

2. Strategies for brand promotion in social media

BACKGROUND

Social media has long been one of the most popular platforms on the Internet. These sites bring together a large number of people and are an alternative to radio, television and print media for many. They are accessed by millions of users every day looking for communication, entertainment and information. This is a large audience, and it is often interested in new products and services. For marketers, it is simply impossible not to use these audiences for business development. That's why social media promotion is very popular today. Social media offers great opportunities for branding and serves as an effective channel for targeted traffic. However, to fully utilise the enormous potential of SMM, it is necessary to develop a clear strategy for the company's presence on media platforms.

The evolution of social media has been driven by the human desire to communicate and the advancement of digital technology. Thanks to its ease of use, speed and reach, social media has become a trendsetter in a variety of topics, from the environment, politics and technology to the entertainment industry. Social media is essentially self-promotional as users spread the word. The virality of social media makes it an attractive business tool for promoting products and services. As the latest phenomenon in the global economy, Internet marketing is a relatively independent field of knowledge and methodological approaches in economics and business management.

The brand is the main category of modern consumption, as well as the entire sphere of advertising communication. Consumers want not just a product or service, but a brand with a unique company name, logo and, most importantly, its own unique image, by which it can be identified and distinguished from all other brands. The choice between branded and non-branded goods is obvious: the former are in greater demand if brands properly establish and develop communication with consumers. The reason is simple - the former always has its own unique, absolutely specific image that influences the minds of consumers, attract their attention and keep them in your space.

The topic of brand development and brand strategy has been studied by such scholars as: F. Kotler[14], D. Ogilvy[17], K.L. Keller[16], S. Coomber[18], D. D'Alessandro, P. Doyle and others. The purpose of this section is to systematise the theoretical foundations of brand promotion in social media, to study the activities of the Foxtrot brand and, in general, to analyse social media as a tool for implementing business ideas, and to assess the advantages and disadvantages of doing business in social media.

PRESENTATION OF THE MAIN MATERIAL

The modern world is full of brands, brands surround us everywhere, they addict consumers, people no longer buy just goods, they buy their dreams, their ideals. The high degree of development of technology and business has led to competition among brands. Companies are making a lot of efforts to create the desired image in the eyes of the consumer in order to maximise profits.

It should be noted that the word "brand" in Latin means "stamp" or "brand". Historically, only high-quality goods were marked with a brand, hence the main function of a brand is to indicate the quality of the product. At the beginning of the 20th century, when the process of globalisation began, export and import ties were established, and there were more and more traders, as well as consumers, the former realised that goods should be decorated and the wishes of the buyer should be taken into account.

In the second half of the 20th century, marketing began to take on the appearance of a science, and well-developed brands became symbols of competitive advantage. Marketers realised that it was more profitable to sell a product to people who were already familiar with it and gave it a positive assessment. To do this, they began to use the skills of artists, photographers and creative people. In addition to goods, services and their producers, the advertising and branding industries began to emerge. Specialists in brand development and positioning, as well as companies specialising in this field, began to appear. The concept of brand is defined as a word, expression, sign, symbol or design solution, or a combination thereof, for the purpose of identifying the goods and services of a particular seller or group of sellers to distinguish them from competitors (definition developed by the American Marketing Associations). [14]

Φ. Kotler interpreted the brand as the seller's obligation to provide the buyer with a certain set of product features, benefits and services, as well as quality guarantees. [15] C. L. Keller defined a brand as a set of associations that arise in the minds of consumers that add value to the perceived product or service and create different reactions to the brand. [16] David Ogilvy, a well-known advertising copywriter and founder of an advertising agency, defined a brand as an intangible sum of product attributes: its name, packaging and price, its history, its reputation and the way it is advertised. [17]

C. Koumber describes branding as one of the most important components of marketing, as well as the creation and promotion of brands for long-term benefit. With the help of marketing techniques, branding fights not just for the consumer, but for his emotions, for his attachment to the product, for his soul and loyalty. Thanks to the right branding, the consumer will ultimately choose your product from the mass of similar ones. [18]

It should be noted that there is no single approach to interpreting the concept of brand and developing a brand strategy. See Appendix A for definitions of the concept of "brand".

Contrary to popular belief, a brand is not based on aesthetics and visual appearance. By brand, we mean the quality and reputation of a company. How do people perceive it? Do they trust the brand and does it make them happy? Does the brand deliver what it promises? All these questions are related to how people see the brand. And if they see it as the most reliable and popular product or service, then you will be able to create a reliable brand. This is the whole point. So, to summarise, a brand is a series of associations and feelings that a consumer has when they think of it: name, packaging, brand history, reputation, level of consumer trust and loyalty.

Consider the difference between a brand and branding. A company's efforts to ensure customer satisfaction, build relationships and conduct marketing campaigns distinguish a "brand" from "branding". In other words, a brand is a noun that defines the "Who?" of a company. In contrast, branding works as a verb that describes the "How?". How the company will communicate and convey its message, as well as how

it will communicate its mission, purpose and vision. Planning and developing a "How?" strategy in branding can help businesses stay consistent in their marketing efforts. In summary, branding is the art of expressing what a brand is, from its personality to its purpose. Figure 1 shows the branding process.

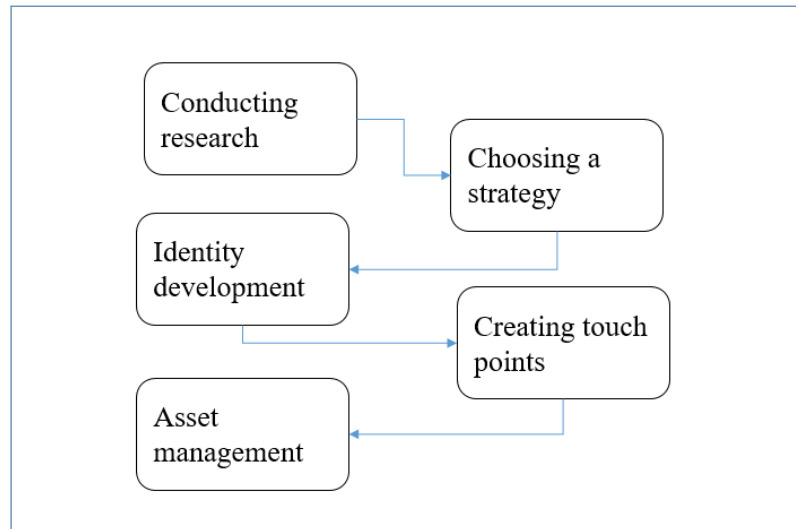


Fig. 1 - Branding process

Source: Developed by the author.

As a result of a brand strategy, people develop a particular feeling or opinion about a company - a feeling that guides their purchasing decisions. This feeling is equal to brand equity. The stronger people feel about a brand, the stronger the brand equity. With the help of a brand strategy, businesses define their long-term goals, and a comprehensive brand strategy informs managers whether they are moving in the right direction. The main goal of a successful branding strategy is to let the world know that your brand exists, what it is about, and what defines it.

Therefore, a brand strategy is a holistic approach to how a brand creates identification and affinity among customers and potential customers. A brand strategy encompasses several different elements: brand voice, brand design, brand values, brand story, and brand atmosphere are key elements of a successful brand strategy (Figure 2). Let's take a closer look at each of the elements:

1. Brand story is a narrative used to convey important points of the business's origin, core beliefs and values, and the main purpose of the business. [19]

Brand stories facilitate the connection between a business and its customer base. By telling why the company is still around, what it stands for, and what inspired the owners to start and continue, it creates an open environment where people can get to know the company better;

2. Brand voice is the personality of your brand; the unique way you present yourself to the world. It should be consistent across all of your communications (social media, websites, blog posts, emails, advertising) regardless of which channels serve your teams, and it should not change."[20]

Brand voice - The words and phrases that a brand uses to communicate with current or new customers through various marketing channels and on its website are called brand voice. It often plays a crucial role in building connections with the customer base, combining the brand's personality with its core values. sets the tone for the relationship that the customer will build with the brand over time and shows them what they can expect from it. A brand that doesn't have a distinctive voice runs the risk of losing that connection or sending a different message than what they really want;

3. Brand design is the way a business is displayed visually - from colour palette to fonts to photography style - on products, website and marketing platforms and is often the first and quickest way a potential customer in your target market can understand what your brand is about.

The elements of brand identity include: a wordmark or logo, key colours, standard typographic treatments, a library of graphic elements, various logo blocking, branded typefaces, a consistent style for images, sound, touch, smell[21]; your brand is a single identity. Colour increases brand awareness by 80%, making it one of the most influential visual factors in creating and maintaining a strong digital brand.

4. Brand values: Why does the company exist? What is most important? Are there problems that the business is actively working to solve? Such questions help to understand the essence of brand values, beliefs and principles.

Brand values can be interpreted as certain feelings and emotions that a brand brings along with its functionality, for example, owning a brand gives a person a sense of self-confidence, belonging to a particular social group, position in society, a sense

of prestige, confidence in the high quality and reliability of the product, etc. - All this gives the consumer deep satisfaction from using the brand[22];

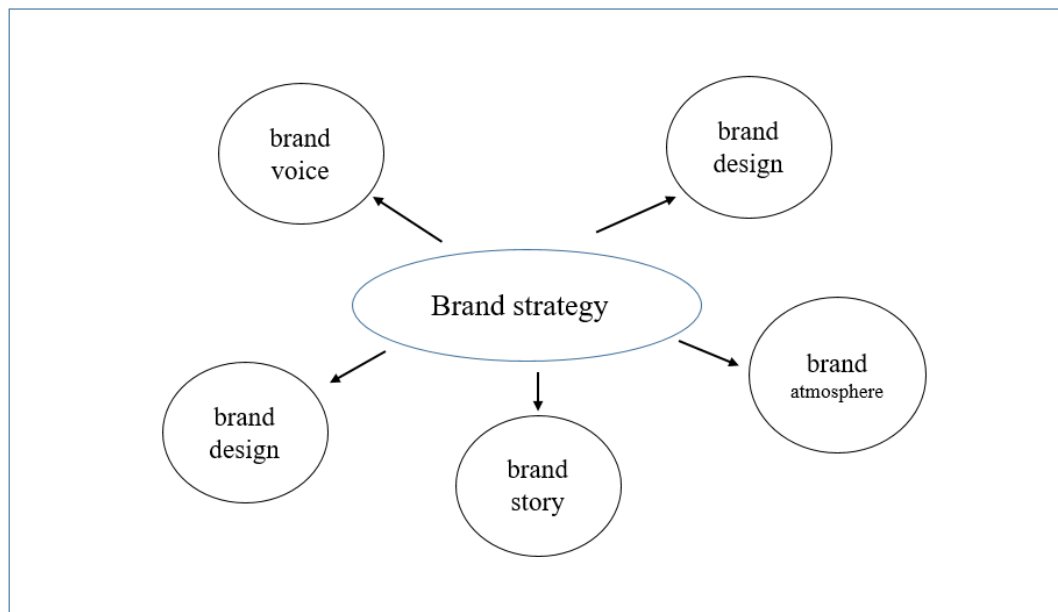


Fig. 2 - Elements of brand strategy

Source: Developed by the author

Branding is relevant in all industries. Organisations spend millions on planning and implementing brand activities. From time to time, new research is published and various frameworks are developed to try to establish different approaches to brand management. However, experts have classified different approaches to branding into seven schools of thought that more or less cover the entire branding landscape.

An extensive analysis of numerous publications on brand management led to the seven approaches. This included more than 300 articles from the Journal of Marketing, Journal of Marketing Research, Journal of Consumer Research, Harvard Business Review, and European Journal of Marketing. The following approaches to branding are distinguished: economic approach, identification, personal, relational, community, cultural and consumer-oriented. [34]

-Economic approach: brand as part of the traditional marketing mix. In the traditional approach, branding directly includes the visible elements of a company or product. Product branding aims to make one product distinctive and recognisable. Symbols or pictures are an important part of product branding to help customers easily

identify your product. For example, Monster Energy drinks have clear packaging and logos that make them easy to distinguish from Red Bull energy drinks;

- Identity approach: brand in connection with corporate identity. Corporate branding is a core business value and a philosophy that a company develops to present itself to the world and its employees. Effective corporate brands often seek to reflect the company's mission, personality and core values at every point of contact with potential customers, current customers and former customers. For example, Nike's core values and mission are recognisable across all of their platforms and products. Nike's mission: "To bring inspiration and innovation to every athlete in the world". And its slogan, next to their famous tick logo, is: "Just do it".

- The personal approach describes branding that is used for an individual rather than branding for an entire business. Celebrities, politicians, opinion leaders and athletes often use this form of branding to present the best version of themselves to the public;

- Relational approach: the brand as a viable partner in a relationship. Co-branding is a form of branding that brings companies together. Essentially, co-branding is a marketing partnership between two or more companies. It helps brands to influence each other in a positive way, and this can lead to business development, brand awareness and entry into new markets;

Consumer-centric approach: the brand in relation to consumer associations. Measuring and observing customers, how they actually act, to offer environments and products for their needs. Companies are aware of different types of customers, so they can offer the right type of service for the target customer segment. Observation methods can include, for example, interviews and experiments;

- Social approach: the brand as a focal point for social interaction. People usually want to be a part of some community or social environment. They buy certain things that relate them to a certain community. Can an employee of an advertising agency and a secretary in a large financial bank be dressed in the same way? Are they expected to follow a certain style? The community approach uses ethnography and community theories to allocate customers;

-Cultural approach: the brand as part of a wider cultural fabric. This approach includes a cultural consumption aspect. For example, what kind of clothes do consumers typically wear? Can companies influence a new generation of consumers? Brands like H&M or ZARA have clothes for both children and adults. So, if we go to this store with our parents, how does it affect us? When we grow up, do we go to H&M because we're used to it? This approach relies on a forward-looking perspective to see and predict what might happen in the future and pays attention to how the world is changing and how trends affect customers, for example. Some of the keywords are popular culture as well as "No Logo";

Sometimes one branding approach is not enough. Today, you can find a combination of several branding models in a company. There is no "right" approach or model. However, all the approaches presented point to a clear trend. There is an important shift from the traditional one-way transmission of brand communication (e.g., the economy and identity approaches) to a strong focus on considering contextual and cultural influences on the brand (e.g., the cultural approach). In order to gain a global understanding of brand management, companies must first understand the underlying thoughts and ideas behind all of these models. In addition, they must realise and accept that their customers own the brand and therefore influence the creation of brand value.

Social media marketing (SMM) is a form of online marketing that uses social media applications as a marketing tool. This type of marketing targets social platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok to promote a brand, grow a target audience, generate website traffic and increase sales.

Online promotion differs from other advertising methods, and the ways are endlessly varied. Internet advertising is actively used in the business world, as it occupies a leading position in marketing and is gradually replacing print media and television. As the popularity of online advertising grows, the number of special applications is increasing, and SMM tools are constantly being improved.

SMM tools are the backbone of social media marketing. It is important to accurately earn the trust of the user with a well-defined and correct approach to

providing useful and interesting information to the audience. Various tools can be used to promote business development, and Z. Andrushkevich identifies the following classification: "building brand communities (creating company offices in social media), working with the blogosphere, reputation management (public relations in social media), personal branding, non-standard SMM promotion, hidden marketing, contextual advertising, promotion of an enterprise in a social network, viral campaigns, lead generation, etc." [35, p. 22].

A brand or community page on the Internet, which acts as a full-fledged platform, is a way to communicate with your target audience, and they provide an opportunity to work on tasks such as brand loyalty and sales promotion. Indeed, social media helps to drive traffic to the website, increase the reach of potential customers and help to raise brand awareness. There are no restrictions on the number of social media accounts, so corporations with branches in different parts of the world can establish communication with the audience based on the demographic characteristics of their customers. If you choose the right social media promotion strategy, the result will exceed all expectations. Let's consider the following tool - the blogosphere, which is a collection of all blogs as a community or social network, a real social universe. [37] The blogosphere is a powerful tool that influences the masses, and the Internet allows for free expression, as its possibilities are endless. The number of blogs is growing every day because absolutely everyone can create and develop their own blog. Bloggers actively interact with each other, read each other, like each other, write comments, and thus create their own subculture. It should be noted that blogging platforms have long been a tool for brand promotion. Advertisers are actively cooperating with bloggers on a commercial basis and securing partnerships.

Shareable content. Businesses can also turn extended SMM interconnectivity into the creation of "sticky" content, a marketing term for engaging content that attracts customers at first glance, encourages them to buy products, and then makes them want to share the content. This type of word-of-mouth advertising not only reaches an unreachable audience, but also has the implicit endorsement of someone the recipient

knows and trusts, making creating shareable content one of the most important ways to drive social media marketing growth.

Social media marketing (SMM) is also the most effective way for businesses to take advantage of another type of earned media (a term for brand awareness through any method other than paid advertising): customer-generated product reviews and recommendations.

Viral marketing. Another SMM strategy that relies on the audience to create the message is viral marketing, a sales technique that attempts to cause a rapid spread of information about a product by word of mouth. When a marketing message spreads among the general public far beyond the original target audience, it is considered viral - a very simple and inexpensive way to drive sales. Customer segmentation: Because customer segmentation is much more accurate in social media marketing (SMM) than in traditional marketing channels, companies can ensure that they are focusing their marketing resources on their exact target audience.

Tracking metrics: according to Sprout Social, the most important social media marketing (SMM) metrics to track are customer-centric: engagement (likes, comments, shares, clicks); impressions (how many times a post appears); reach/virality (how many unique views an SMM post has); share of voice (how far a brand is promoted online); referrals (how a user gets to a website); and conversions (when a user makes a purchase on a website). However, another very important indicator is business-focused: response rate/time (how often and how quickly a company responds to customer messages). [36]

Social media marketing also allows organisations to receive customer feedback while making the company more attractive. Social media allows organisations to build relationships with their audience. It gives end users a platform to ask questions, voice complaints and be heard. It also gives brands the opportunity to respond, adapt and adjust business processes or products. Reputation management plays an important role, as negative comments can reduce the number of purchases and damage reputation. Companies that create activity on social platforms can see an increase in interaction and conversations about the brand and products. Users will comment and share posts, tag the company in their own posts, and even start communicating via instant

messaging. These types of interactions are ideal because there are alerts to notify social media managers. This enables them to establish good customer service, which in turn improves the customer experience. Reputation management involves monitoring, analysing and shaping public opinion and perception, and proactively managing the communication and presentation of an individual, corporation or other organisation's image and perceived values.

Several different strategies can be used in reputation management, including:
[38]

Monitoring and responding to online reviews and ratings: this involves regularly checking websites and social media platforms for mentions of an individual or entity and responding appropriately to any negative comments or reviews;

Online content management: this involves creating and promoting positive content about an individual or organisation, and managing or removing negative content that could damage reputation;

Public relations: This involves actively engaging in online conversations and building relationships with customers, stakeholders and the media.

Use of crisis management: this involves developing and implementing a plan to respond to negative events or situations that may damage the reputation of a person or organisation.

Reputation management is important because the reputation of an individual or organisation can have a significant impact on its success and opportunities. By actively managing and building its reputation, an individual or organisation can improve its public image and build trust and credibility with its audience.

Joint use of paid and regular social networks. Today, social marketing is less about paid and organic social and more about combining the power of the two. As organic reach on social platforms continues to decline, investing in paid social media is more important than ever to reach a wider audience. Contextual advertising - shows ads to people when they search for a specific product, meaning that ads are tailored to specific keywords entered by the user. Targeted advertising works on a similar principle, but is launched on social media. Targeting means setting up an advertising

campaign, restricting the display of an advertising message based on certain criteria, and displaying ads in accordance with the specified parameters. It is worth noting that the main advantage of targeted advertising is its price, because even with a minimal budget, it is possible to promote a product and convert users into leads. Another tool is lead generation - advertising activities aimed at attracting leads. A lead is the contact details of a network user who has shown interest in your product or service, i.e. potential customers. Leads are generated through targeted advertising.

Artyukhina M. and Popova G. also add elements of Internet merchandising (general design of pages, use of corporate identity, visual effects) to their classification of SMM tools [39, p. 57]. This means that every time your artefacts appear, they should be the same in terms of their appearance, use, size, volume, colour, feel, etc.

The use of corporate identity on the company's social media pages is an important step in increasing brand awareness. It is thanks to personalised design that a company stands out among competitors and is better remembered by consumers. In addition, an important advantage is that corporate identity ensures visual, meaningful unity of the company's goods and services. For example, a customer will be more likely to notice a product in a store because they will remember the brand's corporate identity from social media, thereby increasing their chances of buying it. As a result, consumers will easily recognise the company's products or services among other market offers.

There are many SMM tools for business development. SMM promotion methods can both help and harm a company, and an unsuccessful launch of an advertising campaign can damage a brand's reputation. It is important to choose the right promotion tools and pay attention to new technologies, keeping up with trends.

Adapting to the new online reality, consumers choose brands based on brand values, the number of likes and reviews from other social media users. A digital branding strategy leverages a brand's personality and strategically positions it to compete in the market. In a general sense, a digital branding strategy is how a company communicates its brand identity to consumers online with the main goal of increasing customer loyalty and sales. Nowadays, people are faced with the choice of buying goods online or in an offline store, but they still search online for the price of the desired

product and look at reviews first. So, thanks to technological developments, there are even more users online, and the transparency of social media has influenced the positioning of brands on social media, as brands now take great care of their reputation.

Step 1: Define the brand's mission and vision and marketing goals

What is the purpose of the brand, where will it go, and how does it differ from competitors? The brand mission and vision tell your target audience what you stand for and give them a way to relate. Mission: who your company is and what you do. Vision: why you do it, what your goals are, and how you intend to achieve them. Expand on your mission and vision and connect with your target audience through storytelling. Personalise the company, share how the journey began and outline the path to where you are now.

In general, brand perception is the idea that a consumer has about a business. Figure 3 shows the visual perception of a brand by consumers. Consumers form brand perceptions based on a number of criteria: Online reviews, news, recommendations from friends, personal experience, external marketing consumption (ads, social media, etc.).

Regardless of what a company wants to appear to be, consumers may form a different opinion about what the company really is. Brand perception is related to brand positioning because they are both forms of communicating a brand's message to its customers.

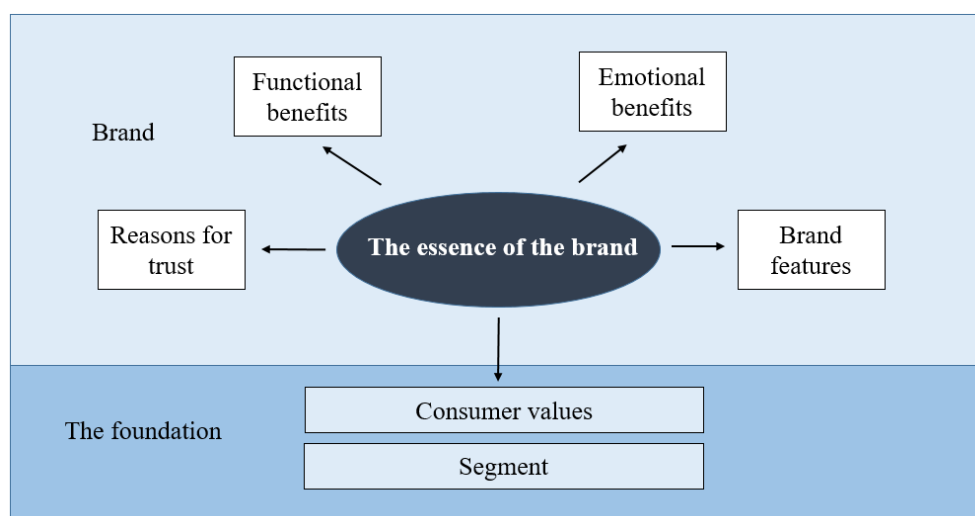


Fig.3 Visual perception of the brand

Source: developed by the author on the basis of [40].

Remember, don't set goals just to set them. You're creating them to help you develop the most appropriate social media strategy for your business, so goals should be: measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.

Stage 2: Research

Research provides companies with important information about their target market, market environment, industry, and their own strengths and weaknesses. Companies should examine internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats related to the industry, events, trends and market conditions. Comprehensive competitor analysis is important to determine how the company's products and brands differ from those of its competitors and what strategies will be used to differentiate it from them. The company should use research to identify and define the habits and values of its target market. This will help illustrate patterns of buying behaviour and find ways to create an emotional connection with them. At this stage, the company should be able to list the differences and similarities between its brands. Differentiation is a simple reason why a company is different from other companies in a positive way. Goals: Every professional marketer knows how important this stage is. Without goals, a digital marketing strategy simply won't work,

Segment your audience. It should be understood that it is wrong to assume that the target audience is all consumers. By segmenting the audience, a company can get a general idea of the audience, which will lead to more informed digital branding strategies. In the past, digital marketers collected qualitative and quantitative information about the target audience, which included age, gender, profession, interests, and location. The definition of a potential customer has recently been taken to another level as buyer personas have taken over. Today, the best digital marketing strategies are incomplete without them. There are several main customer avatars to consider, which is a term used to describe an ideal customer that can be identified through surveys and contact with a pre-defined target group. The latest digital marketing strategies start with identifying your own unique buyers.

Stage 3 Create a content plan, develop an SMM strategy, identify the main platforms for promotion

An SMM strategy is a clear plan of action formulated to achieve certain goals. An important part of the promotion strategy is the content plan and its content, which is designed to attract the audience. By analysing the work of competitors and the behaviour of the potential audience, a company can create interesting, trending content that will interest a wide audience. You need to create a content plan that will post information that is useful to the audience under certain headings. Alternate it to get more responses, experiment with trending content. Popular content that garners more likes and retweets should meet the following criteria:

Unique content: you don't need to create just creative viral content, but it should reflect the brand's uniqueness and essence;

Content quality: incorrect text, hastily created graphics repel viewers, low-quality content can lead to unsubscribes and bans;

Variety: development and holding of contests to increase subscribers and engagement, telling the story of the brand, interesting facts.

Content creation is one of the key stages of an SMM strategy. Careful work and preparation of a publication will affect the time it takes to achieve the goal and its success. The process of creating a content strategy is lengthy and can take several months. The main thing is to select information that will appeal to your audience, interest them and help sell your service or product. Your brand content is linked to your brand voice and includes the media used to communicate your message to your audience. Use content marketing to entertain, inspire, educate, and persuade potential customers throughout the customer lifecycle.

When users share or save content, brands gain organic reach. This method of customer acquisition is called organic promotion. Social media is now oversaturated with content and less dynamic than it was a few years ago. However, users still share messages with their audience and friends, thus helping brands to promote themselves.

The success of promotions in general also depends on the content. Not only should you publish selling content, such as promotions, offers and product information, but also other types of content on social media: [41]

Entertainment content: content that provides interesting information about the brand to keep the audience interested and engaged; Expert content: posts, articles and stories that demonstrate the high level of knowledge of the company's experts and increase brand credibility. It also contains various instructions, studies, guides, tips, reviews, interviews, and answers to viewers' questions; Reputational content: case studies, customer reviews, company achievements and news, information about the creation of products and services - the "inside scoop". This type of content helps to dispel viewers' doubts and build loyalty; Sales content (advertising): contains promotions, offers, product information, payment and delivery to increase sales; Interactive content: mechanisms such as various games and contests that encourage viewers to comment and re-submit their content. Such messages may also be accompanied by additional incentives, such as an offer of

Discounts or free goods or services to one or more participants in the discussion;

The proportion of content posted depends on its type, but it is important that the least amount of content (advertising) is sold and that the bulk of the content is entertainment. The rest of the account's content will depend on the goals of the promotion. For example, if the goal is to increase brand awareness, special attention should be paid to image and reputation content. Also, the speed of response to comments and SMS from followers plays a significant role in gaining customer loyalty.

Choosing a platform:

Facebook and YouTube are the main places to advertise partly because of their highly profitable user bases. According to the 2022 Sprout Social Index™, 71% of consumers and 65% of marketers plan to use Facebook the most in the coming year. YouTube is close behind, with 51% of consumers and 35% of marketers planning to use the platform. Instagram and YouTube are the most popular social media platforms among millennials and Generation Z, demonstrating the power of bold, eye-catching content that exudes personality. [42]

Facebook is a must for brick-and-mortar businesses looking to target local customers. By allowing check-ins and reviews, it's the best place to grow a loyal local following. In addition, they have an incredible chatbot feature that can take your

customer service and marketing campaigns to the next level. A recent change to the platform's algorithm has made it difficult for some businesses to grow their pages and stay in touch with fans. Nevertheless, Facebook's advertising platform is the gold standard for social media advertising.

Simple and straightforward, Twitter is a reliable starting point for most companies. Requiring minimal setup and providing a place to communicate directly with followers, there's a reason why Twitter remains the go-to platform for customer service. If you're trying to learn the basics of social media marketing, including hashtags, tags, brand voice, and social media etiquette, look no further.

At its core, Instagram is a network centred around visual content. The platform, which is a major hub for brick-and-mortar businesses, e-commerce stores, and influencers, encourages brands to get creative. From stunning photography to thoughtful captions, it's all about finding unique ways to showcase what you're selling.

In September 2021, TikTok reached 1 billion users, making it the internet's newest social media darling. Along with its viral trends and dedicated communities, the short video app is known for its hyper-personalised algorithm that keeps users scrolling for hours. TikTok marketing has changed the game for brands, allowing them to connect with customers in a whole new way.

While some may not consider YouTube a traditional social network, the platform's active and engaged community speaks for itself. Given that video is the most effective type of content on almost all social media, YouTube is a great place to post videos.

It is also important to set a budget for social media. WebStrategies has done some basic calculations for a typical company and found that most companies spend approximately 5% to 15% of their annual revenue on marketing. Of this, most spend between 35% and 45% on digital marketing. In turn, most companies spend between 15% and 25% of their digital marketing budget on social media marketing efforts (organic and paid).[43] Social media marketing is as viable a form of marketing as any other form of marketing for most companies, and you should be prepared to allocate your budget accordingly. As with any form of marketing, you should calculate the

return on investment (ROI) from your social media spend, keeping in mind the goals you set earlier in your strategy.

Step 4 Analyse the results and adjust the content plan and promotion methods.

It's worth noting that a large number of followers is not a measure of success, but rather the interaction of followers: purchases, reviews, comments, likes. The following tools can demonstrate success:

Reach is a metric that shows the number of people reached by a single post with an advertising campaign;

Click-throughs are clicks on a post that help you understand and evaluate the effectiveness of your marketing funnel. Tracking clicks for each campaign is essential to understand what sparks interest or encourages people to buy;

Hashtags are keywords that are associated with a brand. You should analyse the most active hashtags presented in your ads and try to use them in future posts;

Engagement is a metric that serves to track the level of activity of visitors on your page. The quality of content distribution depends on this metric. Audiences can be interested not only in paid content but also in free (organic) content published without further promotion;

Organic and paid likes. In addition to the standard number of likes, these interactions are related to paid or regular content. Given how much more difficult organic engagement is, many brands turn to advertising. Knowing these differences can help you plan both your ad spend and the time you invest in different formats;

Comments - help you find out how users feel about your brand, how the public reacts to the brand and products.

If a negative opinion is expressed only once or twice, it may be a ploy by a competitor. However, constant negative feedback can indicate problems;

views. This data point measures video views, but different platforms have different requirements for this. For example, Facebook and LinkedIn count a view when a user watches a video for at least three seconds. From the popularity of TikTok to live streaming, video is taking over the internet, so check out the engagement metrics for social videos if you plan to use them in your strategy.

Paid advertising campaigns allow you to reach relevant audiences that you are not currently connected to. You can use ads to increase brand awareness, promote certain posts/videos, or even sell products.

Working with influencers. If you choose the right influencers, your company has a chance to reach a whole new audience that will be interested in your business and its products. Influencers have already mastered the art of social media marketing - this is their strength. They have built a solid online reputation and have a large number of loyal and engaged followers. You might consider working with influencers to direct their followers to your social sites. However, you'll of course have to create content that will keep them interested once they land on your pages. If you choose influencers whose followers match your target audience and provide quality content to the people the influencers send your way, you have a chance that these people will then become your social media followers as well.

Collaborating with brand advocates: brand advocates may not have the same reach as the top influencers in your niche, but some will already have a significant audience and a solid reputation, so by including brand advocates in your social media marketing strategy, the brand gets the added benefit of growing a growing number of people who trust the brand. Brand advocacy simply means that people who love your product or services continue to support your brand, organically promoting your organisation to new audiences. Your brand advocates can play an important role in word-of-mouth marketing and drive new business by being enthusiastic supporters of what your company does.

Controlling every action, every stage in the process of implementing your SMM strategy is crucial. By using the above tools and analysing them in detail, you can plan your social media promotion and achieve significant success.

The evolution of social media has been driven by the human urge to communicate and the advancement of digital technology. It is a story about establishing and nurturing personal connections on a large scale. The concept of social media did not start with Mark Zuckerberg and Facebook. It started in the early 70s, when technology was developing rapidly. In the late 90s, platforms that we now call social

media began to emerge. It was only a matter of time before social media marketing was introduced. Let's take a closer look at the history of social media marketing.

According to Merriam-Webster, social media is defined as "forms of electronic communication (such as social networking websites and microblogs) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos)" [44].

In less than a generation, social media has evolved from a direct electronic exchange of information to a virtual gathering place to a retail platform to a vital marketing tool of the 21st century. How did it start? How has social media impacted the lives of billions of people? How have businesses adapted to the digital lifestyle of consumers? How do marketers use social media? All of this is part of the story of social media's ongoing evolution.

After the invention of computers in the 1940s, the idea of creating networks between these computers emerged. The first forms of Internet access, such as CompuServe, were founded in the late 1960s. In the late 70s and early 80s, technology became increasingly sophisticated and computers in the home became more common. However, home computers did not become popular until the late 1980s and early 1990s, when companies we know today, such as Apple and Microsoft, began to equip these machines to be in every home.

While the roots of digital communications run deep, most contemporary accounts of the modern origins of the modern Internet and social media point to the emergence of the Advanced Research Projects Agency Network - ARPANET - in 1969. This early digital network, created by the United States Department of Defence, allowed scientists from four interconnected universities to share software, hardware and other data. In 1987, a direct predecessor to the modern Internet emerged when the National Science Foundation launched a more robust nationwide digital network known as NSFNET. Ten years later, in 1997, the first true social networking platform was launched."[45]

In the 1980s and '90s, according to the "History of Social Networking" on the technology news site Digital Trends, the growth of the Internet enabled the introduction

of online communication services such as CompuServe, America Online and Prodigy. They introduced users to digital communication through email, message boards and real-time online chat.

In 1997, Andrew Weinreich created the first official social network called Six Degrees. The platform allowed users to upload a profile and make friends with other users, enabling social networking.[46] Around the same time, several blogging sites, such as Open Diary, began to gain popularity, creating the online phenomenon we all know and love today. The platform, created with the idea that there is always a degree of separation between acquaintances in your social circle, allowed you to upload profile photos, post items on message boards, communicate with other users and create their social groups. This social network achieved great popularity, reaching 3,500,000 registered users at its peak. It was sold to YouthStream Media Networks in 1999 for \$125 million and then completely shut down in 2001.

In 2001, this service was followed by Friendster. These rudimentary platforms attracted millions of users and allowed for the registration of an email address and basic online networks. Weblogs, or blogs, another early form of digital social communication, began to gain popularity after the launch of the LiveJournal publishing site in 1999. This coincided with the launch of the Blogger publishing platform by Pyra Labs, a technology company acquired by Google in 2003. [45]

Another precursor to social networking was Friendster, created in 2002 by Jonathan Abrams, Peter Chin and Dave Lee, whose goal was to become a dating site that would help its users connect with mutual friends. The social network was a forerunner in leaving comments on other profiles, and at its peak, it reached 100 million users. Unfortunately, the site did not survive and closed on 14 June 2015.

In 2002, LinkedIn was founded as a networking site for professional professionals. By 2020, it had grown to over 675 million users worldwide. It remains a favourite social networking site for job seekers as well as hiring managers looking for qualified candidates.

In 2004, a young Harvard student founded a website called Thefacebook. He later changed the name and became the giant we know today as Facebook. This was

Mark Zuckerberg's second attempt to create a social network. The year before, he created Smashface, a website that uploaded photos of students (without their consent) for others to rate their attractiveness. The site was shut down after a few days, and Harvard University forced Zuckerberg to publicly apologise. But Facebook was different and started to grow rapidly among university students and in the same year it was launched, received \$500,000 from PayPal founder Peter Thiel. In 2006, Facebook expanded, the application became available to everyone. By October of that year, it had 50 million users. A month later, Facebook Ads was launched.[46]

At the time, Zuckerberg announced that Facebook advertising: "A whole new way to advertise online. For the last hundred years, media has been pushed out to people, but now marketers are going to be part of the conversation. And they're going to do it by using the social graph the same way our users do." - Mark Zuckerberg, 2006

Brands and companies around the world started creating brand pages to interact with their customers. This was the beginning of the social media marketing era. One of the factors that helped Facebook become the king of social media was that the platform allowed you to use your real name as a user, unlike previous networks that only allowed you to use pseudonyms. This is even confirmed by the former MySpace CEO Mike Jones himself.

The ability to adapt and change is what makes Facebook a great business titan. According to the mantra "move fast and break things", the company is open to any changes to stay ahead of the competition. What made Facebook different from its competitors was the ability for users to share content with their friends and stay connected through the news feed. This meant that, unlike other platform options, users had a reason to keep coming back to Facebook. The company became more robust and colossal by buying other networks like Instagram and media outlets like WhatsApp, in addition to buying companies like Oculus VR, Beluga, and Onavo. On 28 October 2021, the company announced its name change to Meta, with the main mission of bringing people together.

In 2010, Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger co-founded Instagram, which has become the best photo-sharing app. Interestingly, Instagram owes its existence to

alcohol, in particular bourbon and whiskey. In 2009, a young Kevin Systrom was so passionate about bourbon and whiskey that he decided to develop an app called Burbn, a platform where people could share places to drink these drinks and then share photos.

Kevin only met two Silicon Valley investors interested in Burbn at a party in Silicon Valley for a startup called Hutch. After meeting over coffee, everyone believed in the idea. With the help of investors, Mike managed to raise \$500,000 after he made a deal with his Stanford University classmate Mike Krieger.

It turned out that food and drink photos were the most frequently shared in Burbn, and seeing such popularity, the two entrepreneurs decided that the main focus of their app would be photos. The name Instagram comes from a combination of an instant camera and a telegram. On 6 October 2010, the app was released, and on the same day it became the most downloaded free photo app with 25,000 users, reaching almost 1 million users in mid-December.

By 2011, the app's value had already reached \$25 million, and even the founder of Twitter was interested in buying it, but Mike turned down his \$500 million offer. However, everything changed when Mark Zuckerberg acquired the social network for a billion dollars in April 2012, agreeing that Instagram would remain autonomous.

One of the first high-profile examples of social media marketing was Coca-Cola's "Share a Coca-Cola" campaign. The 2012 campaign featured a Facebook advert. The advert invited Facebook users to create their own can of Coca-Cola and share virtual cans of Coca-Cola with their friends. The campaign was so successful that traffic to the Facebook website increased by 870% and the number of fans on Coca-Cola's Facebook page grew by 39%. Around 76,000 virtual cans were placed online and 378,000 cans of Coca-Cola were printed across Australia. Coca Cola's 2012 "Share a Coke" campaign was so successful that Facebook traffic increased by 870%.[45]

Social media marketing has changed the rules of doing business. It used to cost a lot of money and effort to get noticed in traditional media, but at the same time, there was no guarantee that the advert would resonate with the masses. With the development of the Internet and the emergence of social media, we all have a place to express

ourselves, and small or large businesses have the opportunity to broadcast their ads to the right people.

Before the advent of social media, the public relied on experts on television, radio and newspaper columnists to influence their purchasing choices. The rise of more affordable technology, such as video cameras, video editing software and social media platforms, has democratised the ability to share opinions and become influential. After the rise of YouTube, video bloggers began to emerge. They soon became industry leaders. Brands were quick to use this as a marketing opportunity. They started working with influencers, paying them to create sponsored posts and content. Their influential status meant that customers placed a lot of trust in their product recommendations. Influencer marketing is now crucial to brands' social media strategies, with over 50% of marketers saying that influencer marketing helps them attract better customers.

Social media meets e-commerce. The concept of social commerce first emerged through the combination of social media with brands and user-generated content. It has become an integral part of how e-commerce consumers find, evaluate and purchase products and services. E-commerce brands are collaborating with Instagram and TikTok on social commerce platforms. B2C businesses are finding great success on TikTok, as 47% of users have purchased something through the TikTok Shop. Social commerce has already become a hit, but it is predicted to grow steadily in the future: 49% of brands plan to invest more in social commerce in 2022.

As social media companies have grown their user bases to hundreds of millions, business applications of Facebook, Twitter and other social platforms have begun to take shape. Social media companies had access to the richest user data ever to be tracked. An article on IAS Insider titled "The Evolution of Social Media Advertising" sums it up: "Users don't just log in and browse the web, they tell the platforms their name, where they live, what they like and who they know. Painting the most vivid picture for marketers looking to target specific consumers."

Facebook started advertising on its platform back in 2006. Twitter enabled advertising in 2010. LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest, Snapchat, and TikTok have all tried to monetise their services through various forms of sponsored advertising. In

addition to advertising on social media platforms, companies have discovered the potential benefits of cultivating an active, engaged social media presence. While social media advertising requires payment, creating and sharing informational or entertainment content on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and other platforms is an attempt by brands to grow their audience organically, in other words, without paying for it directly. The combination of advertising, or paid social media marketing, and organic social media reach has evolved into a digital marketing speciality known as social media marketing.

History has shown that social media and marketing are developing at a rapid pace. With 23% of time spent online being spent on social media, brands that don't have a solid social media strategy in place today will be left behind by the competition.

Social media has exploded as a category of online conversations where people create, share and communicate at high speed. All types of social media provide opportunities to introduce yourself and your products to dynamic communities and individuals who may be interested. Promotions, market intelligence, sentiment research, public relations, marketing communications, and product and customer management are all sub-disciplines of marketing that can use social media.

Social media marketing is when a brand uses social media platforms to connect with its audience. Social media can help increase sales, drive traffic to websites, build your brand, and create long-lasting relationships between your company and customers. Each social media platform (e.g. blogs, online discussion forums, and online communities) impacts marketing outcomes (e.g. sales), so it is vital to understand their relative importance and interconnectedness.

Social media reports that 70% of social media users make purchases online. Consumers can easily get what they want just by sitting in front of a computer screen and opening online sites. While social media marketing has tremendous benefits for consumers and marketers, it also has negative impacts on both. Due to the easy way of accessing information, lack of monitoring and control, it undoubtedly contributes to many risks and cybercrime.

With the growing popularity of digital marketing, many companies are exploring how social media can help them promote their products and services to potential and existing customers. Social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter and Instagram have changed the way some companies think about advertising. Some companies direct customers to their social media pages rather than their own websites. There are certain advantages of social media marketing, but there are also disadvantages associated with it (see Figure 4).

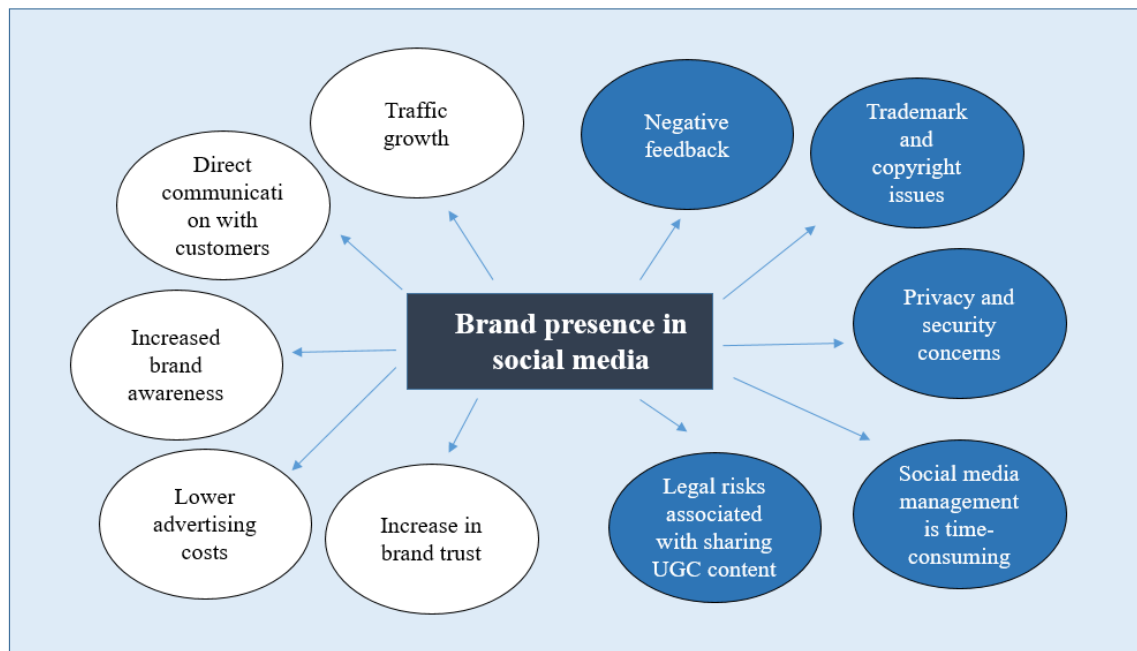


Fig. 4 - Advantages and disadvantages of brand presence in social networks

Source: created by the author

The main advantages of social media marketing are cost reduction, increased traffic, increased brand trust, increased brand awareness, and direct communication with customers. The cost of social media advertising is lower than other marketing channels. In addition, social media marketing allows companies to reach customers who may not be accessible due to time and geographical limitations of existing distribution channels.

Social media platforms increase reach and reduce costs by providing two areas of benefit to customers. First, a social media page can provide customers with unlimited information without human intervention. This is an advantage over other forms of communication, as the amount of information that can be provided is much

greater than in any other form of communication. In addition, and more importantly, the information can be provided in a form that clients can easily process and understand.

Secondly, a social media marketing firm can create engagement by customising information for individual customers, allowing customers to develop products and services that meet their specific requirements.

To better understand the benefits of social media marketing, here are five key advantages to achieving success in this area:

1. Lower advertising costs

According to Weinberg, the main advantage of social media marketing is related to costs. The financial barriers to social media marketing are quite low compared to other forms of marketing. Most social media sites are free to access, create a profile and publish information. Whereas traditional marketing campaigns can cost millions of dollars, many social media tools are free, even for commercial use. Companies can run very successful social media marketing campaigns on a limited budget. The advantage of reaching your target market with little or no monetary investment is significant, and the audience that needs your information voluntarily joins or follows you. Pay-per-click ads on sites like Facebook, Instagram are "geo-targeted" according to certain criteria to reach the right audience. [52]

Advertising costs can get out of control, and it is much harder to reallocate funds or limit budgets to things like flyers, billboards, and magazine ads. On the other hand, social media advertising can be much cheaper and much more effective. And people do click: 92% of Instagram users say they've followed a brand, visited their website or made a purchase after seeing a product/service on the platform. Similarly, globally, the average Facebook user has clicked on 12 ads in the last 30 days. In other words, people are looking for and clicking on ads that interest them. That said, this spend can skyrocket without the right messaging and targeting, so you have to hone these aspects to get this part right. This means truly understanding your customers and making sure you are posting the most relevant content for them.

2. Direct connection with customers

On social media, you have a direct and unfiltered connection with your customers. This is extremely difficult to achieve with any other medium. Think about it: in a brick-and-mortar store, you can only get face-to-face contact with a few people. During that contact, you have very little control over how they interact and where the conversation goes. On social media, you have much more control over the situation. You also have a much wider reach.

Many customers have come to expect this kind of accessibility. More than one in three people will look for a social media profile before making a decision about a brand or product. What's more, 49% of people check the opinions of others on social media before making a purchase decision.

3. Increase brand awareness

Again, almost half the world is on social media. If a brand wants to reach a wider audience, getting on social media platforms is like using the world's best megaphone. The viral nature of social media means that everyone who reads your posts has the ability to spread the news further within their network, so information can reach a large number of people in a short time.

By posting interesting information on a page, you can get a lot of visitors. As mentioned above, popular social networks have a huge audience. This makes it possible to attract the interest of hundreds of thousands of virtual network users to the promoted object."[48]

4. Traffic growth

Social media marketers know that inbound traffic is vital to a company's success. Inbound traffic is when a company attracts potential customers before they are ready to buy something. Inbound marketing is considered one of the best ways to turn people from strangers to loyal customers. When people respond to your call to action and land on your brand page, they turn from "interested" to "customers".

5. Increased brand trust

After all, a study by the American Association of Advertising Agencies found that only 4% of consumers believe that marketers and advertisers practice honesty. This

means they don't trust what "official" ads say. On social media, you don't have the same barrier. This means that by being as open and transparent as possible, showing testimonials and adding real-life stories about the challenges you've faced along the way, you can build trust with your audience.

The online environment creates not only opportunities, but also complications and challenges in the social media marketing process. The transparency of the Internet makes online information accessible to all audiences and increases the need for consistency in the planning, design, implementation and monitoring of online marketing communication.

Disadvantages:

1. Intensive time.

As the name implies, social media is interactive, and successful two-way exchanges require commitment. The nature of marketing changes on social media, with an emphasis on establishing long-term relationships that can translate into increased sales. Someone has to be responsible for monitoring each network, responding to comments, answering questions, and publishing product information that the customer finds valuable.

Businesses without a service to manage these social networks will find it difficult to compete. The first preliminary consideration, and probably the most important, is that social media marketing requires a significant investment of time. It is generally a fantasy to simply use a few social media resources and expect to make a huge profit. A company needs to realise the time commitment required and accept or reject this commitment as likely to be viable for its operation. [49]

2. Trademark and copyright issues.

According to Steinman and Hawkins, it is extremely important for companies to protect their trademarks and copyrights when using social media to promote their brands and products. A company's brands and other intellectual property are often almost as valuable as the products or services they offer. Social media's ability to facilitate informal and impromptu communication, often in real time, can help

companies promote their brands and distribute copyrighted material, but it can also facilitate the misuse of a company's trademarks and copyrights by third parties.

When using social media, whether through a third-party network or the company's own social media platforms, marketers should regularly monitor the use of their trademarks and copyrights. Companies should monitor their own social media, as well as third-party social media platforms, to ensure that those providing content through the medium are not misusing their intellectual property. Online tracking and verification services are available to monitor the use of your company's trademarks and copyrights on third-party sites, including checking social media sites for profiles or usernames that are identical or substantially similar to your company's name or brands. [50]

A form of impersonation can be damaging to a company's brand and reputation if left unchecked; such monitoring can also serve as a positive indicator of business success. Companies should consider reserving usernames on various social media sites that are the same or very similar to their trade names and brands.

In addition, companies should have terms and conditions for their own social media sites with provisions for determining how to properly use company or third-party intellectual property. Marketers conducting certain types of social media marketing campaigns, such as advertising campaigns and user-generated content campaigns, should have policies that specifically prohibit trademark and copyright infringement and impersonation.

3. Trust, privacy and security issues.

Using social media to promote your brand, products or services can also lead to trust, privacy and security issues. It is important for companies to be aware of these issues and take appropriate measures to minimise their liability related to the collection, use and maintenance of personal data. Trust, especially unique transaction security and privacy settings, play a crucial role in building customer loyalty to social media marketers.

A study conducted by Ratnasingham [51] found that fear of online credit card fraud was one of the main reasons why customers did not make more purchases online.

Moreover, privacy concerns have led to public relations fiascoes for some major social media marketers, resulting in significant brand image erosion. Social media companies, such as Facebook and Twitter, typically have their own privacy policies that govern their use of consumer data and the behaviour of third parties on the social media platform with respect to personal data.

Marketers who use third-party social media should ensure that their marketing campaigns do not encourage consumers or any other parties to engage in conduct that violates the social media company's privacy policy, and marketers should also ensure that they comply with the policy as well. Companies that operate their own blogs or other social media platforms should also maintain a comprehensive policy that discloses how the company collects, uses and stores data, as well as any third-party liability with respect to data privacy and security.

Trust, which is closely related to security, is a very important factor in online shopping behaviour. In general, you cannot touch, smell or feel the product. You cannot look the seller in the eye. Therefore, these ways of developing trust online are excluded. Brand trust usually helps to reduce uncertainty. In addition, trust is a component of loyalty. So, it is clear that loyalty in general and brand trust in particular can help to overcome some of the disadvantages of the Internet, i.e., the perception that the Internet is an unsafe, unfair and unreliable marketplace. In fact, this perception still prevents some potential customers from making purchases.

4. User-generated content (UGC).

Over the past few years, users have spent more time on social media, making it easier to share opinions and information online. There are also new forms of content generation, communication and collaboration online. Often, marketing strategies that involve social networking sites or other social media include user-generated content (UGC) in the mix. For example, UGC allows internet users to make comments in various forms, such as photos, videos, podcasts, ratings, reviews, articles, and blogs. Whether it's a video or photo posted on a website or a message that site users distribute to network members, UGC shows promise as a marketing tool.

In addition, user-generated content has a relatively high degree of trust in the eyes of consumers, particularly if someone has created the content, for example, or a tweet between friends. Soliciting UGC in connection with a marketing strategy carries some risk of legal liability for the content created by the person participating in the campaign, but marketers can take certain steps to minimise the legal risks associated with marketing campaigns that include the distribution of UGC through social media.

5. Negative feedback

Social media in a way turns consumers into marketers and advertisers, and consumers can create positive or negative pressure on a company, its products and services, depending on how the company is represented online and the quality of the products and services presented to the customer. Consumer-generated product reviews, images and tags, which serve as a valuable source of information for customers making product choices online, have grown rapidly on the Internet and have had a major impact on e-commerce since the advent of Web 2.0 technologies. One aspect of social media that is particularly damaging to marketing campaigns is negative responses to posts. Dissatisfied customers or industry competitors may post disparaging or offensive photos, posts, or videos, and there is little that marketers can do to prevent these from happening. However, negative or otherwise unconstructive feedback cannot be ignored. Social media needs to be managed effectively enough to respond immediately and neutralise harmful posts, which takes more time. Today, consumers are taking on a new role in social media. Consumers are becoming "content creators" and thus functional consumers, not just consumers as in the past. The social media applications or tools that facilitate this are blogs, microblogging applications (such as Twitter), social networking sites (such as Facebook), podcasts and video and photo sharing sites (such as YouTube). Given this reality, companies, especially marketers, benefit from integrating social media into marketing and their marketing strategies.

We have identified the main advantages and disadvantages caused by the development of Internet technologies in the field of social media marketing. Social media is a modern tool for marketers who are trying to get their message across to their target audience in every way possible. The medium has many advantages and

disadvantages. Ordinary business owners or marketers do not fully understand the risks and challenges involved. So, before a company steps into the realm of social media marketing, it should complete a full research of social media practices. An organisation must master the basic principles and tactics of using social media as an effective tool to survive in the social media marketing space. The main goals of a company or organisation are to attract customers, protect the company's reputation, provide customers with high quality products and services, and satisfy customer needs.

As the war in Ukraine continues, governments and businesses around the world are making difficult choices about how to respond in such dire circumstances. From government sanctions to business divestment to humanitarian aid, the world is watching leaders respond to this humanitarian crisis. This is a time when brand marketing strategies need to be re-examined. Every company needs to make sure that its values are reflected in its marketing strategy. Many consumers will have seen during this time how brands reacted to the war, whether they withdrew from the market of the aggressor country or not, whether they helped Ukraine, and what position they took.

At the beginning of the full-scale invasion, each brand reacted differently. Some suspended their operations and simply stopped communicating with the audience. Some brands remained silent for the first few days, while large international companies reacted very cautiously - not immediately, as if they were waiting to see how events would develop so as not to damage their reputation. From the first hours of the invasion, some of them actively entered the information space with a clear position and support.

At present, companies are trying to support Ukrainians and build warm relationships with the audience. The importance of social brand roles is growing significantly. Some provide food for the elderly, some repair destroyed schools, some design temporary modular houses for people who have lost their homes, give their products to the needy, and donate part of their profits to the armed forces.

Has brand communication changed? Traditionally, brand communication has been aimed at raising awareness, building trust and changing behaviour. Previously, brands were interested in brand development, corporate social responsibility and integrated communication. At the moment, communication mistakes are very costly

for companies, so brand trust is one of the key positions, as it is very difficult to regain it from consumers. At the moment, consumers are refusing to consume anything Russian and are supporting Ukrainian producers, which is a direct benefit. There is a positive feedback from consumers when an international brand leaves the Russian market, and consumer loyalty increases when a brand has a clear position and when the brand helps and donates to the Ukrainian armed forces. The full-scale invasion has changed the meaning of communications and even adjusted the goals. However, the concept of effectiveness remains the same. Brands that take an active social stance receive sales as a "bonus". Through their non-business activities, they build a positive impression of themselves and grow trust, and thus are more likely to be chosen over their competitors."[54]

The results show that globally, the goals of an effective marketing channel have not changed. However, the focus on lead acquisition and conversion rates has increased significantly. Around 40% of Ukrainian marketers surveyed said it was important to focus on acquiring new customers in order to effectively resume operations and restore sales to pre-war levels. Consequently, with the start of the full-scale invasion, conversion has become the main objective of any advertising campaign.

In addition, marketers are beginning to pay more attention to the allocation of performance budgets, directing campaign efforts to priority and profitable categories of services/goods. In times of war, marketers focus on strategies that have already proven their effectiveness.

Although most companies have a detailed marketing plan for the next year, there are times when plans need to be drastically changed in response to a crisis situation. As the world continues to look for ways to support Ukraine, now is the time to adopt a rapid response marketing strategy to communicate your company's values to customers.

Rapid response marketing is a strategy that uses immediate events around the world to provide brands with an opportunity to speak out on a situation through relevant content, messaging and public relations. It works differently from traditional marketing campaigns because the responses are quick, focused and don't require a lot of planning

or technical effort. Responsive marketing is a great way to demonstrate authenticity and stay relevant during important events.

The whole world feels the pain of the Ukrainian people, refugees, and defenders who are fighting for our country. This experience is something that every consumer can currently connect with on a humanitarian level. It is an easy way to connect with other users and brands who are experiencing the same thoughts and feelings.

The effectiveness of marketing communication means attractiveness to the audience, the degree of coverage, the formation of consumer attitudes towards the brand and its services or products, and the formation of its image. Trust in a brand is what helps to move forward and determine the necessary pace of development. It affects reputation, shows whether efforts are justified and whether marketing campaigns are successful. It is a sign responsible for long-term development that can be easily compared with the industry or competitors.

The story of Ukrzaliznytsia was a real revolution in terms of brand. It is the national carrier of people and goods in Ukraine and a monopolist in the railway sector. Before the general war, passengers criticised Ukrzaliznytsia mainly for its uncomfortable sleeping conditions: the beds were not comfortable, there was no air conditioning, windows were blocked in the summer heat, and dirty toilets were common complaints. However, Ukrzaliznytsia presented itself as one of the most focused and prepared companies that really helps Ukrainians.

The company presents itself with the line "We do what we do and more, no matter what". Ukrzaliznytsia has launched free evacuation trains to take people out of the areas of intense fighting. It also has cars for transporting the wounded and other people with limited mobility. Employees of the company risked their lives to go to the hot spot to save people. Among the employees are people who died at work. Even if someone did not use the services of Ukrzaliznytsia for rescue and did not have personal contact with the company's work during the war, the company's activities are very active in the Ukrainian information space: worthy of admiration and gratitude. People are literally being taken out of the shelling. They often have to stand for ten hours to get as many people as possible on the train. However, despite the inconvenience, the

focus is clear: On 24 February, Ukrzaliznytsia did not just stop its traffic. This story is the main answer to the question of how brand communications have changed: communications have moved from words to actions.

It has become the norm for Ukrainians for a women's clothing brand to reformat part of its production to make bulletproof vests. And at the same time, it launches a summer collection of dresses. This is the story of the Ukrainian brand TM byMe. They raise money for stoves, sew bulletproof vests and send protection to the frontline. The brand makes its help public. And this is a good thing. Such publicity reinforces the understanding that helping others in any way you can is not an exception to the rule, but a new normal for everyone. [54]

The content strategy of brands requires maximum adaptation to the new realities. The traditional division of content into branded, selling, fan, and interactive content no longer works, and has been replaced by social, supportive, and useful content. [53] Let's look at Figure 5, which shows the changes in content in detail. In the first months of the war, the advertising activities of brands decreased significantly.

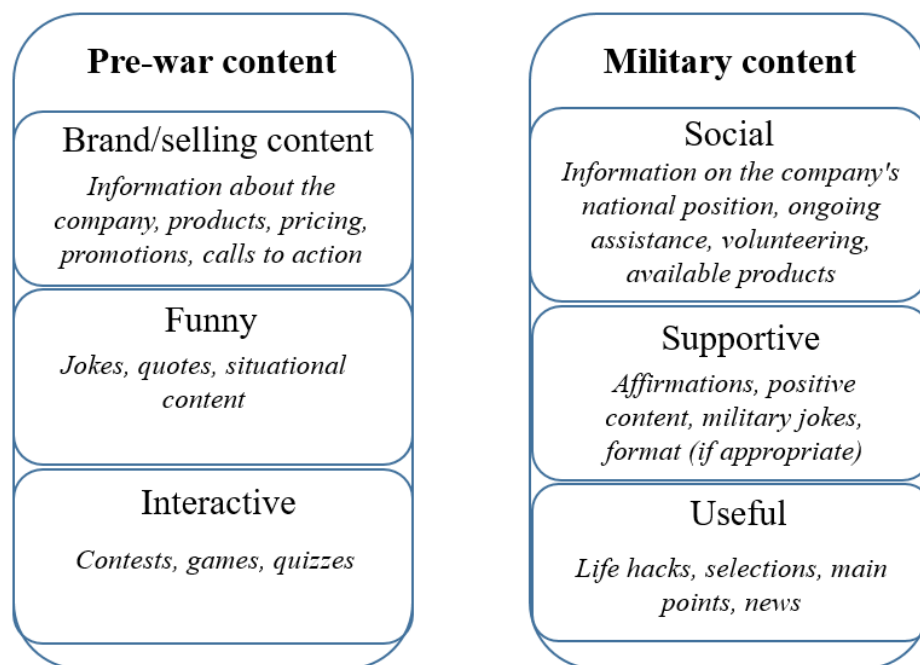


Fig. 5 - Changes in the content strategy of brands during the war

Source: [53]

Appropriate humour has not disappeared from the Ukrainian information space since the start of the full-scale war. It is one of the ways Ukrainians psychologically support themselves. [54]

Now, during the war, brands that have built their own powerful platform are relying on rapid adaptability and holistic brand communication. For example, Nova Poshta quickly created the slogan "Courage to deliver the future" and Planeta Kino organised an auction of its NFT popcorns, donating the proceeds to charity. [55]

How marketing strategy planning has changed. In the pre-war period, a marketing plan was usually drawn up for a year. Long-term planning is difficult today, both for large enterprises and small and medium-sized businesses.



Fig. 6 - Changes in marketing strategy planning [56].

The survey revealed that: [56]

- 45% plan a strategy for a quarter;
- 30% - for a month with its further updating;
- 15% plan, as before, for a year;
- 10% of marketers develop a plan for six months.

Let us highlight the key areas for Ukrainian companies: there is nothing and no one outside politics. All Ukrainian brands operating in Ukraine and abroad cannot help

but take their place, because this war affects everyone. If brands avoid or stay away from Ukraine and the war, they lose their audience's loyalty.

Brands should develop a social Ukrainian mission. Previously, this option was considered mainly for large corporations with cash resources. Smaller businesses believe that developing their social mission requires a large budget. The social mission is now the No. 1 topic for Ukraine's branding because it is important to be useful for your country today.

In the past, we have seen many Ukrainian brands positioning themselves as European or American. It is difficult to understand that these brands are Ukrainian because it is hard to see Ukrainian and national features in them. Now it is important to show that it is not just a good brand, but that it was created in Ukraine. Today, every business project must at some point focus on Ukraine's self-identification and our social mission. You can't do business out of context, and we have proven this time and again.

CONCLUSIONS

Today, social media advertising and promotion is one of the most important tools for online marketing success. Social media allows brands to connect with their audience in order to: build a brand, increase sales, drive traffic to a website, create a community of followers, share and interact with content. Creating relevant content that users will share with their own networks helps brands increase their presence. It also extends their reach to fans, potential customers and even potential employees when used as a recruitment tool.

A digital branding strategy is how a company communicates its brand identity to consumers online with the primary goal of increasing customer loyalty and sales.

Brand strategy is a holistic approach to how a brand creates identification and affinity among customers and potential customers. Brand strategy encompasses several different elements: brand voice, brand design, brand values, brand story and brand atmosphere are key elements of a successful brand strategy.

A brand is a series of associations and feelings that a consumer has when they think of it: name, packaging, brand history, level of reputation, level of consumer trust and loyalty, while branding is the art of expressing what a brand is, from its personality to its purpose.

An extensive analysis of numerous publications on brand management has led to seven approaches. The following approaches to branding are distinguished: economic approach, identification approach, personal approach, relational approach, community approach, cultural approach and consumer-oriented approach.

Social media marketing (SMM) is a form of online marketing that uses social media applications as a marketing tool.

Online promotion is different from other advertising methods, and the methods are endlessly varied.

SMM tools are the backbone of social media marketing. It is important to earn the user's trust with a well-defined and correct approach to providing useful and interesting information to the audience. Z. Andrushkevych identifies such tools as: "building brand communities (creation of company offices in social media, in simple words, pages), working with the blogosphere, content, reputation management (public relations in social media), personal branding, non-standard SMM promotion, hidden marketing, contextual advertising, promotion of an enterprise in a social network, viral campaigns, lead generation, etc.".

Artyukhina M. and Popova G. also add elements of online merchandising (general page design, use of corporate identity, visual effects) to their classification of SMM tools. There are many SMM tools for business development. SMM promotion methods can both help and harm a company, and an unsuccessful launch of an advertising campaign can reduce the brand's reputation. It is important to choose the right promotion tools and pay attention to new technologies, keeping up with trends.

The stages of digital promotion include: 1) defining the mission, brand vision and marketing goals, 2) market research, market environment, strengths and weaknesses, setting goals, dividing the audience into segments, 3) creating a content

plan, developing an SMM strategy, identifying the main platforms for promotion, 4) analysing the results and adjusting the content plan and promotion methods.

The following types of content are distinguished: Entertainment content: content that contains interesting information about the brand to engage and enthuse the audience; Expert content: posts, articles and stories that demonstrate the high level of knowledge of the company's experts and increase brand trust. Reputational content: case studies, customer reviews, company achievements and news, information about the creation of products and services - the "inside scoop". This type of content helps to dispel viewers' doubts and build loyalty; Sales content (advertising): contains promotions, offers, product information, payment and delivery to increase sales; Interactive content: mechanisms such as various games and contests that encourage viewers to comment and re-submit their content. Such messages can also be accompanied by additional incentives, such as offering a discount or free product or service to one or more participants in the discussion;

Facebook and YouTube are the main venues for advertising in part because of their highly profitable user bases. According to the 2022 Sprout Social Index™, 71% of consumers and 65% of marketers plan to use Facebook the most in the coming year. YouTube is close behind, with 51% of consumers and 35% of marketers planning to use the platform. Instagram and YouTube are the most popular social media platforms among millennials and Generation Z, demonstrating the power of bold, eye-catching content that exudes personality. Important tools for measuring the effectiveness of social media marketing include reach, clicks, hashtags, engagement, organic and paid likes, comments and views.

Social media marketing has changed the rules of doing business. Previously, it cost a lot of money and effort to get noticed in traditional media, but at the same time, there was no guarantee that the advert would resonate with the masses. Early forms of the Internet have been around since the 1940s, but it wasn't until 1997 that the first official social network appeared. Marketers moved to social media marketing around the time Facebook expanded its network back in 2006. In less than a generation, social media has evolved from direct electronic information exchange to a virtual gathering

place to a retail platform to a vital marketing tool for the 21st century. In 1997, Andrew Weinreich created the first official social network called Six Degrees.

Before the advent of social media, the public relied on experts on television, radio and newspaper columnists to influence their purchasing choices. The rise of more affordable technology, such as video cameras, video editing software and social media platforms, has democratised the ability to share opinions and become influential. The rise of YouTube was followed by an influx of video bloggers. They soon became industry leaders. Brands were quick to use this as a marketing opportunity. They started working with influencers, paying them to create sponsored posts and content. Their influential status meant that customers placed a lot of trust in their product recommendations. Influencer marketing is now crucial to brands' social media strategies, with over 50% of marketers saying that influencer marketing helps them attract better customers.

The main advantages of social media marketing are cost reduction, increased traffic, increased brand trust, increased brand awareness, and direct communication with customers. The cost of social media advertising is lower than other marketing channels. In addition, social media marketing allows companies to reach customers who may not be available due to the time and geographical limitations of existing distribution channels. The online environment creates not only opportunities, but also complications and challenges in the social media marketing process. The transparency of the Internet makes online information accessible to all audiences and increases the need for consistency in the planning, design, implementation and control of online marketing communications. The disadvantages of a brand's presence on social media include: Time intensive, trademark and copyright issues, trust, privacy and security concerns, user-generated content (UGC) and negative feedback.

Rapid response marketing is a strategy that uses immediate events around the world to provide brands with an opportunity to express their opinions on the situation through relevant content, messaging and public relations.

At the moment, communication mistakes are very costly for companies, so brand trust is one of the key positions, as it is very difficult to regain it from consumers. At

the moment, consumers are refusing to consume anything Russian and are supporting Ukrainian producers, which is a direct benefit. There is a positive feedback from consumers when an international brand leaves the Russian market, and consumer loyalty increases when a brand has a clear position and when the brand helps and donates to the Ukrainian armed forces. The full-scale invasion has changed the meaning of communications and even adjusted the goals. However, the concept of effectiveness remains unchanged.

Around 40% of Ukrainian marketers surveyed said it was important to focus on acquiring new customers in order to effectively resume operations and restore sales to pre-war levels. Consequently, with the start of the full-scale invasion, the main objective of any advertising campaign is conversion. In addition, marketers are beginning to pay more attention to the allocation of performance budgets, directing campaign efforts to priority and profitable categories of services/goods. In times of war, marketers focus on strategies that have already proven their effectiveness.

The content strategy of brands needs to be adapted to the new realities as much as possible. The traditional division of content into branded, selling, fan, and interactive content no longer works, and has been replaced by social, supportive, and useful content.

Most marketers prefer to play tactically and plan a strategy for one to three months with subsequent updates. This helps businesses to quickly adapt to market changes and reallocate budgets to priority areas if necessary. The main goal of effective marketing hasn't changed: conversions. Google Ads, Facebook Ads and SEO advertising remain the three best channels for driving traffic. By the end of the summer, the country had somewhat adapted to martial law, and marketers increased budgets to meet KPIs. As the market is shrinking sharply due to mass immigration, many small businesses are experiencing difficulties and saving money on marketing.

Let's highlight the key areas for Ukrainian companies: 1) there is nothing and no one outside politics, 2) brands should develop a social Ukrainian mission, 3) today every business project should at some point focus on Ukraine's self-identification and our social mission.

We analysed the main trends in social media for 2023. We identified such trends as: 1) metaverse, 2) more complex influencer campaigns, 3) development of new platforms, 4) data privacy, 5) updating social media for convenient customer service, 6) short videos and TikTok, 7) crisis management for social media, 8) brand authenticity, 9) interactive advertising is gaining popularity, 10) promotion of user-generated content, 11) games will become an alternative to social media platforms, 12) audio content will become even more popular.