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STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF THE MARKETING ACTIVITIES OF A BUSINESS ENTITY

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The contemporary business environment is characterized by a high degree of dynamism, uncertainty, and an acceleration of transformational processes, which substantially affect the operating conditions of business entities. Changes in consumer behavior, intensifying competition, the digitalization of economic processes, shortening product and service life cycles, the development of e-commerce, the growing role of social media, and personalized communications are generating new requirements for enterprise management systems. For Ukrainian enterprises, additional sources of uncertainty include war-related risks, disruptions to logistics linkages, changes in the geography of sales markets, consumer migration, resource constraints, and the need to adapt to the post-war economic recovery.

Under these conditions, marketing ceases to be exclusively a functional area associated with product promotion and sales stimulation. It acquires a strategic character because it provides an enterprise with information about the external environment, enables the identification of promising market opportunities, the formation of target segments, the creation of a value proposition, the management of customer relationships, and the achievement of long-term competitive advantages. Therefore, strategic management of marketing activities should be regarded as an integral component of the overall strategic management system of a business entity.

The issues of strategic marketing and strategic management of marketing activities are actively investigated by Ukrainian scholars. D. Raiko, I. Fedorenko, K. Sokol, and O. Lanko examine strategic management of marketing activities through the interrelationship of planning, implementation, control, and coordination of an enterprise's marketing product policy [1]. Ya. Larina, N. Ovsienko, and D. Vasylkov emphasize the transformation of strategic marketing methodology under the influence of contemporary challenges and digital technologies [2]. K. Stepanova and I. Murashko highlight the particular role of strategic marketing under wartime and post-war operating conditions of Ukrainian enterprises [3]. Thus, the contemporary concept of strategic marketing is gradually shifting from traditional long-term planning toward a system of continuous monitoring, adaptation, and revision of strategic decisions.

The purpose of the study is to substantiate theoretical and methodological provisions for the strategic management of the marketing activities of a business entity.

Strategic management of marketing activities should be viewed as a systemic process of defining the long-term marketing objectives of a business entity, analyzing the external and internal environment, selecting strategic development directions, formulating a set of marketing strategies, ensuring their implementation, and monitoring the achievement of defined results.

The distinction between strategic management and operational marketing management primarily lies in the time horizon, the nature of managerial decisions, and the level of their impact on enterprise activities. Operational marketing is predominantly focused on addressing current tasks: conducting advertising campaigns, managing prices, organizing sales, communicating with consumers, stimulating sales, and so forth. Strategic management, by contrast, determines which markets the enterprise should operate in, which consumer groups should be prioritized, what competitive position should be established, what the value proposition should be, and how marketing resources should be allocated to ensure long-term development.

Thus, strategic management of marketing activities involves the integration of three levels of managerial decision-making: strategic, tactical, and operational. The strategic level determines the long-term direction of development; the tactical level translates strategic decisions into specific programs and sets of marketing measures; and the operational level ensures the day-to-day implementation of planned actions and responses to current changes.

A distinctive feature of contemporary strategic marketing is its orientation not only toward satisfying existing demand but also toward identifying future consumer needs and creating new market opportunities. Therefore, marketing activities should begin not with the selection of an advertising tool or sales channel, but with environmental analysis and the identification of the enterprise's strategic problem.

In this context, strategic management of marketing activities can be represented as a closed management cycle:

environmental analysis → identification of strategic objectives → strategic choice → formulation of a marketing strategy → resource provision → implementation → control → evaluation of results → strategy adjustment.

It is fundamental that this cycle should not end at the control stage. The results obtained should provide an information basis for a new cycle of strategic analysis. Consequently, strategic management of marketing activities should be not linear but cyclical and adaptive.

D. Raiko, I. Fedorenko, K. Sokol, and O. Lanko substantiate the need for interconnection among organizational, methodological, and analytical procedures at all stages of managing marketing product policy [1]. This approach should be extended to the marketing activities of a business entity as a whole. In this case, strategic management should ensure consistency among marketing research, market segmentation, and product, pricing, distribution, and communication policies.

An important prerequisite for strategic management is the identification of its object and subjects. The object is the enterprise's marketing activity as a set of interrelated processes involving market research, the creation and delivery of a value proposition, pricing, distribution, communications, and customer relationship management. The subjects of management are the owners, enterprise management, the marketing unit, managers of the respective functional areas, and other employees involved in implementing the marketing strategy.

Accordingly, strategic management of marketing activities cannot be exclusively the responsibility of the marketing department. It requires cross-functional coordination because strategic marketing decisions directly affect production, finance, logistics, personnel, innovation activities, and the enterprise's investment policy.

The first stage of strategic management is the determination of the strategic orientations of the business entity. The marketing strategy should not exist separately from the overall enterprise strategy. It should ensure the implementation of the enterprise's mission, strategic vision, and system of long-term objectives.

At this stage, several fundamental questions must be addressed: What is the current market position of the enterprise? What consumer needs does it satisfy? Which target segments are the most promising? What are its competitive advantages? Which changes in the external environment may create opportunities or threats? What resources can the enterprise employ to achieve its strategic objectives?

The formulation of strategic orientations requires alignment among three components: the interests of the enterprise, consumer needs, and the characteristics of the competitive environment. If a strategy is oriented solely toward the enterprise's internal capabilities, it may lose market relevance. If, however, it is based exclusively on current demand, the enterprise risks failing to account for future market transformations.

Therefore, strategic marketing orientation should provide for the continuous alignment of the enterprise's internal potential with the dynamics of the external environment.

An important instrument for such alignment is strategic analysis. It should be conducted in the following areas:

- analysis of the macroenvironment;
- analysis of the industry and competitive environment;
- consumer analysis;
- analysis of market conditions;
- analysis of the enterprise's marketing potential;
- analysis of competitive advantages;
- evaluation of the effectiveness of marketing tools;
- identification of strategic risks.

For macroenvironment analysis, PESTEL analysis is appropriate, as it makes it possible to systematize political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal factors. For assessing the competitive environment, M. Porter's Five Competitive Forces model is effective. SWOT analysis makes it possible to integrate the results of external and internal analyses and identify strategic alternatives.

At the same time, the use of an individual tool does not ensure a comprehensive strategic analysis. The results should be interconnected and interpreted from the perspective of the specific enterprise. For example, an increase in digital demand is not in itself a strategic opportunity if the enterprise lacks the necessary digital competencies. Likewise, high brand awareness cannot be considered a sustainable competitive advantage without analyzing customer loyalty and competitors' positions.

Thus, strategic analysis should move beyond the simple accumulation of information toward the formulation of managerial conclusions.

One of the central problems of strategic management of marketing activities is the identification of target markets and segments. The contemporary approach involves abandoning orientation toward an abstract "average consumer" and moving toward a detailed analysis of the needs, motivations, behavior, and value of individual customer groups.

Segmentation should be based not only on demographic or geographic characteristics. For strategic management, behavioral, psychographic, and value-based characteristics of consumers are more significant. Under digitalization, enterprises can analyze a substantially broader body of data on customer behavior, creating the prerequisites for a transition from mass marketing to personalized interaction models.

The strategic selection of target segments should be based, at a minimum, on the following criteria:

- segment size and potential;
- growth rate;
- level of competition;
- segment accessibility;
- alignment with enterprise resources;
- potential profitability;
- long-term demand stability;
- the possibility of developing a competitive advantage.

The concept of customer value acquires particular importance. A strategic decision concerning segment selection should take into account not only current sales volume but also potential customer lifetime value, the possibility of repeat purchases, referrals, cross-selling, and the development of long-term relationships.

Thus, segmentation within the strategic management system should be directly linked to the enterprise's resource provision. An enterprise cannot serve all segments equally effectively; therefore, strategic management involves concentrating resources on the most promising areas.

After identifying target segments, the enterprise must establish its competitive position. Competitive strategy determines how the enterprise will create and sustain an advantage in the target market.

Competitive advantage may be based on price, quality, innovativeness, service, speed of service, brand, technology, customer experience, a unique value proposition, or a combination of several factors.

For a contemporary enterprise, the ability to rapidly adapt its competitive offering to changing market conditions is becoming particularly important. In this respect, the traditional understanding of strategy as a fixed long-term plan requires reconsideration.

Ya. Larina, N. Ovsienko, and D. Vasylkov note that the methodology of contemporary strategic marketing is being transformed under the influence of digital technologies, which expand the possibilities for marketing analysis and management [2]. Accordingly, a strategic marketing system should provide not only for determining a development direction but also for the enterprise's ability to continuously review and adapt selected decisions.

The principal types of marketing strategies of a business entity include: market penetration strategy; market development strategy; product development strategy; diversification strategy; differentiation strategy; cost leadership strategy; focus strategy; innovation development strategy; digital transformation strategy; customer-centric strategy; and omnichannel strategy. The choice of a specific strategy should depend on the results of strategic analysis, the enterprise's resource potential, and the characteristics of the target market.

At the same time, it is appropriate to distinguish between the corporate and functional levels of strategizing. Corporate strategy determines the overall direction of business development, whereas marketing strategy specifies it from the perspective of the market, consumers, and competitive interaction.

The effectiveness of strategic management largely depends on the extent to which the enterprise uses individual marketing tools in a coordinated manner. The traditional 4P model—product, price, place, promotion—remains fundamental; however, under contemporary conditions it should be supplemented by digital marketing tools, customer experience management, branding, and data analytics.

The product strategy should determine not only the product range but also its development directions, innovativeness, quality, design, packaging, after-sales service, and life-cycle stages.

The pricing strategy should take into account not only costs and competitors' prices but also the perceived value of the product for the target segment. In the digital environment, enterprises have opportunities to employ dynamic pricing, personalized offers, and automated analysis of consumers' pricing behavior.

The distribution strategy involves determining the optimal structure of product distribution channels. A contemporary consumer may interact with an enterprise simultaneously through a physical store, website, marketplace, social media, and mobile application. Therefore, omnichannel integration, in which different channels operate as a unified system, acquires strategic importance.

The communication strategy is also undergoing transformation. Its task is no longer merely to inform consumers about a product but to establish sustainable relationships with the target audience. This involves combining advertising, public relations, content marketing, SMM, email marketing, search marketing, influencer marketing, and personalized communications.

V. Homolska, in studying the marketing product policy of enterprises under wartime conditions, emphasizes the need to adapt product strategies to an unstable environment and to seek models of survival and development [4]. This confirms the need to view strategic marketing management not as a static system but as a mechanism for enterprise adaptation.

One of the most significant factors transforming strategic marketing is digitalization. Digital technologies are changing not only communication tools but also the very logic of marketing decision-making. Traditional marketing analysis was often based on periodic studies, surveys, and statistical information. Today, enterprises can obtain information about customer behavior practically in real time. Data from CRM systems, web analytics, social media, e-commerce, and loyalty programs provide an information basis for more accurate demand forecasting.

As a result, data-driven marketing is emerging. Its strategic significance lies in enabling a transition from intuitive decision-making to analytically grounded management.

The following digital tools can be used for strategic management: CRM systems; web analytics systems; BI platforms; marketing automation systems; advertising campaign management systems; social media; e-commerce platforms; artificial intelligence tools; predictive analytics; and competitor monitoring systems.

The use of artificial intelligence opens up new opportunities for demand forecasting, customer segmentation, content personalization, communication automation, and the identification of patterns in consumer behavior. At the same time, digitalization creates new risks, including dependence on digital platforms, cyber risks, data breaches, declining consumer trust, excessive automation of communications, and the risk of making managerial decisions based on incomplete or inaccurate data.

Therefore, digital transformation should be regarded not as an end in itself but as a tool for improving the effectiveness of strategic management of marketing activities.

Under conditions of high uncertainty, the adaptability of the marketing strategy becomes a fundamental issue. The classical strategic planning model assumes the sequence: analysis — planning — implementation — control. However, in an unstable environment, the life cycle of strategic decisions becomes shorter.

For Ukrainian enterprises, this problem is particularly relevant. War-related risks can substantially alter market accessibility, logistics, population purchasing power, demand structure, and consumer behavior. Therefore, a marketing strategy should incorporate a mechanism for rapid adjustment.

K. Stepanova and I. Murashko emphasize the particular importance of strategic marketing for Ukrainian enterprises under wartime and post-war conditions [3]. Under such circumstances, strategic management should incorporate a scenario-based approach.

It is advisable to develop at least three scenarios: the baseline scenario, which assumes the continuation of the main market development trends; the optimistic scenario, which assumes an improvement in the economic situation, expansion of demand, and improved access to resources; and the crisis scenario, which assumes deterioration of market conditions, declining demand, intensified competition, or the emergence of additional risks. For each scenario, a set of marketing measures, an acceptable level of expenditure, and key performance indicators should be determined.

This approach makes it possible to move from responding to a crisis after its occurrence toward the proactive formulation of alternative managerial decisions.

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