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**RELATIONSHIP MARKETING CONCEPT AS A PHILOSOPHY OF DOING BUSINESS IN A PANDEMIC COVID-19**

s. 193-210

DOI: 10.54264/0018

ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to the substantiation of theoretical and methodological approaches to the evolution of the concept of marketing from the beginning to the emergence of the concept of relationship marketing. A scientific analysis of approaches to the interpretation of relationship marketing in the context of the modern paradigm of marketing theory. The author's interpretation of the concept of relationship marketing is proposed and the determinants of its implementation in the activities of enterprises are determined. The principles of using the concept of relationship marketing in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic are substantiated.

In order to assess the implementation of the concept of marketing relations to industrial enterprises and determine the level of satisfaction and customer loyalty in the B2B market, a study was conducted on the example of the metallurgical industry PJSC "Metinvest Holding". The study was allowed to determine the relationship between customer satisfaction and consumer loyalty to sheet metal, which is produced by PJSC "Metinvest Holding". According to the results of the study, the Consumer Satisfaction Index with the products of PJSC "Metinvest Holding" was calculated, which demonstrates the relationship between consumer satisfaction and their loyalty to the company. A loyalty matrix has been developed, which includes four main categories of consumer requirements: basic needs, satisfaction engines, insignificant, hidden opportunities. It was proposed to use the research methodology Customer Satisfaction Measurement, which is one of the key elements in assessing consumer loyalty in the cycle "measurement - feedback - transformation".

KEYWORDS

relationship marketing, pandemic COVID-19, industrial enterprises, marketing concepts.

**Introduction**

The COVID-19 crown pandemic has had a significant impact on the economic consequences of doing business. According to the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, it is known that in 2020, an additional 131 million people are living below the poverty line in the world, many of them - women, children and members of the most vulnerable. Women make up more than 50% of the workforce in sectors with high levels of instability in a pandemic, such as retail, hospitality and tourism, the areas most affected by isolation. Many of them have limited or no access to social protection. According to the UN report, \$ 12.7 trillion was spent on emergency measures to stimulate the world economy.

In the context of the economic consequences of the pandemic, a special role is played by the system of stable relations with consumers, which has provided businesses with additional advantages in establishing digital sales channels. The crown pandemic of the COVID-19 virus has helped revitalize the digital economy and turn most business processes into a remote format. All these aspects have created the conditions for the evolution of the concept of marketing.

In general, marketing has gone through several stages of development. The concept of traditional marketing has become a concept of socio-ethical marketing, followed by the concept of relationship marketing, which has developed especially in the context of the pandemic COVID-19. Within this concept, companies should focus on the relationship with buyers of their products, taking into account socio-ethical standards.

The relevance of the chosen research topic is due to the desire of modern manufacturers to implement the principles of doing business in the context of socio-ethical relations. This approach to doing business is especially important during the coronary virus pandemic, due to the particular vulnerability of the B2B market. Every buyer is very important for the company and its loss is an unacceptable mistake, which may not be with the reasonable implementation of the company's practice of close relations with customers. It is much cheaper to keep existing customers than to develop measures to attract new ones.

**The aim of the study** is research of theoretical and methodological bases of development of the concept of marketing and the analysis of features of introduction of the concept of marketing of mutual relations in the B2B market in the conditions of pandemic COVID-19.

**The methodological basis of the research** is based on the research of many scientists who have substantiated various aspects of the development of socio-ethical marketing. Various aspects of the study of the evolution of marketing concepts have been studied by many scientists, namely Aaker D. [1], Drucker P. [5], Kotler F. [9, 10, 11], Keller K. [8], Mintzberg G. [15], Lamben J.-J. [12], Nestorenko T. [16], Porter M. [21], Oklander M. [18, 19], Pererva P. [20], Chukurna O. [2, 3, 4, 17] etc. Despite the significant contribution of scientists to the theory of marketing, the economic conditions prevailing in the pandemic COVID-19 raised the issue of marketing strategy of B2B companies in the context of relationship marketing, taking into account socio-ethical issues of society. This determined the choice of the topic, its relevance and practical justification.

Result of the study. The profound socio-economic transformations that are taking place today require the solution of fundamentally new tasks of business management. Industrial enterprises that carry out economic activities face problems that require scientifically sound creative solutions in all areas of entrepreneurship. An effective tool and base of entrepreneurship is the concept of marketing, which is used to develop and make business decisions and plays a key role in the system of management, organization, planning and controlling in the system of entrepreneurial activity. Marketing, as a business philosophy, includes: way of thinking and behaving, conceptual approach, focus on the consumer and his needs. Detailed periodization of the development of marketing concepts are presented in table 1.

Table 1 - The evolution of marketing as a science [compiled on the basis 1, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15] исследовательская компетентность, мониторинг, факторно-критериальная модель

Years	Theoretical principles	Methods	Scope
1900-1950	The doctrine of goods, focus on distribution, theory of exports and sales	Observation, analysis of purchases and sales, calculation of probabilities, consumer panels	Production of mass goods, agricultural industry
1960	The doctrine of sales, focus on sales, product and function. Distribution theory.	Motive analysis, operations research, modeling	Consumers of means of consumption
1970	Scientific bases of behavior and decision making. Marketing as a recipe. Focus on trade, sales and partly on the consumer.	Factoring, discriminant analysis, mathematical methods, marketing models.	Consumers of means of production and means of consumption.
1980-1990	Situational analysis. The doctrine of marketing as a function of management. Theory of competitive analysis. Principles of Ecology. Strategic marketing.	Positioning, cluster analysis, consumer typology, examination, causal analysis	Consumers of means of consumption, means of production, services, non-profit organizations.
1990 to the nowadays	The doctrine of marketing as a function and tools of entrepreneurship. Theory of market networks, the theory of communications and interaction. Focus on social and environmental effects	Positioning, cluster analysis, consumer typology, models of consumer and competitor behavior, benchmarking, game theory.	Consumers of means of production, means of consumption, sphere of services, non-profit organizations, sphere of state entrepreneurship

Modern marketing is a complex socio-economic phenomenon, which is best considered as a set of four factors, constantly changing parameters of behaviour in market conditions:

World science and practice in the field of marketing and entrepreneurship have substantiated and recommend the following concepts in the evolution of marketing: production, product, sales, traditional marketing, socio-ethical marketing and interaction marketing (Table 2).

Table 2 - The evolution of the concept of marketing [compiled by the author on the basis of 1, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 17]

Years	Concept	The main idea	Basic tools	The main goal
1860-1920	industrial	I do everything I can	Cost, production	Improving production, sales growth, profit maximization
1920-1930	Commodity	Production of quality goods	Commodity policy	Improving the consumer properties of the product
1930-1950	Sales	Development of sales network, sales channels	Sales policy	Intensification of sales of goods due to marketing efforts to promote and sell goods
1960-1980	traditional	I produce only what the consumer needs	Complex marketing, market research	Meeting the needs of consumers in target markets
1980-1995	Socio-ethical marketing	I produce what the consumer needs, taking into account the requirements of society	Complex of marketing mix, research of social, ecological consequences of production and consumption of goods and services	Meeting the needs of consumers of target markets, provided the preservation of material, energy and other resources for environmental protection
Since 1995 to the nowadays	Relationship marketing	I produce what satisfies the consumer and business partners	Methods of coordination and network analysis, marketing mix complex	Satisfaction of consumers, interests of partners and the state in the process of their commercial and non-commercial interaction

One of the most promising ways to maintain customer commitment and loyalty to a brand is relationship marketing.

The progressiveness of relationship marketing is confirmed by the fact that products become more standardized and services unified, which leads to the formation of repetitive marketing decisions. Therefore, the only way to keep the consumer - is the individualization of relations with him, which is possible through the development of long-term interaction of partners. In this context, the relationship becomes the most important resource that the company has, along with material, financial, human and other resources. Relationships as a result of effective interaction become a product in which intellectual and information resources are integrated, the main factors of continuity of market relations. Relationship marketing is sometimes associated with customer relationship management or affiliate marketing.

Keeping existing customers as opposed to attracting new ones is the goal of relationship marketing. The origins of relationship marketing lie in the field of industrial marketing, where it was seen as an alternative approach to marketing, as the specifics of the interaction of organizations required the emergence of a different paradigm than that which dominated the consumer market. In 1983, this concept was first mentioned by Dr. Leonard Berry, a former president of the American Marketing Association, in the context of service marketing to describe a new approach to marketing focused on longer-term interaction with consumers. Decades later, relationship marketing penetrates consumer markets.

In the scientific literature, the concept of relationship marketing is interpreted differently. A number of authors, such as F. Kotler [11], J.-J. Lamben [12] and others define relationship marketing as a set of practical methods of retaining consumers. F. Kotler understands relationship marketing as the practice of building long-term mutually beneficial relationships with key partners interacting in the market: consumers, suppliers, distributors in order to establish long-term privileged relationships. A high level of service and reasonable prices must be used in this process. It aims to establish close economic, technical and social links with partners, which reduce transaction costs and save time, which turns transactions from the subject of negotiations into a routine process. The end result that relationship marketing strives for is the formation of a unique asset of the company, called the marketing system of interaction. The marketing system of interaction includes the company and all other groups interested in its work: consumers, employees, suppliers, distributors, retailers, advertising agencies, university scientists and everyone with whom the company has established a mutually beneficial business relationship. Thus, it is not so much the manufacturing companies that compete as the interaction systems as a whole [11].

Others (K. Grenroos, F. Webster, and others) view relationship marketing as the result of the development of marketing, reflecting its current state, as the next step after the concept of socially-oriented marketing that continues. As F. Webster notes, „there was a shift in emphasis from transactions to relationships” [6]. He emphasizes that consumers are becoming partners, and companies must make long-term commitments to achieve the preservation of these relationships through quality, service and innovation [6].

Thus, relationship marketing should be understood as a philosophy of doing business, a strategic orientation that focuses on retaining and „improving” current consumers rather than attracting new ones [11].

According to leading branding experts P. Temporal and M. Trotta, relationship marketing is, above all, the creation of a strong brand, and this is achieved through the right combination of organization, systems and processes, which allows employees to better understand individual customers and, in principle, adjust the dialogue with each client to his specific needs. Having detailed information about each consumer also means that employees have every chance to find additional business opportunities with existing customers and thus bring the company additional income [22].

Relationship marketing offers a search for consumers who are not the most profitable customers for the company today, but can become them if the brand makes a really good impression on them. From an economic point of view, it is necessary to focus mainly on those buyers who bring the most profit, but a good relationship marketing program should not ignore everyone else. Of course, the level of attention to less profitable buyers may be slightly lower, but the attitude towards them should not be worse. In fact, the programs encourage less profitable buyers to move to more profitable segments.

K. Keller defines relationship marketing as a concept and business strategy aimed at building a sustainable business, the core of which is a „customer-oriented” approach. This strategy is based on the use of advanced management and information technologies, through which the company collects information about its customers at all stages of purchasing decisions (attraction, retention, loyalty), draws knowledge from it and uses this knowledge for the benefit of its business by building mutually beneficial customer relations. Technically, relationship marketing is supported by special equipment and software that serves to collect, process and quickly update customer data and the company's relationship with them, as well as helping to automate and coordinate business processes in marketing, sales and service. Consumer participation in the company's activities, its impact on the process of creation, production and service of the product are provided [8, 9].

Summing up the above, we can give the following definition of relationship marketing: Relationship marketing is a concept of marketing management based on building long-term, mutually beneficial relationships with key partners of the organization: customers, suppliers, distributors, staff and more. As an object of marketing management, he considers - the relationship (communication) with customers. At the same time, not only specialists of sales and marketing departments, but also the personnel of the enterprise should be guided by management of interactions with clients.

Relationship marketing provides the following benefits to businesses.

- costs are reduced, especially related to attracting customers;
- there is an increase in the number and amount of purchases, as regular consumers increase their costs at a rising rate and the final profit exceeds the discounts of this category of consumers. Loss of such a segment - loss of high profits;
- relationship marketing ensures the presence of a key group of consumers, which provides the company with a market for testing and launching new products or offers with less risk, which reduces uncertainty for the company as a whole;
- the company acquires a barrier to entry of competitors by maintaining a stable customer base, and in addition, a stable customer base is a pledge to retain staff.

The consumer also gets a number of benefits through relationship marketing. On the one hand, close interaction with the company brings psychological benefits (the consumer communicates with regular employees, he does not have to get used to new

people every time) and social benefits (establishing friendly relations with staff). On the other hand, interaction with the company provides economic benefits (receiving discounts, prizes, etc.). Also, due to long-term cooperation, the service provider can adapt it to this particular consumer [8].

Analysis of foreign practice reveals the following major errors in the use of relationship marketing technologies:

- introduction of technologies of marketing of relations to development of the strategy focused on consumers;
- implementation of these technologies to the corresponding organizational changes;
- assumption that the more technology, the better;
- „harassment” of consumers instead of „caring” for them.

The question arises about the need to use relationship marketing in every business. This question should be answered in the negative in cases where the technology of relationship marketing for business is not useful, namely:

- with low consumer value for the company in the long run;
- in highly unstable business;
- in types of business where there is no direct contact between the seller and the end buyer.

The relationship marketing approach is different from the transactional approach. The latter includes exchange transactions between buyers and sellers and is characterized by limited communications and weak ties between the parties. Its main purpose is to seduce the buyer with a low price, packaging, promotion or accompanying amenities. Many organizations, however, are trying to take a new approach to building long-term customer relationships. Transactional marketing involves a relationship between buyer and seller that can deteriorate due to the weakness of social ties. Relationship marketing, on the other hand, creates an increased level of social interaction between seller and buyer. It goes beyond the obvious obligations that buyers expect (Table 3).

Table 3 - The difference between relationship marketing and transactional marketing

Characteristic	Transactional marketing	Relationship marketing
Temporary orientation	Short-term	Long-term
Organizational goal	Selling	Customer retention
Customer service priority	Relatively low	A key component
Contact with the consumer	From low to moderate	Frequent
Degree of consumer obligations	Low	High
The basis of interaction seller and consumer	Conflict resolution	Cooperation, trust
Source of quality	Mainly production	Corporate commitment in the broadest sense

Relationship marketing has a three-tier structure (Table 4) and the following four dimensions:

- 1) Commitments: two or more parties must guarantee each other the development of long-term contacts, mutual interests must coincide.
- 2) Sensitivity: the ability to see the situation from the side.
- 3) Reciprocity: any long-term relationship between the parties involves some concessions, commitment to others in exchange for the same location.
- 4) Trust: reflects the degree of confidence of one party in the honesty and integrity of the other; is, after all, a binding element in the relationship for many years [7].

Table 4 - Levels of relationship marketing

Characteristic	The First level	The Second level	Th Third level
The main connection	Financial	Social	Structural
Degree of individual service	Low	Moderate	From moderate to high
Potential support competitive advantages	Low	Moderate	High

I. Abratt distinguish the following principles of relationship marketing:

1. Relationship marketing focuses on long-term interaction, as opposed to individual transactions and, as a consequence, on retaining consumers against their involvement.
2. Relationship marketing has an economic justification for consumer retention, which includes targeting profitable consumers / consumer segments.
3. In relationship marketing, more emphasis is placed on quality than in the traditional concept of marketing.
4. The traditional marketing complex („4P”) is insufficient to build long-term relationships with the consumer, so relationship marketing operates an expanded marketing complex.
5. An important component of relationship marketing is internal marketing.

The imperfection of the traditional marketing complex is also pointed out by other authors (M. Bitner, D. McCarthy and others). They offer additional components that form a complete marketing complex for services. The most recognized concept of advanced marketing is the concept of „7P”, proposed by M. Bitner. In addition to the basic „4P”, it includes the following additional elements: physical evidence - the material environment in which the service is; people - all people present at the provision of the service, including staff and other consumers; process - all procedures, mechanisms, activities required to provide the service [14].

The central concept of relationship marketing is „relationship”. According to Storbacka K., Strandvik T., Gronroos C., the „relationship” consists of a series of episodes of interaction between the consumer and the company, and the purchase of the service at least twice is the main condition for the relationship. Storbacka K. also notes that the relationship takes place when there is a series of interactions between the consumer and the company. In addition, he shows that the existence of a „relationship” requires that both parties perceive the existence of such a relationship or that the relationship is perceived as having some „special status”. He believes that the relationship is also characterized by other properties, but the absence of these, makes the relationship impossible. Thus, the relationship exists when the consumer repeatedly interacts with the company, perceives the existence of this relationship, and both parties have obligations to each other, trust each other and aim for mutually beneficial cooperation [14].

Given the above, the following conclusions can be drawn.

The basis of relationship marketing is the management of a dynamic network of internal and external relations. The former includes relationships in the organization, the latter - relationships with suppliers, stakeholders, the environment and even competitors. The purpose of relationship marketing is to create an effective marketing interaction system.



The emergence of the paradigm of relationships and relationship marketing changes the image of marketing thinking and complements previous paradigms. A comparative analysis of the neoclassical, „conflict” paradigms and the paradigm of relations is presented in table 5.

Table 5 - Comparative analysis of marketing paradigms

Neoclassical marketing paradigm	Competitive paradigm	The paradigm of marketing relations
<p>Sales are treated as marketing mix function. Focuses marketers on sales volume indicators and others economic results activities for some short-term and not considers long-term marketing implications measures.</p> <p>Focuses on alternative levels marketing mix, on the steps of those who make themselves company, not her competitors.</p> <p>Claims what people do rational choice</p> <p>guided solely prudent analysis information.</p> <p>Considers the most important moment for a person who the choice is the price.</p>	<p>Focus is given competitive fight.</p> <p>Market characterized by the types competition.</p> <p>The main indicator the success of the company is its market share.</p>	<p>At the heart of marketing -mutually beneficial exchange and cooperation of the parties, not competition.</p> <p>The competition is playing secondary role. It allows the consumer make choices that stimulate manufacturers to save and innovation.</p> <p>The market is a system „Burdened with value relations ,, uniting brand and consumer at all levels of distribution channels, including final users.</p> <p>Long-term relationship reduce the risk of carrying out operations and such way become profitable for both parties.</p> <p>Establishing strong ties depends not so much on the amount money spent with, how much from the manifested parties of attention.</p>

One of the goals of marketing efforts is customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is highly relevant in B2C markets, but B2B markets are also sensitive to change and dependent on consumer loyalty.

In situations where markets are saturated, unique products become less and competition intensifies, the only reliable way to increase a company’s profits is to increase the level of service and build strong relationships with customers. To this end, it is necessary to examine the degree of customer loyalty to work with the company or the degree of their dissatisfaction, how important to customers are certain factors, as well as which activities require urgent improvement. These questions can be answered using the Customer Satisfaction Measurement method. It was developed by the British company The Leadership Factor, certified according to the ISO 9000: 2000 standard and passed 20 years of testing in a worldwide study.

Ever since the American Consumers Association concluded in 1987 that attracting new customers was five times more expensive than maintaining existing ones, a massive shift to customer-centric business strategies has begun in developed markets. Companies began to expand the service area, improve the quality of service and measure customer satisfaction everywhere. Moreover, new evidence has recently emerged: the cost of acquiring buyers can be 20 times higher than the cost of maintaining a relationship.

In order to assess the implementation of the concept of marketing relations to industrial enterprises and determine the level of satisfaction and customer loyalty in the B2B market, a study was conducted on the example of the metallurgical industry



PJSC „Metinvest Holding”, involving intermediary companies that participated in the interview. The study aimed to determine the relationship between customer satisfaction and consumer loyalty to sheet metal, which is produced by PJSC „Metinvest Holding”. The results of the study presented demonstrate the relationship between consumer satisfaction and their loyalty to the company (Fig. 1). However, it should be borne in mind that the customer must be not just satisfied, but very satisfied. According to research, those customers who answered that they were „very satisfied” (ten points out of ten possible), showed high loyalty to the company (95%). At the same time, those who said that „everything is fine” (eight points out of ten) were only 65% loyal. Not surprisingly, with other responses, the level of loyalty declined sharply. Thus, if the buyer was „satisfied”, his loyalty to the company was only 15%. This explains why customers who declare satisfaction with the company’s products or services are often not loyal to it. That is why customer service and quality of hardware should be not just good, but first-class. Poor service and quality of goods forces the company to take a step back, allows you to stay in place, and only excellent service moves the company forward.

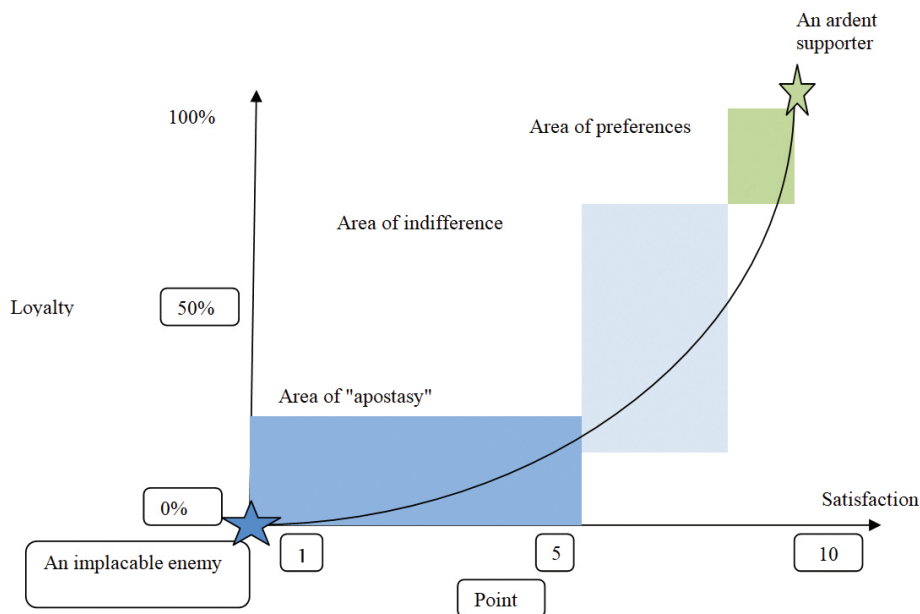


Figure 1 - Relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty of PJSC „Metinvest Holding” in the B2B market.

Only the achievement of the „area of advantage” (score of nine to ten points on the satisfaction scale) can be considered as the optimal level of work of PJSC „Metinvest Holding”.

The attitude of customers to the company affects their behavior and, in turn, determines the amount of profit that the organization will receive. For example, it was estimated that the growth of consumer satisfaction by only 1% brings 500 thousand UAH. from additional sales in the next five years.

Thus, the strength of the relationship is due to customer satisfaction. The buyer has a number of expectations, requirements and requests, based on which he decides whether he will become a customer of this company or look for another supplier of goods and services.

The starting point of the consumer satisfaction survey is the right questions. The questionnaire should be based on the opinion of the company's employees - their assumptions about what is important to customers. However, it cannot be used to measure customer satisfaction if their attitude towards the company is based on other evaluation criteria. In other words, to understand consumer demands, you need to look at the situation from their point of view. To this end, conduct exploratory (qualitative) research. Possible methods - in-depth interviews (they are used in B2B markets). Identified customer inquiries include in the questionnaire the main amount of the survey, during which, directly measure the level of satisfaction with one or another criterion, as well as rank each of them according to the degree of importance for consumers.

A great way to understand whether consumers are satisfied with the work of the company as a whole is to calculate their Customer Satisfaction Index. Based on the results of research, we can conditionally call this indicator low, medium or high. The evaluation results for PJSC Metinvest Holding are presented in Fig. 2.

The index of consumer satisfaction with the products of PJSC „Metinvest Holding” was calculated on the basis of a comprehensive assessment of intermediaries who work with the company on the basis of in-depth interviews.

The satisfaction index of PJSC „Metinvest Holding” is recommended to be monitored in dynamics, monitoring the progress of the company (frequency may be from once a month to once a year). It is also used to compare with similar indicators of competitors, and if desired - with indicators of successful companies in other industries. This kind of benchmarking can be done around the world: there is a large database that includes companies from the category of „blue chips”.

It is not always necessary to focus on the areas where the lowest satisfaction is noted, because it is also necessary to take into account what factors customers consider most important for themselves. Therefore, you should pay attention to the biggest differences between importance and satisfaction.

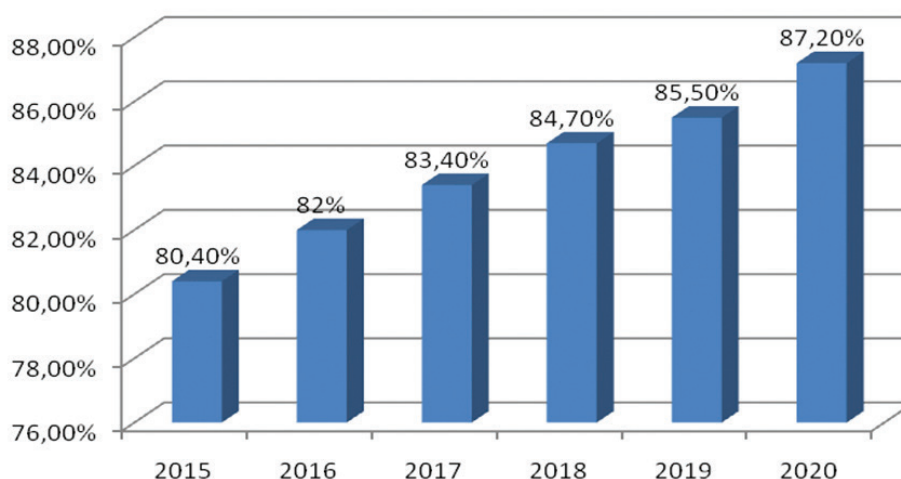


Figure 2 - Consumer loyalty index of products of PJSC „Metinvest Holding” for 2015-2020.

The key to consumer satisfaction is to „do the best thing that matters most.” That is, satisfaction should be highest in those areas that are a priority for customers. The levels of customer satisfaction of PJSC „Metinvest Holding” are presented in Fig. 3.

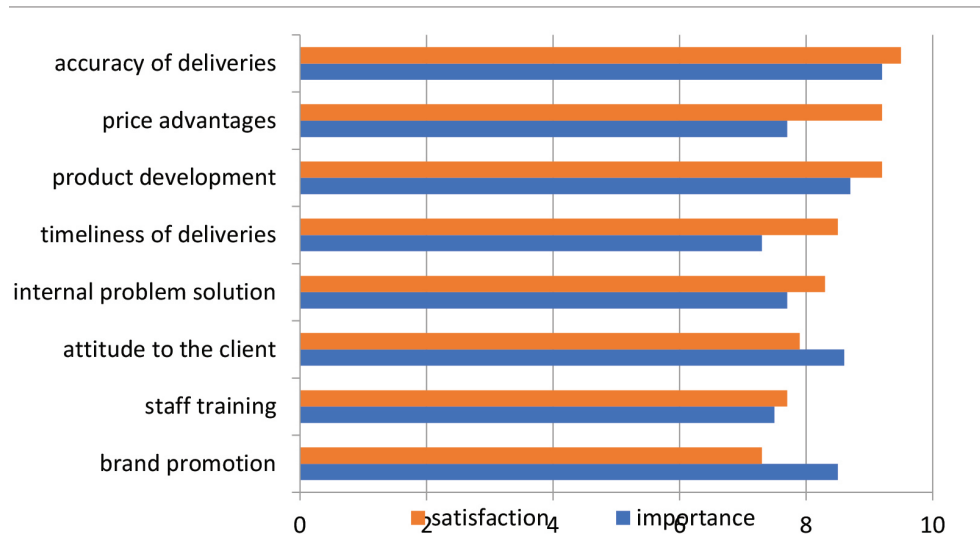


Figure 3 —Identification of discrepancies between the importance and satisfaction with working with the products of PJSC „Metinvest Holding”

It is interesting to track what exactly consumers are most dissatisfied with. One of the indicators is the number of negative assessments and comments on a particular issue. To better understand specific issues, you need to combine interrelated factors into several groups. In addition, it is possible to analyze the reasons for dissatisfaction by consumer segments and even for each representative of the intermediary who participated in the study.

In addition to the fact that customer requirements have different degrees of importance, compliance with these requirements by the company also has different effects on the overall level of customer satisfaction. Combining the indicators of importance and impact in one matrix, we can identify four main categories of consumer requirements for PJSC „Metinvest Holding” (Fig. 4).

The importance of requirements	<p><b>Basic needs</b></p> <p>Compliance in these areas will often be perceived as appropriate, and the measures taken by the super-minimum standards will not necessarily improve satisfaction. At the same time, if these requirements are not met, it will negatively affect consumer satisfaction</p>	<p><b>Engines of satisfaction</b></p> <p>Requirements with high indicators of both importance and impact. They are the main factors that affect the level of satisfaction, and will usually appear in the plans of the supplier of goods and services to improve customer satisfaction.</p>
	<p><b>Insignificant</b></p> <p>These requirements cannot be ignored as completely unimportant, as they have been stated by customers. They are the second echelon of the main ones. They usually do not require large investments, but should be provided at the appropriate level.</p>	<p><b>Hidden opportunities</b></p> <p>Low importance, high impact. So far, these factors are not considered by the customer as very important, but the company's activities in these areas and a positive consumer experience will have a positive impact on overall satisfaction, while a negative will lead to a negative result.</p>

The impact of requirements on overall satisfaction

Figure 4 —Main categories of consumer requirements. The key quadrant „Engines of Satisfaction” for PJSC „Metinvest Holding”.

Let's focus on basic needs, because due to the low impact on overall satisfaction, their value may be underestimated. But the requirements of this area are extremely important for customers. By meeting the needs in the „Basic Needs” category and investing in „Hidden Opportunities”, the company will have a huge potential to increase customer satisfaction.

An interesting way to identify „quick wins” is to build a matrix of nine quadrants, which reflects the relationship between the cost of improvements (meaning costs and difficulties) and the magnitude of differences between satisfaction and importance. Vertically - the cost of improvements (low, medium and high), horizontally Satisfaction Gap - with divisions of -2, -1, 0 and +1. The requirements in the lower right quadrant are the area of „quick wins” (the lowest cost of implementing change with the highest Satisfaction Gap).

The Customer Satisfaction Measurement study is only the first element in the „measurement - feedback - transformation” cycle. The plan of actions on directions will help to optimize resources and to define directions of change (tab. 6).

Table 6 - Action Plan for PJSC „Metinvest Holding”

Requirements	Staff service	Processes	Management	Marketing
Staff competence	▲	▲	■	●
Speed of service	▲	▲	■	●
Quality of metal products	●	▲	●	●
Price	●		▲	■
Assortment	●	■	■	▲
Level of service	▲	●	■	●
Service and warranty service	●	●	●	■
Compliance with socio-ethical norms	●		●	●

● – top priorities for improvement; ■ – secondary priorities for improvement; ▲ - all is well

To solve problems, improve service and increase customer satisfaction, it is not enough to measure it. You have to make decisions and work hard. In order to implement the activities that will lead to the implementation of the proposed results, it is necessary to go through several stages.

1) Goal setting.

It is necessary to formulate specific goals and draw up an action plan to achieve them. It is necessary to take into account the following pattern: the higher the level of satisfaction, the more difficult it is to increase.

For example, it is very difficult to demonstrate significant improvements if at the time of the study the satisfaction index reaches 90%. Conversely, if this figure is below 60%, you should aim for a significant leap forward - acceptable, a „plus” of 5% in the first year. The average satisfaction index (75-80%) can be increased by 1-1.5% per year.

2) Feedback within the company.

After reporting the results of the study to the company's management, they need to communicate them to employees at all levels. This does not have to be a complete report of the results. The main thing is to draw the attention of all staff to the problems. To do this, a series of discussion seminars can be held in each of the areas identified as a priority for improvement. Staff often have good ideas on how to solve problems, and

by expressing their suggestions, employees will feel involved in the process and useful to the company. In addition, you need to assign areas of responsibility to the relevant departments or create a special team to implement changes.

3) Feedback from customers.

Effective communication about the company's work can significantly improve the attitude of customers to it. Sometimes customers are unfair in their opinion about the level of service of an organization or do not notice its improvements. Therefore, they need to be told that the study was conducted. Use it as an occasion to inform customers that the company is interested in them and begins important transformations for them. This fact alone will change the opinion of customers about the company for the better. You can use various means of communication: the company's website, articles in the business press, corporate magazine or newspaper, send customers a booklet about the results of the study and further actions of the organization. The point is to inform customers about everything, even minor improvements, otherwise they may not be noted.

4) We begin to act.

The first step is to focus on the areas that have been identified as „quick wins.” These are areas in which the result can be achieved relatively easily, and the impact will be noticeable. Improvements in other areas will probably require more effort.

Constant reminders to employees that their salary comes from the client's pocket. To make a high level of service a priority for all employees, you can establish a relationship between the quality of customer service and the amount of bonuses received by staff. Work with employees requires special attention: it is a question of improvement of system of motivation and stimulation, and also about system of training. Dedicate at least 40 hours a year to staff training, and programs should change, be entertaining and inspiring, not dry and vague.

You should begin with top managers. They hold a session to determine the company's strategy in the field of service. Then middle managers are trained. At the trainings they get acquainted with the principles of the service approach and acquire management skills by employees (internal clients). Particular attention is paid to the development of mentoring skills. Without them, it will be impossible to implement a service strategy, because it is the middle management that controls the work of employees, monitors compliance with service standards. Finally, for line personnel it is possible to organize trainings of different levels of complexity: first basic service programs for working with external and internal clients, then (depending on the responsibilities of employees) programs for telephone communication, work with complaints and compensation, work with aggressive clientsю

5) Repeated measurements: successful practice.

Customer satisfaction is recommended to be measured on a regular basis with a certain frequency. This will allow us to assess the company's progress (to what extent the priorities for improvement have been implemented), as well as to identify a trend of declining overall satisfaction in the event of dissatisfaction with certain criteria. Such quantitative measurements are desirable at least once a year, and in rapidly changing markets - more often, such as quarterly. The search stage, at which customer requests are detected, should be repeated once every three years, as customer requirements do not change very quickly. The strategy of improvement is not easy, and the effect of it is not always visible immediately, so over time, some employees may conclude that it makes no sense to spend money on maintenance. To prevent this, you need to regularly measure the results and clearly monitor their dynamics.

Six months later, stable positive results were visible: customer satisfaction of PJSC „Metinvest Holding” has increased significantly (Fig. 5).

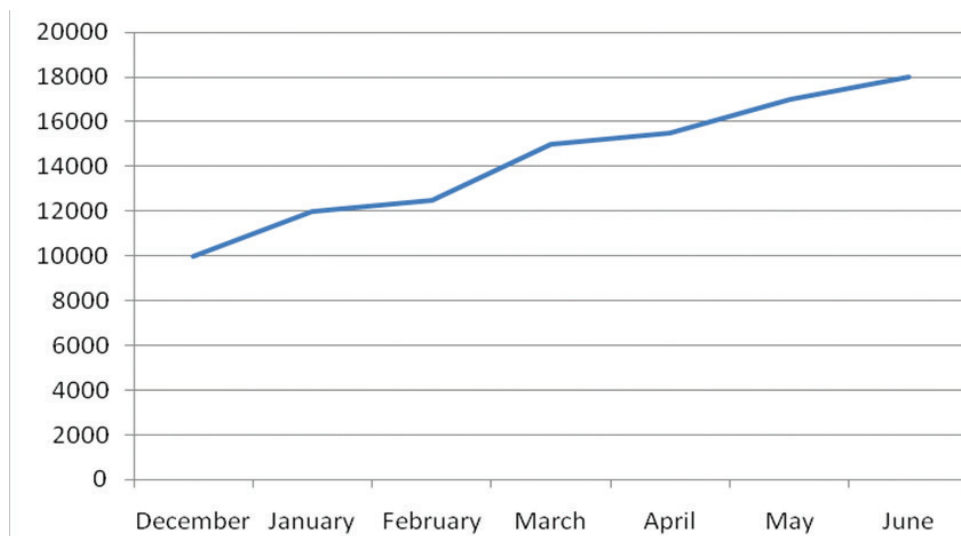


Figure 5 - Results of customer satisfaction measurements of PJSC „Metinvest Holding” from December 2020 to June 2021

And in the first two months, when there was a tendency to improve, the morale of employees working in the team increased: they began to participate in the process with great enthusiasm. No further effort was required to motivate the company’s employees - they were inspired by the results. Two years after the start of this project, customer satisfaction, rather than competition, has become a key aspect of Metinvest Holding’s strategy. The highest quality customer service has become one of its top priorities, as it became clear what importance for business is a high level of cooperation between the client and the company.

The more satisfied the employees of the company are with their work, the more satisfied the customers are. Because inspiring employees are able to provide customers with high quality service. This was done using the Employees Satisfaction Measurement technique. The information obtained was taken into account by PJSC „Metinvest Holding” in the formation of directions for the implementation of the concept of relationship marketing in the work of the enterprise.

## CONCLUSIONS

The study allowed to substantiate the theoretical and methodological approaches to the evolution of the concept of marketing from the beginning to the emergence of the concept of relationship marketing. A scientific analysis of approaches to the interpretation of relationship marketing in the context of the modern paradigm of marketing theory, which resulted in an author's approach to the interpretation of the concept of relationship marketing. The determinants of the introduction of the concept of relationship marketing in the activities of enterprises are determined. The principles of using the concept of relationship marketing in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic are substantiated.

In order to assess the implementation of the concept of marketing relations to industrial enterprises and determine the level of satisfaction and customer loyalty in the B2B market, a study was conducted on the example of the metallurgical industry PJSC „Metinvest Holding”. The study allowed to determine the degree of relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty to sheet metal, which is produced by PJSC „Metinvest Holding”. According to the results of the study, the Consumer Satisfaction Index with the products of PJSC “Metinvest Holding” was calculated, which demonstrates the relationship between consumer satisfaction and their loyalty to the company.

It has been developed a loyalty matrix, which includes four main categories of consumer requirements: basic needs, satisfaction engines, insignificant, hidden opportunities. Based on the results of the matrix, a conclusion was made to meet the needs of consumers in the category „Basic needs” under the condition of investing in „Hidden Opportunities”, the company will have a huge potential to increase customer satisfaction.

It was proposed to use the research methodology Customer Satisfaction Measurement, which is one of the key elements in assessing consumer loyalty in the cycle „measurement - feedback - transformation”. Recommendations on methods of resource optimization and determination of directions of changes according to the action plan by directions are developed.

Evaluation of the strategy of social and ethical marketing of Metinvest Holding LLC allowed to form the main strategic goals that the company implements in the metallurgical market. It was developed the ways to implement the concept of relationship marketing in the activities of Metinvest Holding LLC in the B2B market by measuring customer satisfaction as a tool for managing consumer loyalty in the B2B market.



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## KONCEPCJA MARKETINGU RELACJI, JAKO FILOZOFIA PROWADZENIA BIZNESU W PANDEMII COVID-19

### STRESZCZENIE

Artykuł poświęcony jest uzasadnieniu teoretycznych i metodologicznych podejść do ewolucji pojęcia marketingu, od początku do powstania pojęcia marketingu relacji. Naukowa analiza podejść do interpretacji marketingu relacji, w kontekście współczesnego paradygmatu teorii marketingu. Zaproponowano autorską interpretację pojęcia „marketingu relacji” oraz określono uwarunkowania jego realizacji w działalności przedsiębiorstw. Uzasadnione są zasady stosowania koncepcji marketingu relacji, w kontekście pandemii COVID-19.

W celu oceny realizacji koncepcji relacji marketingowych do przedsiębiorstw przemysłowych oraz określenia poziomu satysfakcji i lojalności klientów, na rynku B2B przeprowadzono badanie, na przykładzie branży metalurgicznej PSA „Metinvest Holding”. Badanie pozwoliło na określenie relacji pomiędzy zadowoleniem klientów, a lojalnością konsumentów do producenta PJSC „Metinvest Holding” blachy. Zgodnie z wynikami badania obliczono Wskaźnik Satysfakcji Konsumentów z produktów PJSC „Metinvest Holding”, który pokazuje związek między satysfakcją konsumentów, a ich lojalnością wobec firmy. Opracowano macierz lojalności, która obejmuje cztery główne kategorie wymagań konsumentów: podstawowe potrzeby, silniki satysfakcji, nieistotne, ukryte możliwości. Zaproponowano zastosowanie metodologii badawczej Customer Satisfaction Measuremen, która jest jednym z kluczowych elementów w ocenie lojalności konsumentów, w cyklu „pomiar – informacja zwrotna – transformacja”.

### SŁOWA KLUCZOWE

marketing relacji, pandemia COVID-19, przedsiębiorstwa przemysłowe, koncepcje marketingowe.



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