PERCEPTION OF MARKETING COMMUNICATION OF SELECTED INTERNET BOOKSTORE BY READERS FROM THE GENERATION Y TARGET GROUP

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Abstract

When designing a marketing strategy, it is important to take into account a number of factors that shape and plan the strategy. In the first place, it is necessary to consider the characteristics of the product or service, the target group, the competitive environment and the sector in which the brand operates. The revised marketing strategy is a key opportunity for brand success and the growth of its value on the market or in consumers' minds. An increasing trend across sectors is the use of online communication channels for marketing purposes, combining them with traditional marketing tools to create complex communication in the current environment. The paper focuses on online marketing and the behaviour of Slovak online consumers and their preferences.

Keywords: brand, e-shop, online, communication, shopping

1. Generation Y and perception of brands

Although demographers often differ on the exact parameters of each generation, there is a general consensus that Generation X ends with the birth year 1977. Some suggest that anyone born between 1978 and 2000 belongs in the Millennial Generation. Given the accelerating pace of change, Tulgan thinks this group is too large. He prefers to break the so-called Millennials into two cohorts: (1) generation Y - people born between 1978 and 1990, and (2) generation Z - anyone born between 1991 and 2000 [1].

Generation Y is the most diverse generation in history in terms of ethnic heritage, age, colour, geographical origins, language, lifestyle preference, sexual orientation, ability or disability, size and every way of categorizing people. It is difficult found a way how to impress the generation Y.

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Creating brands that touch their hearts implies a true knowledge of the underlying youth drivers and needs. Something that will only be in reach when you have a long-term commitment to listen to Gen Y's opinion and involve them with your innovations and campaigns from the start. It exists the five key attributes of successful brands (target group generation Y). Model CRUSH: Coolness, Realness, Uniqueness, Self-identification with the brand and Happiness [2].

Perception is the process by which each individual select, organizes and evaluates stimuli from the external environment to provide meaningful experiences for him or herself. The art of a advertising is to develop symbols or advertising properties that must be understood by a target group audience. In international advertising, these signs or symbols usually have originated in one culture and cannot be decoded the same way by members of other cultures. Understanding the concept of culture and the consequences of cultural differences will make marketing and advertising people realize that one message, whether verbal or visual, can never reach global audience because there is no single global culture of people with identical values [3].

2. Significance of brand building and its communications

The brand plays a significant role for companies and consumers, for their functioning as well as it has other important functions. It is particularly essential for consumers to identify and distinguish the range of products, thereby making them accountable to manufacturers. The consumers are able to distinguish the brand with which they were satisfied and vice versa, which does not suit them or does not meet their requirements and criteria. Based on marketing communication, they are able to build trust and loyalty to the brand as they learn more about it and create certain brand associations and emotions

For consumers, the brand serves:
- as a product identification,
- to establish corporate responsibility,
- to reduce the risk of repeated purchases,
- as a quality signal,
- as a symbol,
- as a pledge or commitment by the manufacturer to them.

For companies the brand serves:
- as a means of identification to simplify trading
- as a means of legal protection
- as a quality level signal for satisfied customers
- as a source of competitive advantage
- as a source of financial return [4].

Aaker has compiled ten brand values, which are divided into 5 main categories, the first 4 categories pointing to brand perception by customers and the latter category representing market behaviour. The Ten brand values include:

Measurement of customer loyalty
1. Price advantage,
2. Customer satisfaction.
   Measurement of perceived quality
3. Perceived quality,
4. Leadership, popularity.
   Measurement of associations
5. Perceived value,
6. Brand personality,
7. Associations associated with organizations.
   Measurement of the brand knowledge
8. Knowledge of the brand.
   Measurement of market behaviour
9. Market share,
10. Market price and distribution [5].

3. Branding process in the market

Branding building or branding is a challenging and long-term strategic process that should create certain attitudes and feelings for consumers that are in line with the brand's goals. According to Kotler and Keller, the strategic brand management process includes the 4 main steps that are dealt with in this part of the paper:
1. determination and introduction of brand positioning,
2. planning and implementation of brand marketing,
3. measuring and interpreting of the brand performance,
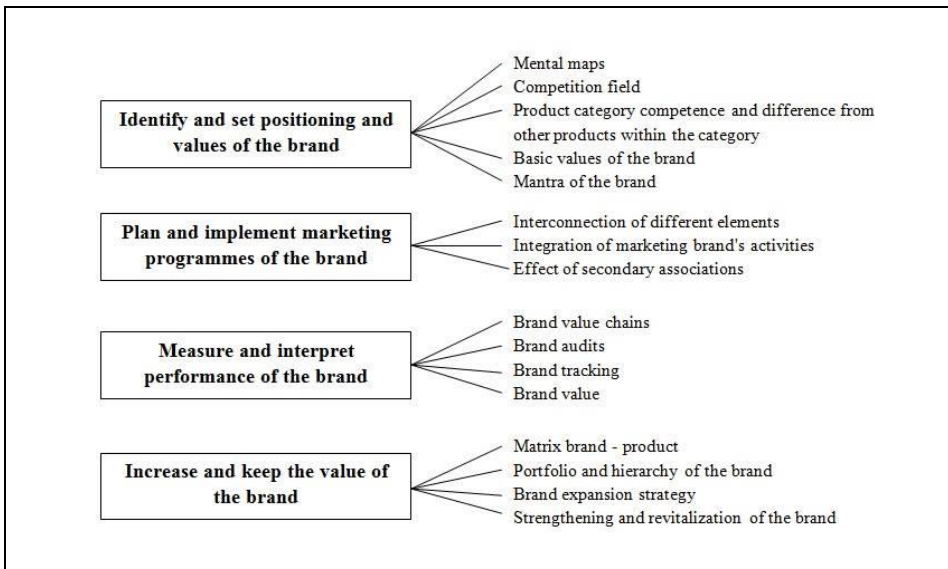4. development and maintenance of brand value [6].

Figure 1. Steps to building brand value.

In Figure 1 we can see building a brand value and the microsteps of this process.

Branding is a process used to build awareness and increase customer loyalty. Companies should take every opportunity to express why people should choose their brand. Brand building requires willingness to invest in the brand's future, accompanied by the desire to be the market leader and overcome competition, therein provide employees with the best conditions to realize that their customers are the main reason why companies are building brands [7].

Keller describes brand building based on the Customer-based brand equity model, which is based on four key questions that the customer asks about brands and at the same time are linked to brand building:

1. Who are you? - Brand identity;
2. What are you doing? - Brand importance;
3. What about you? What do I think or feel about you? - Brand responses.

What kind of association and how strong link would I want to have with you? - Relationship to the brand [1, p. 105].

4. Trend of online consumers on the Slovak market

The number of e-commerce is constantly growing across different categories, while the number of online shoppers is growing as well as the frequency of purchases. Slovak consumers trust verified e-shops, so they buy more from domestic than foreign online stores. Online shopping is becoming a growing trend and gets the confidence of consumers which can be caused by the boom of online communication, social networks, the quality of e-shops, reviews and other people's experiences, etc.

In 2015, internet price comparator Pricemania conducted a survey of Slovak online consumers and their behaviour on a sample of 5,210 respondents. Here we are going to describe some interesting findings about the online behaviour of Slovaks in the area of shopping.

4.1. Most commonly purchased product of the Slovaks

In the Slovak online market, according to the survey, products bought most frequently are electronics (63.28%), clothing (39%), electronic appliances (24.70%) and then books with 20% representation. If we focus on the book product, the survey finds that people from Bratislava, Kosice or Prešov region buy it most frequently compared to other regions. This is the third most purchased item for women [http://blog.pricemania.sk/pre-e-shopy/58-zrealizovali-sme-prieskum-nakupneho-spravania-slovakov-na-internete].

4.2. What influences Slovaks when choosing an online product

When purchasing an online product, most people have the following criteria when choosing from multiple answers: reviews - 58.58%, price -

55.12%, product properties and parameters - 49.23%. In particular, when buying books, the reviews play the most important role, as in the case of electronic appliances, electronics and cosmetics [http://blog.pricemania.sk/pre-e-shopy/58-zrealizovali-sme-prieskum-nakupneho-spravania-slovakov-na-internete].

4.3. Based on what criteria the Slovaks choose an e-shop

As the most important criterion, Slovak online consumers consider the price (52.26%), with the help of internet price comparators, where they can easily find the price of the product in several e-shops. The brand and built e-shop name is the second criterion with 40.27%, and the third most important criterion is whether an e-shop has been awarded an award.

The least number of survey respondents 4%, claim that they are affected by advertising. Here we can see that the second most important criterion is the built e-shop name, which means that they have built confidence with consumers on the basis of marketing communication and respondents do not admit that it is direct advertising that leads them to buy certain product [http://blog.pricemania.sk/pre-e-shopy/58-zrealizovali-sme-prieskum-nakupneho-spravania-slovakov-na-internete].

5. Selected survey results

From an economic and technical point of view running a functioning e-shop is not a serious problem, however to attract customers, keep their attention, force them to buy products and then make them return again is more complicated. E-commerce is constantly advancing, employing various purchasing technologies, communicating with both online and offline tools. For e-commerce, it is important to monitor the latest trends and behaviour of competition in the online marketplace.

On the Slovak market there is already plethora of e-shops with a good name and a wide consumer base. They're mostly selling electronics, clothing, cosmetics, books and smaller goods. The online book market in Slovakia originated in 2000 when Martinus founded the first e-shop with books and today is considered to be the largest online bookstore. The competition among online bookstores is quite large. There are more 'players' on the market and they complement their smaller and more specific e-shops.

In our survey we focused on the Martinus bookstore, given its popularity and extensive marketing communication. We conducted a questionnaire survey on a selected sample of 150 respondents who are readers of Martinus bookstore and meet the age category of Y generation. The composition of the respondents was 93 women and 57 men. The questionnaire contained 5 questions relating to the perception of Martinus's book activities, from which we select part of the results. The values are represented by the Word cloud.

I prefer to buy books

Respondents answered as follows:

- stone shop – 20%,
- e-shop – 30%,
- both options – 50% (the results can be seen in Figure 2).

Majority of respondents combine these two options. However very important is the fact where the respondent comes from and if there's a stone shop in that area or the only option is to shop online. When shopping online consumers can read a review and this can help the purchase.

Figure 2. Reasons for e-shop selection.

Figure 3. Social networks.

Reasons to buy via Martinus e-shop

With this question, respondents had the opportunity to choose a variety of options which are the reasons why consumers are buying in the Martinus online bookstore. More than 70% of respondents emphasize e-shop transparency, followed by 63% of high-quality products and news, 51% voted for Martinus's approach to customers. Reasons like communication and charity are an important fact for 25% of respondents which supports the purchase in this e-shop. The smallest number of responses, namely 15%, has the price, which is an interesting finding, as it is one of the most important factors for most buyers. However, the reason for this may be that Martinus has become a love brand for many people and they do not take the price into account.

News and updates of Martinus look on social networks

Martinus bookstore is active on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google+, and Youtube social networks, with Facebook being the most popular and where Martinus regularly communicates products, campaigns, activities and various consumer competitions. Individual social networks are tracked by many customers:

- Facebook - more than 115,000 fans,
- Twitter - 9,653 followers,
- Instagram - more than 14,900 followers,
- Google+ - 2 463 followers,
- Youtube - 1 075 subscribers (the results can be seen in Figure 3).

Facebook is watched by 94% of our respondents, followed by Instagram - 70% in second place. Brand popularity on this social network is steadily increasing. Videos on a specific Instagram network are tracked by 40%, Twitter is followed by 20% of our respondents, and Google+ social network is not very popular on our market, which represents 2% of our survey.

The most popular activity of Martinus bookstore

The Martinus bookstore is known for a number of advertising campaigns, some have been so successful that they are constantly repeated and continually developed. Our respondents have been asked about the campaign which best suits them as all of them are interactive and invite consumers to participate or engage in some activity. Activities perceptions were as follows:

- Knižná šifra (Book Cipher) – 48%,
- Knižný hrdina (Book Hero) – 24%,
- Deň neprečítaných kníh (The day of unread books) – 20%,
- Discussions – 10%,
- Knihobežník (Bookrunner) – 6%,
- Literature tent at Pohoda Festival – 2% (the results can be seen in Figure 4).

Do you know the activity *'Angel Change'*? If so, do you support it?

The activity of *Angel change* has become very popular for years and it is building charitable awareness of the Martinus brand. The layout is simple, the consumer can decide to round up the total amount and donate this difference to the Good Angel, a non-profit organization. With this activity, over 365,000€ were collected by 2017. Only 2% of our respondents will not know *Angel*

change, but 88% of the activity is known and also contributes to buying through the e-shop. The remaining 10% of PR heard about the activity, but has not contributed (the results can be seen in Figure 5). Book Store Martinus is considered to be the best communicating bookshop on Facebook on the Slovak market. It focuses on different target groups but the social media and creative marketing predetermine its future with the target groups of the Y generation that perceive it positively.

Figure 4. Martinus campaigns.

Figure 5. Activity 'Angel change'.

6. Conclusion

The number of e-shops with various goods or services is constantly growing which also increases competition between them and gradually they have to implement communication campaigns and various activities. Consumers have the opportunity to choose from dozens of e-shops with the same or similar goods therefore the communication strategy ought to create and promote the

brand name in the minds of consumers, later build a relationship and confidence with them in order to make them want to come back for further purchase.

Acknowledgement

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