

Principle Differences between B2B and B2C Marketing Communication Processes

The scientific problem analysed in the article focuses on identifying the differences in the marketing communication process in a framework of business-to-consumer and business-to-business markets. The results show that although it may seem that the process itself is the same in both situations, however, it has many differences as well as many aspects in common.

Keywords: business-to-business, business-to-consumer, communication process, marketing communication.

Straipsnyje analizuojama problema – kokie yra esminiai skirtumai marketingo komunikacijos procese, taikomame verslui ir verslas vartotojui rinkose. Rezultatai rodo, kad, nepaisant paties komunikacijos proceso vienodumo, egzistuoja nemažai skirtumų ir bendrybių.

Raktiniai žodžiai: komunikacijos procesas, marketingo komunikacija, verslas vartotojui, verslas verslui.

Introduction

For a long time, marketing communication has been known as an important activity provided by organizations in order to inform, attract, and persuade consumers. However, according to L. Porcu, del S. Barrio-García and Ph. J. Kitchen (2012) recent shift of orientation from transactional to relational approach has also changed communicational objectives from ‘inform, persuade and remind’ to ‘inform, listen and respond’. Therefore, it can be argued that even though circumstances are changing, the main aim of information sharing remains. Only the measures and ways of information flows,

also the specifics of information are getting different. Marketing communication is used to provide selected information to customers (Faláta and Holubčík, 2017). Achieving to provide consumers with purposeful information, marketing communication strategies or integrated marketing communication (IMC) are implemented (Porcu et al., 2019). According to P. J. Kitchen (2017), integrated marketing communications has become one the most influential marketing management frameworks over the last two decades: ‘it is now the overarching theme of every marketing communications text, it is the title for chapters in marketing management texts, and it is the oft repeated theme of

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professional books and articles presented at practitioner and academic conferences.

R. Radzevičiūtė and L. Šliburytė (2007) emphasize that on a theoretical level marketing communication is a topic of interest in many scientific discussions: the abundance of scientific articles presenting different research methodologies and discussing important research results can be found in literature. Analysing theoretical and methodological studies in the field of marketing communication M. Malinowska (2013) indicates several topics of interest, mainly: IMC campaigns, their creative aspects, processes of media selection and various communicational techniques. L. Porcu, del S. Barrio-García and Ph. J. Kitchen (2012) emphasize that since the emergence in mid-1990's, IMC has become one of most popular topics in marketing literature. According to R. Radzevičiūtė and L. Šliburytė (2007), despite the body of conceptual literature on the definition of marketing communications, recently the focus have shifted to the premises of the emergence of IMC, the dynamics of its evolution, also, to forecasting its further development and necessary conditions for implementation. However, according to M. Malinowska (2013), 'the field of effectiveness and efficiency of marketing communications is usually overlooked or described quite shortly and generally'.

Depending on the type of consumers a company is dealing with, marketing communication holds its own peculiarities. While initially marketing strategies for identifying consumers and ways to reach them seems similar, the marketing activities used to attract the target differ (Saha et al., 2014). Marketing in business-to-consumer (B2C) market is more based

on emotional aspects; while in business-to-business sector more professionalism is needed. Therefore, seeking to successfully plan and implement marketing communication strategies, it is important to understand the differences of business-to-consumer vs. business-to-business communication processes. Despite that a company's primary purpose in B2C market is sale, M. Malinowska (2013) emphasizes that increasing sales is not always the goal of marketing communications. Achieving to attract final consumers in B2C market, emotional factor is very important in an entire sales process to provoke a purchase decision. B2C market can be characterized as being based on customers' emotions to be touched and irrationality of purchase decision (Milichovský, 2013). In B2B sector, companies are more focusing on the logic of the product and its features. It shows that marketing communication strategies in B2B and B2C sectors have to be based on different presumptions. However, customer orientation is common for both processes: according to Sh. Garg (2014), in any case marketing communication leads to interaction between the company and its customers.

Considering latter insights and various scientific debates found in related literature, **the problem solved in this paper is:** What are the differences in marketing communication process in a framework of business-to-consumer and business-to-business markets? Accordingly, **the object of the research** is the differences in marketing communication process in business-to-consumer and business-to-business markets; and **the aim is** to determine the differences of marketing communication processes in business-to-consumer and business-to-business markets.

Research methods. Achieving to determine the core differences in marketing communication process in business-to-consumer and business-to-business markets, theoretical analysis and synthesis of scientific insights are provided. The determined differences are generalized and can be used as a background for elaboration of marketing communication plan.

Theoretical insights on marketing communication

‘Marketing communication is a way how to provide selected information to customers, ideally with the fastest and in the most efficient form’ – state L. Falát and M. Holubčík (2017). M. Malinowska (2013) defines marketing communications as ‘a set of devices and procedures for exchanging information about the company and its offer, which should contribute to achievement of the basic objectives of the organization’. Therefore, it can be argued that marketing communication is an essential tool used in every company’s strategy in order to be successful in terms of reaching consumers. F. Milichovský (2013) emphasizes that adequate communication is necessary to ensure an optimal background for an effective marketing performance.

Analysing marketing communication strategies, K. H. Kim and V. Kumar (2018) note the importance of strategy’s adaptation to customers’ preferences; moreover, authors emphasize that understanding of the evaluation of marketing communication strategies by customers will finally result in their purchasing behaviour. Th. M. Key and A. J. Czapski (2017) define marketing communication

as a core of promotional strategy encompassing six elements of promotional mix: advertising, public relations (publicity), sales promotions, personal selling, digital/internet marketing, and direct marketing; moreover, to achieve synergy all the elements have to be used according to some system, as ‘the whole is greater than the sum of its parts’. In such a way, the value provided to the customer is clearly superior and at a minimal cost (Duralia, 2018). The system combining all the elements of promotional mix is often called the Integrated Marketing Communication in marketing literature.

After an extent analysis of previous theories on marketing communication, L. Porcu et al. (2019) provided a definition of integrated marketing communication (IMK); according to the authors, IMK is ‘the stakeholder-centered interactive process of cross-functional planning and alignment of organizational, analytical and communication processes that allows for the possibility of continuous dialogue by conveying consistent and transparent messages via all media in order to foster long-term profitable relationships that create value’.

In a context of integrated marketing communication, U. Sh. Rehman and M. S. Ibrahim (2011) provide the steps that have to be followed in the process of integrated marketing communication (see Figure 1).

The research provided by T. Nsour (2018) highlighted the importance of three components determining the performance of marketing communication process, namely: organizational structure of the marketing communication department, the available financial resources, and the elements marketing communication mix.

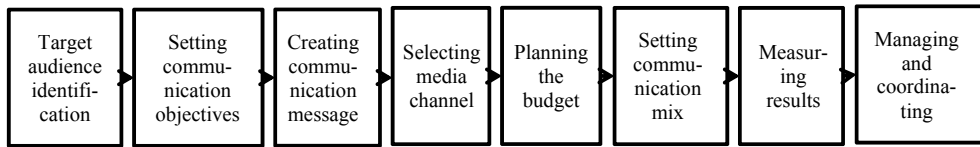


Fig. 1. Integrated marketing communication process

Source: created based on U. Sh. Rehman and M. S. Ibrahim (2011).

Substantiating the importance of personnel, L. Povolná (2017) emphasizes that business-to-business communications have long been based on personal contact. G. Todorova (2015) emphasizes that company's marketing communication activities must be well prepared and conducted in good order through comprehensive management. Therefore, it can be argued that marketing communication process has to be not only precisely planned, but also kept in line with overall organization's philosophy.

Differences of Business-to-Consumer vs. Business-to-Business markets

The most primitive and also the most essential question companies have to answer while choosing their target market is whether they will communicate to final consumers or to other businesses; consequently, two major types of markets emerge. According to V. Kumar and G. Raheja (2012), business-to-business (B2B) applies to companies marketing their goods or services exclusively to other businesses (e.g., a manufacturer deals with a wholesaler, or a wholesaler with a retailer) and not to consumers; while business-to-consumer (B2C) applies to businesses marketing their goods or services to consumers. Market size for business-

to-consumer (B2C) sellers is often limited with geographical area and/or number of people in the city, county or country. For example, if a company sells sunglasses its market is the country's (or even larger) population; however, if it runs a yoga studio, most probably a target market will be limited within driving distance of the studio location. On the other hand, business-to-business (B2B) sector refers to companies primarily selling products and services to businesses, rather than directly to consumers as in case of B2C. Moreover, sales in B2B sector typically have higher order values, longer sales cycles and are often more complex than B2C sales. Market size is also an important factor while elaborating a communication strategy in a B2B sector. As it was discussed, B2C sales potential is normally limited by population or geographical area or combination of both, but in case with B2B sales strategy, market size could be limited to number of specialized producers in the area. This can be illustrated by number of buses in the city, if a company is in a business of bus tires, for example.

Another important aspect affecting differences of marketing communication in B2C and B2B sectors is a decision maker. Looking from consumer perspective, in B2C there is always a particular person who is making a decision to purchase an item. Considering B2B sales, in

most cases will be more than one person to decide; therefore, knowing decision makers and decision making process in B2B is very important.

After providing a comparative study between B2B and B2C, S. K. Saha et al. (2014) provide their difference based on several characteristics (see Table 1).

always the goal of marketing communications. There may be many other – secondary goals set in a company’s strategy such as building loyalty, strengthening of brand name, investigating the buyer’s reactions, and others. Emphasizing a relational approach to marketing communication, L. Porcu, del S. Barrio-García and

Table 1. Differences between B2C and B2B markets

Criterion	Business-to-Consumer	Business-to-Business
Target	End User	Enterprise
Market size	Large	Smaller
Sales volume	Low	High
Decision making	Individually	By committee
Risk	Low	High
Purchasing process	Short	Longer
Payment	Often instant	Instant payment may not be required
Transaction	Can be in cash, by card	Requires more complex system
Consumer decision	Emotional	Rational
Demand	Based on wish	Based on need
Usage of mass media	Essential	Avoidable

Source: adapted from S. K. Saha et al. (2014).

The differences between B2C and B2B markets are evident; therefore, companies have to plan and implement their marketing communications in justice to those differences in order to reach the optimal results.

Communication objectives

In a case of B2C marketing, a company’s primary purpose is sale, i.e., buyer’s decision to spend money for goods or services at the particular location for particular set of things (goods, services or combination of both). However, M. Malinowska (2013) emphasizes that increasing sales is not

Ph. J. Kitchen (2012) point that a dialogue with stakeholders is needed in order to increase organizational brand value. Moreover, different promotional tools could be used for achieving different goals as to increase consumer awareness of product or service; to inform people about features and benefits of company’s offerings; or to provoke consumers to acquire those offerings (Camilleri, 2018).

Looking form marketer’s point of view it may seem that marketing communication strategies in B2B and B2C sectors have to be based on different presumptions like complexity, pricing, promotions, decision making and others; however, there are several aspects where both,

B2B and B2C, communication strategies have many in common. The most important factor which is common for both processes is *customer orientation*. According to O. Duralia (2018), the goal of marketing communication strategy is to reach a concrete audience providing a clear and unitary message. M. A. Camilleri (2018) adds that sending clear, consistent and complementary messages enable companies to finally turn prospects into customers.

Communication message

In B2B sector, companies are focusing on the logic of the product and its features. Customers are also investigating competitors and alternative solutions; therefore, consultative approach should prevail in B2B marketing communication against aggressive deal closing approach. At the same time, B2C marketing communication is directed to a final consumer whose choice is often irrational; and the seller will want to focus on the benefits of the product or service. B2C marketing communication campaign in most cases will be based on capturing the customer's attention immediately. Consumers' decision will be more emotional: they will not put so much effort on analysis of other alternatives or competitors; however, M. A. Camilleri (2018) argues that sometimes they also may be interested in the features and benefits of products or services. However, the emphasis on emotions often smothers proper targeting, resulting in disruptive and irrelevant to consumers messages which are often understood as environmental noise (Kitchen, 2017).

The emotional factor is very important while making a decision to buy in a sales process in B2C sector (Saha et al., 2014), and companies spend significant resources to recognize proper emotions in order to close the deal. On the other hand, in B2B sector there are planned activities involved into a sales process: a purchaser has to follow the budget frames and time limitations. In B2B sale is little to no personal emotion involved in the purchasing decision. Therefore, operating as consumers, business companies 'may want to know more on the terms of trade, the reliability of delivery, volume discounts, and about the businesses' efforts to generate demand through advertising' (Camilleri, 2018). E. A. Kemp et al. (2018) suggest that also in B2B humans are involved in the decision-making buying; therefore, their decision-making emotions may also play some role in line with rationalization.

Predominant attribute of marketing message is very different when discussing B2B and B2C marketing approach. B2C marketing message, especially if it is on-line is normally calling for immediate action: to use coupon, to register for newsletter, to buy with discount or other. B2B marketing message is an informative one: it calls a consumer (or customer) to find out something; this means that a message has content inside. Aim of the content is to educate rather than sell. In some cases, B2B sale may happen in a year or more after presented message, whether it was an e-mail newsletter, a conference or a presentation. Therefore, L. Povolná (2017) suggests that even in B2B companies should elaborate creative and more interesting advertising messages in order to maintain stronger relationship and catch managers' attention.

Media channel

A proper choice of media channel can be crucial on a way to success. M. A. Camilleri (2018) emphasizes that smaller B2C companies with limited budgets often choose to rely on two or even fewer media channels thus amplifying the risk of wasting time and resources on activities that would not lead to pursued goals and objectives. As opposed, B2B companies often use several channels for communication with their targets (Povolná, 2017). According to K. Swani, B. P. Brown and S. M. Mudambi (2019), appropriate media channels for B2B companies are television, online, print, out-of-home, or direct mail communication. L. Porcu, del S. Barrio-García and Ph. J. Kitchen (2012) emphasize that nowadays a variety of communicational and promotional tools is increasing thus enabling conventional and interactive media channels and forms to disseminate marketing messages. Moreover, as a variety of marketing channels is increasing and the media is getting more complex, it is becoming more difficult to reach or access target consumers, as well as influence and persuade them (Kitchen, 2017). The marketing clutter is becoming more and more complex as 'everyone is exposed to commercial messages during a typical day: radio and TV commercials, ads in the morning newspaper, billboards along the highway, solicitations in the mail, calls from telemarketers, web page banners, among others' (Camilleri, 2018). In most cases, companies operating in a B2C sector have to run different marketing campaigns to promote their goods or services, whether it is on-line, published, radio, or others; while in B2B modern

buyers require more personal approach (Povolná, 2017): a strong personal connection may be integral in the organizational buying decision-making process because perceived risks are often high (Kemp et al., 2018). Moreover, in both markets there occur cases when actual presence of goods is expected: it can be supermarket, on-line store or other place where buyer will be in presence. Exception to this clause can be operations with real estate, automobiles and pre-ordered furniture.

When analysing processes of marketing communication, L. Povolná (2017) states that part of B2B communications has moved online, and forecasts that this trend will continue to increase. On the other hand, in B2C sector online marketing communication is changing its viewpoint from targeting masses to individual customers (Owen, Humphrey, 2010). Moreover, the increasing the level of interactivity makes communications more valuable element of marketing (Porcu, del Barrio-García, Kitchen, 2012). The internet provides a huge amount of information in the forums, user groups, social networks, or in queries in Google to the potential clients; therefore, going online enables sellers saving costs as the personal contact comes in the later stages of the shopping process (Povolná, 2017).

N. Vilkaitė-Vaitonė (2015) emphasizes the growing importance of social networks as a channel for the marketing communication. However, investigating social networking from both perspectives K. Swani, B. P. Brown and G. R. Milne (2014) point out that the usage of social media marketing in B2B markets is being accepted sceptically, while in B2C markets latter channel of marketing communication is

prospering. On the other hand, S. Iankova et al. (2018) comparing the B2B and B2C business models and their combinations determined that representatives of B2B sector (compared to representatives of B2C) perceive marketing communication in social media as a least effective sales channel and not important tool in customer relationship building. However, V. Kumar and G. Raheja (2012) argue that based on the recent behaviour of professional investors it can be noticed that the opportunities of latter channel in B2B may be much greater.

The budget

As marketing communication mix encompasses several dimensions: advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, digital/internet marketing, and direct marketing; the costs of these dimensions are strongly different (Malinowska, 2013), as well as their effects and results. M. A. Camilleri (2018) emphasizes that those organizations possessing bigger budgets have a wider choice of communicational options; they can choose an electronic media (TV and radio), print media (newspapers and magazines), direct- or e-mail offerings, telemarketing, personal selling, public relations and the web. On the other hand, the constrains of limited budget in B2C sector can be overcome by choosing proper marketing tools and creating the relevant messages to attract consumers. A research provided by L. Murton Beets and A. Handley (2019) showed that in B2C markets budget has to support creation of proper content. Moreover, the budget has

to be planned in a way to reimburse every marketing tool used.

Also, when analysing marketing communication in a context of buying behaviour, K. H. Kim and V. Kumar (2018) emphasize the significant resources that B2B firms spend in order to manage the relationships with their customers. K. Swani, B. P. Brown and S. M. Mudambi (2019) add that B2B managers allocate massive budgets towards advertising considering latter promotional tool as a 'smart investment'; however, the research on the budget development and allocation process in B2B sector is often outdated.

Communication mix solutions

There are many marketing communications tools which can be used in digital media and traditional channels (Camilleri, 2018). According to G. Todorova (2015), in the era of mass communications and emerging mobile technologies, an organization must build an adequate mix of marketing communications, in order not to drown in a sea of information. T. Nsour (2018) points out that marketers, researchers and planners of marketing communication activities have already noticed that using traditional tools of promotion in most communicational campaigns does not work effectively, neither produce the desired result. As traditional tools of marketing communication, M. Malinowska (2013) mentions advertising, personal promotion, sales promotion, public relations; however, in the era of internet and social networking digital/internet marketing and direct marketing are gaining popularity (Key, Czaplewski, 2017). M. A. Camilleri (2018) suggests

adapting multi-channels and multi-audience approaches to message creation to achieve synergies in attracting and influencing target customers.

In comparison to final consumer market, the B2B sale process is longer in time: there is almost no necessity for B2B seller to make sure the goods or services are available immediately. Price factor is of course important in B2B sale process/strategy; however, its importance is limited to conformity to the buyer's budget; therefore, tactics of cross-sales, quantity-based discounts and other promotion methods of this kind will not be effective in most cases. Instead of using promotional tactics, L. Povolná (2017) suggests making differences among various customers and carefully select a way to communicate with each of them. According to K. Swani, B. P. Brown and S. M. Mudambi (2019), decision making in B2B markets is often formal, involving group of people; therefore, a promotional mix in the B2B situation emphasizes personal selling.

The other important element of marketing communication regardless the sector where the company is operating is *consumer service*. Garg (2014) understands marketing communication as dialogue enabling interaction between the company and its customers; latter dialog is developed as a four-stage process and lasts through preselling, selling, consuming and post-consuming stages. The organization's marketing communication in the B2C sector for customer service will be focused on after-sales activities, mainly, like building loyalty, servicing sold goods, providing information on up-coming products, on-line activities, up-dates, etc. However, an organization operating in B2B sector will focus on customer service

before transaction with consultancy and discussions regarding technical, technological, legal, budgetary and other issues even without certainty that sale will be closed. In order to be successful this has to be done regardless of status of contact initiator: whether it was customer or seller. Generally speaking, building trust between seller and buyer will be the main prerequisite for successful deal.

As it was discussed before, a decision to purchase in B2C is more emotional, rather than rational. When building a B2C marketing communication strategy, companies know that customer will make a decision alone. They are putting efforts to include such marketing elements as influencers, pricing, merchandising tricks into a communication strategy; therefore, the final result in case of sale will be a combination of many factors. In case of B2B sales, a decision making will take much longer than in B2C. Secondly, more than one person will be involved into decision making procedure. Each of the influencing elements has to be accomplished and detailed: budget, timing, technological, legal, and others. This means that emotional aspect of decision making in B2B will be excluded.

Result measurement, management and coordination

According to P. J. Kitchen (2017), in B2C markets marketing communication activities are often focused upon customers and prospects; therefore, the need for measuring and analysing marketplace results emerges. M. Malinowska (2013) suggests that achieving to assess the effectiveness of marketing communica-

tion, it is necessary to enable its feedback; consequently, the better match to target market's requirements will be ensured in the future. However, R. Radzevičiūtė and L. Šliburytė (2007) pointed out the absence of a particular system for the assessment of performance of integrated marketing communication emphasizing the intangibility of marketing actions and their impact on behavioural changes.

Understanding the issue, M. Malinowska (2013) suggests assessing the effectiveness of B2C company's marketing communication in three areas:

- Awareness: the level of knowledge about the company and its offer;
- Attitudinal dimension: the attitudes and preferences of customers to the company and its offer;
- Behavioural dimension: the purchasing behaviour of customers. However, P. J. Kitchen (2017) emphasizes that such marketing, where companies measure behavioural outcomes in response to marketing communication, is still inaccessible in many cases.

Investigating the field of B2B related research K. Swani, B. P. Brown and S. M. Mudambi (2019) also define three main groups of communication effectiveness measures:

- Behavioural measures (e.g., sales calls, click through and buyer click rates, search advertising revenues, and post likes and comments in social media, etc);
- Non-behavioural measures (e.g., awareness, attitude towards the ad and brand, behavioural intentions, and brand recall);
- Readership measures from various independent organizations (e.g., Starch, AD-CHART, and AD-SELL, etc.).

L. Porcu, del S. Barrio-García and Ph. J. Kitchen (2012) suggest grouping consequences of marketing communications into the three possible categories, namely: related to marketing communications performance, to brand performance, and to stakeholders. However, M. A. Camilleri (2018) argues that marketing communications are usually directed to more than one market segment and involve more than one communication vehicle; therefore, the assessment of the effectiveness of every single effort is complex.

Limitations and further research

The theoretical analysis enabled revealing the principle differences in marketing communication processes in a framework of B2C and B2B markets. Using the process of marketing communication as a background, general differences were found to be evident in every stage of it. However, every single situation can be considered as a phenomenon with its own peculiarities. Therefore, even knowing the detected differences, marketing communication process has to be adapted to a specific situation based on the type of organization, product characteristics, market situation, consumer profile, and other forces possible having impact on business results.

Based on the theoretical investigation it can be stated that product category, either in B2C or B2B market requires a proper adaptation of marketing communication process. The product category determines the level and type of competition in the market. Therefore, different actions in marketing communication process have to be planned in a situation

when a product is viewed as radical innovation of international level in comparison to a commodity known for everyone.

Also, the urgency of the product is important. The level of urgency determines the consumer actions in the marketplace. If the product is urgent, less marketing resources are needed to convince consumers to acquire it. On the other hand, in a situation of wide supply more aggressive and extensive marketing communication actions will have to be applied during the process.

If considering a market type, many characteristics of the target segment have to be considered in order to properly elaborate the communication strategy and action plan. Whether a target is B2C or B2B, such factors as market size, volume, or budget will determine the effectiveness of marketing communication.

The latter considerations can serve as further research directions for scholars providing their research in a field of marketing communications. Moreover, they must be considered by marketing during the elaboration and implementation of marketing communication strategies.

Conclusions

The aim of this study was to determine the differences of marketing communication processes in business-to-consumer and business-to-business markets. The theoretical analysis enabled to reveal the topicality of the problem. After the scientific research it can be concluded that the pursued differences are evident in every stage of marketing communication process. Moreover, knowing the principle differences of marketing communication

processes typical to B2C and B2B markets enables companies to plan their marketing communication strategies more adjusted; therefore, the manuscript can be applied as a guide for marketers working in the field. On the other hand, the manuscript provides basic guidelines for the demarcation of B2C and B2B markets in terms of marketing communication processes. Therefore, it can serve as a guide for scholars providing their research in the area.

The research results enabled indicating principle differences in every stage of marketing communication processes; either it was an identification of target audience characteristics or the terminal procedures of process monitoring. The core differences were pointed in sales processes, as in B2B markets products and services are being sold to other businesses and sales process is limited by more constraints as has less space for creativity. The rationality factor is fundamental in B2B sales; therefore, it directs the choice of all the further actions of marketing communication in latter type of market. As the opposite, the sales process in B2C markets is often based on emotions and human factors; the process itself is often based on creativity and has a wide space for self-expression.

Furthermore, based on rationality of B2B customers and the emotionality in B2C markets, the messages of marketing communications also have to emphasize different aspects of an offering: starting with general product characteristics in B2B market and ending with pursued delight and impalpability in B2C situations.

While considering a choice of media channel, the practice is also different. Research results emphasize the trend of going

on-line in both markets; however, when it reaches social media it can be stated that being a must-be practice in B2C market, for B2B marketers it is still viewed suspiciously. Considering latter results it can be stated that social media marketing as a channel for marketing communications can be viewed as an undiscovered field for research of B2B marketing scholars.

The differences also were found between budget allocation in B2C and B2B markets leading to the differences in communicational mix solutions. As companies operating in B2B sector often have larger budgets, the bundle of tools of communication mix has also to be wider.

Moreover, in B2B market personal communication is the factor of highest importance, whereas in B2C in many cases it is not even considered as suitable.

At the last step of marketing communication process, the result measurement necessary for management and coordination is performed. In both markets, this stage enables to avoid future mistakes and provides directions for improvement. However, being inevitable latter stage is also most difficult to be implemented. Scholars agree that even the dimensions to be assessed are known, the complexity of marketing communication process doesn't often lead to proper results.

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The paper submitted: May 30, 2019
Prepared for publication: July 31, 2019

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ESMINIAI MARKETINGO KOMUNIKACIJOS PROCESO VERSLAS VERSLUI IR VERSLAS VARTOTOJUI RINKOSE SKIRTUMAI

S a n t r a u k a

Verslo pasaulyje marketingo komunikaciją nuo seno buvo įprasta laikyti veikla, kurią organizaci-

jos pasitelkia siekdamos informuoti, pritraukti ir įtikinti vartotojus pasirinkti jų siūlomą produktą ar paslaugą. Keičiantis verslo orientacijoms, požiūris į

šių marketingo veiklą taip pat kinta, ir nors esminis tikslas – informacijos vartotojui perteikimas – išlieka, priemonės ir būdai, taikomi perduodant informaciją, o kartu ir skleidžiamos informacijos pobūdis negali likti tokie patys. Pastarieji pokyčiai padarė įtaką ir marketingo komunikacijos tyrimų laukui – dėmesys nuo atskirų marketingo komunikacijos elementų krypsta į pastarųjų integravimą, kūrybinius komunikacijos proceso aspektus, marketingo komunikacijos būdų ir metodų įvairovę, taip pat ryškėja mokslinių tyrimų sritis, apimanti tolesnę marketingo komunikacijos raidą ir sąlygas efektyviam jos vyksmui.

Viena iš marketingo komunikacijos tyrimų krypčių, vis dar nesulaukianti pakankamo tyrėjų dėmesio, yra rinkos nulemta marketingo komunikacijos įgyvendinimo specifika. Siekiant papildyti pastarosios krypties tyrimų lauką, šiame straipsnyje sprendžiama mokslinė problema – kokie yra esminiai skirtumai tarp marketingo komunikacijos procesų, kuriuos riboja verslas vartotojui ir verslas verslui rinkos aplinka. Tyrimo objektas – marketingo komunikacijos procesų verslas vartotojui ir verslas verslui rinkose skirtumai; straipsnio tikslas – atskleisti marketingo komunikacijos procesų verslas vartotojui ir verslas verslui rinkose skirtumus. Siekiant tikslo, atliekama mokslinės literatūros analizė ir sintezė, kurių metu nustatyti skirtumai apibendrinami ir pateikiami kaip gairės, naudotinos kuriant marketingo komunikacijos planus skirtingose rinkose.

Atliktas teorinis tyrimas atskleidė nagrinėjamos mokslinės problemos savalaikiškumą – galima teigti, kad skirtumai buvo identifikuoti visose marketingo komunikacijos proceso stadijose. Žinodamos verslas verslui ir verslas vartotojui rinkose vykdomos marketingo komunikacijos skirtumus organizacijos gali planuoti ir įgyvendinti taiklesnes marketingo komunikacijos strategijas, o mokslininkai – remtis šiuo straipsniu, atlikdami išsamesnius mokslinius tyrimus.

Tyrimo rezultatai atskleidė skirtumus visose komunikacijos proceso stadijose. Esminiai skirtumai, lemiantys tolesnę marketingo komunikacijos specifika, buvo nustatyti pardavimų procese: verslas verslui rinkose produktai parduodami kitoms įmonėms, taigi ir pardavimų procesas yra griežtesnis, ribojamas racionalumu, nepaliekantis erdvės kūrybai. Būtent racionalumas yra esminis faktorius, ribojantis ne tik pardavimo procesą, bet ir marketingo komunikacijos priemones ir būdus, kuriuos organizacija pasitelks klientui įtikinti. Priešingai, verslas vartotojui rinkoje pardavimai yra daugiausia sąlygojami vartotojų emocijų, taigi marketingo komunikacijos procesas turėtų būti grindžiamas kūrybiškumu, paliekant laisvės kūrėjo saviraiškai. Racionalumas ir emocionalumas sąlygoja komunikacinės žinutės skirtumus: verslas verslui rinkose turėtų būti atskleidžiamos esminės produkto charakteristikos, verslas vartotojui rinkose dažniausiai akcentuojamos neapčiuopiamos naudos ir vartotojo siekiama palaima.

Marketingo komunikacijos kanalo pasirinkimas verslas vartotojui ir verslas verslui rinkose taip pat skiriasi. Tyrimo duomenys atskleidė, kad nors komunikacija ir persikelia į elektroninę erdvę, socialinės medijos, tampančios verslas vartotojui marketingo pagrindu, verslas verslui rinkose vis dar vertinamos skeptiškai. Vėlgi tai galėtų tapti tolesnių tyrimų lauku.

Tyrimo rezultatai atskleidė ir skirtingus marketingo komunikacijai skiriamus biudžetus, toliau lemiančius komunikacijos komplekso sudėtį: verslas verslui rinkose veikiančios kompanijos dažniausiai operuoja didesniais biudžetais, o tai lemia ir gausesnį komunikacijos kompleksą, kurio pagrindinis elementas yra asmeninė komunikacija, kuri dažnai visiškai netinka verslas vartotojui rinkoms.

Galiausiai tyrimas atskleidė, kad būtina vertinti marketingo komunikacijos rezultatus siekiant išvengti tolesnių klaidų ir tobulinti procesą tiek verslas vartotojui, tiek verslas verslui rinkose.