of the article, to overcome the effects of the pandemic caused by COVID-19, restaurants have changed their brand communication strategies towards increased activity on social networks.

Modern ways of promotion on the Internet have a significant impact on the formation of demand for restaurant services. According to the results of the study by J. Baek & Y. Choe (2020), customers most often make decisions about visiting a restaurant based on the online reviews. Restaurant attendance is influenced by their online ratings. T. Dirsehan & E. Cankat (2021) noticed that restaurant customers' use of mobile applications to order food from a restaurant saves time and effort, which ultimately increases their satisfaction and brand loyalty. J. Raudeliuniene *et al.* (2018) suggest that as the popularity of social networks grows, more and more restaurants resort to using them as

a means of advertising and as a channel of communication with customers. Besides, the activity of the restaurant in social networks has a positive effect on its value, as evidenced by S. Kim *et al.* (2015).

In the time of war, restaurant brand management becomes even more important, as wartime is associated with economic hardship, danger, high risk, and uncertainty. In such a situation, a strong brand can help a restaurant survive in the market and attract customers who are looking for a reliable place to eat and relax. At the same time, it is necessary to take into account the fact that the influence of brand manifests itself differently across countries and regions, as discussed in the work of O. Stryzhak *et al.* (2021). It is also important to note that a restaurant brand may be associated with a particular culture or national cuisine that may be popular with diners during times of war. For example, a restaurant specializing in local cuisine can use its brand to attract customers who are looking for popular local dishes in a limited food base. If a restaurant has already had a recognizable brand and a good reputation before the war, consumers may be more inclined to choose it, even if it is located in a conflict zone. Additionally, customers may express brand loyalty based on association with national identity in the context of supporting a national manufacturer.

The war has had a significant negative impact on the restaurant industry of Ukraine, but restaurant activity throughout the country is gradually recovering taking into account an increase in volumes compared to pre-war periods in the west of the country to some revival in the south-eastern part. Restaurants and other catering establishments have demonstrated their viability and high adaptability, through brand management, as well.

■ CONCLUSIONS

In today's increasingly competitive markets, brand management is important for all industries. But the use of brands is especially noticeable in those areas where the business result largely depends on trust in service providers. One of these industries is public catering. Restaurants occupy a significant segment in this sector of the economy, for them brand management is extremely important, because it is brand loyalty that encourages consumers to visit restaurants, and brand commitment that makes them regular customers. In crisis conditions, in particular during the war, when the overall demand for restaurant services decreases, brand management is one of the most effective measures that allow restaurants not to go bankrupt, to ensure their functioning and to form a certain development potential. Determining the functions and peculiarities of impact on the restaurant brand during military operations will allow establishments to improve the quality of brand management in difficult conditions.

Thus, a restaurant may need to change its marketing and advertising strategy to maintain and develop its brand in a wartime environment. In particular, a restaurant can use social networks and other online channels to promote its services and connect with customers. Also, a restaurant can set discounts and promotions for customers who are limited in their financial capabilities. One of the main tasks of a restaurant during the war is to keep customers and staff safe. Therefore, the restaurant brand can be used to strengthen customers' trust in the restaurant and

guarantee the safety of their lives and health. Given the heterogeneity of restaurant business development by regions of Ukraine, promising areas for further research include the working out of restaurant development strategies taking into account regional specifics.

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None.

■ CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

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Управління брендом ресторану в умовах війни

■ **Анотація.** Повномасштабні воєнні дії, що відбуваються з 2022 року в Україні, негативно впливають на всі сфери економіки, включно зі сферою ресторанного бізнесу. Важливим чинником, що допомагає працювати та розвиватися українським ресторанным закладам є бренд. Тому актуальності набувають питання управління брендом ресторану з урахуванням воєнних умов. Мета дослідження – визначення характерних рис брендингу суб'єктів ресторанної справи в контексті воєнних дій. У статті застосовано такі наукові методи, як: бібліографічний аналіз, аналіз та синтез, групування та порівняння. Для аналізу сектору діяльності із забезпечення стравами та напоями було використано дані Державної служби статистики України. Дані охоплюють період з кінця 2014 до початку 2023 року. Проаналізовано український сектор діяльності із забезпечення стравами та напоями (включно з оцінюванням змін бізнес-ситуації, аналізу рівня зайнятості та коливань попиту в цій сфері) для визначення особливостей функціонування та перспектив розвитку ресторанного бізнесу. Окреслено проблеми, з якими зіштовхуються українські ресторанны підприємства протягом 2022-2023 рр. Обґрунтовано, що управління брендом ресторану важливе для забезпечення його діяльності в умовах воєнних дій та надалі для післявоєнного відновлення. Визначено особливості та функції бренду ресторану, а також систематизовано чинники впливу на бренд ресторану в кризових умовах. Запропоновано імплементацію закордонного досвіду щодо просування бренду ресторану, зокрема просування послуг у соціальних мережах та інших онлайн-каналів. Результати дослідження мають практичне значення для українських ресторанны закладів та можуть бути використані ними з метою корегування як загальної стратегії розвитку ресторану, так і заходів просування бренду

■ **Ключові слова:** заклади громадського харчування; сфера харчування; кризові умови; функції лейбла; чинники впливу на імідж компанії