

І. І. Решетнікова, М. П. Сагайдак*
КНЕУ ім. В. Гетьмана,
*Криворізький економічний інститут

БАГАТОКАНАЛЬНИЙ МАРКЕТИНГ У КОМУНІКАЦІЙНІЙ ДІЯЛЬНОСТІ ЛОГІСТИЧНИХ КОМПАНІЙ

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Обґрунтовано доцільність багатоканальним маркетингового інструменту в діяльності компаній, що надають логістичні послуги. Визначено значення багатоканального маркетингу і сфери його використання, що узагальнює багатоканальні маркетингові інструменти. Особлива увага приділяється визначенню та обґрунтуванню провідної ролі персоналу логістичних підприємств, який безпосередньо контактує із клієнтами, у встановленні і підтримці зв'язку з усіма сторонами з метою творення клієнтського ланцюжка створення цінності у логістичному сервісі. Представлено схему взаємодії контактного персоналу логістичних компаній на різних ієрархічних рівнях і взаємодію персоналу з контактною аудиторією.

Ключові слова: багатоканальний маркетинг, комунікації, поведінка споживачів, логістичні послуги, логістика продукції, контактний персонал.

I. Reshetnikova, M. Sahaidak*
KNEU n.a. Vadym Hetman,
*Kryviy Rih Economic Institute

MULTI-CHANNEL MARKETING IN COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES OF LOGISTICS COMPANIES

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The article justifies the feasibility of multi-channel marketing tool in activities of companies that provide logistics services. Specifies the meaning of multi-channel marketing and the scope of its use, generalizing multi-channel marketing tools. Particular attention is paid to the determination and substantiation of the leading role of contact personnel of logistics enterprises in establishing and maintaining of communication with all parties to create customer value chain of logistic services. An interaction of logistics companies' contact personnel at different hierarchical levels and interaction of contact personnel with contact audience are presented.

Key words: multi-channel marketing, communications, consumer behavior, logistics services, logistics product, contact personnel.

Statement of the problem. Modern trends, which occurring in the industry-specific competitive markets require the use of the latest marketing tools in establishing and maintaining communication with consumers, using digital technology. Taking place of traditional communication channel, where main participants are “seller-buyer”, comes multichannel marketing, which is based on usage of alternative tools, including (web-site of the enterprise, e-mail, mobile-devices, social networks, search systems, etc.)

for informing, establishing of cooperation, but not influencing the customer. Therefore, the use of multi-channel marketing, on the one hand, allows for effective interaction with customers, create additional opportunities and alternativeness of communication channels with the exception of extra links in the chain of creating customer value in order to minimize costs of purchase. On the other hand, multi-channel marketing as a tool that allows to interact with customers in direct and indirect channels of communication for the producer creates the preconditions for the transformation of interactive marketing into the multi-channel marketing, and thus will increase operating efficiency and multichannel interaction with customers in markets that are declining

Analysis of recent research and publications. Recently, the concept of multi-channel marketing has spread in scientific publications of foreign scientists. Studies of foreign scientists: J. Thomas, U. Sullivan [1], D. Duffy [2], S. Neslin, V. Shankar [3], L. Simons, Ch. Steinfield, H. Bouwman [4], B. Rosenbloom [5], M. Lipowsky [7], P. Stern, P. Durand [8] et al., Focusing on solving of the issues concerning the improvement of processes of multi-channel relationship management with customers, evaluation of the effects of multi-channel sales for customers and providers, development and substantiation of multichannel strategy of the enterprise on markets and the strategic positioning of the company's web site in multi-communicational market environment. Scientific achievements of scientists are widely used in the practice of Western pharmaceutical companies and banking institutions, while remaining unnoticed by other areas of economic activity.

Scientific publications of indogenous scientists, Yu. Daynovsky [10], S. Illyashenko [11], Ye. Krykavskiy [12], I. Lytovchenko [13], M. Oklander [9] et al., Primarily focusing on the development of interactive, digital and Internet - marketing. However, scientists are less paying attention to address issues regarding the development of multi-channel interaction between all participants of creation of customer value while focusing attention on clients and communication channels of promotion of products / services. Given the significant scientific achievements of foreign and domestic scientists on the study issues, problem of definition and justification of the leading role of contact personnel of logistics enterprises in establishing and maintaining communication with all parties to create customer value chain of logistic services remain unsolved.

Goals of the article. To prove the feasibility of multi-channel marketing tools in communication activities of logistics enterprises with rethinking of the role of contact personnel to meet the needs of consumers and to ensure the effectiveness of marketing activities.

The main material of research. In a broad sense, multi-channel marketing aimed at organization of producer's interaction with different target audiences through direct and indirect channels of communication with the aim of encouraging them to appropriate actions, which will result in the purchase of goods or services [6; 15; 16] In a more narrow sense, multi-channel marketing – is the choice of communication channel and channel of sales of goods / services to intermediate or end customers. Tools of multi-channel marketing allow logistics companies to establish a “point of contact” with various partners and customers using various ways and means of establishing communications. Modern communication channels include: web-site, e-mail, mobile devices, social networks, search engines, online advertising, product placement, direct mail, call centers, retail network, points of sales, representative offices, printed advertising, television, radio, outdoor advertising. The list of resources can be divided into two types of communication channels: traditional and digital [16].

The use of multi-channel communications allow the logistics company to increase the effectiveness of marketing campaigns, accelerate the promotion of products on the market, to attract the maximum number of interested parties and maintain communication with them, promptly analyze their requests to develop customized logistics service offers, etc. In detail these issues were investigated by E. Krykavsky [12].

Thu, multi-channels allow you to quickly meet the needs of consumers, including specific, and achieve market objectives of the enterprise. This should draw attention to the fact that there are negative

aspects of the use of multi-channel marketing. Firstly, due to the absence of required number of specialists, which can promptly respond to customers' claims, simultaneous effective operation on different channels is impossible; secondly, provision of effective operation of multicomunicative channel depends on quality of analytical evaluation of its operation and from developed communication strategy of logistics enterprise; thirdly, efficiency of communication policy of the enterprise (with usage of different mobile devices and electronic resources) depends on quality of work of contact personnel.

Thus, the main advantages of usage of multi-channel marketing in logistics enterprises activities are as follows:

- informational presence of the enterprise on offline and online platforms simultaneously;
- reaching the maximum number of clients and the implementation of evaluation of the effectiveness of each channel with the influence of various factors which creating the market environment;
- consumer's awareness of logistics services provided by enterprise and awareness of potential partners about cooperation opportunities in different markets;
- quantitative and qualitative analysis of web-site, evaluation and statistical information on transitions to it from other Internet sites, targeting on justification of expediency of online advertising;
- establishing two-way communication with customers to better understand target contact audiences and adjust the interaction of enterprise with them;
- the implementation of effective positioning on the market by examining consumer response to advertising and informational messages;
- the formation of a comprehensive "customer portrait" and managing of reliable customer database;
- reducing the dependence of the company from mono-communicative channel;
- the use of multi-communication allows the company to use a wider range of types of advertising;
- quick search of alternative options to in order to satisfy specific customers requests for logistics services with restricted own funds and resources.

One of the main mechanisms of multi-channel marketing, as noted by S. Orlik [6] is a constant analysis of data on all channels in the summary base (BigData). In this context, the increased role of contact personnel who understand the nature of the business process of creation of logistics services, can make communication with the consumer, and also analyze its response and identify the unmet needs of target customers. Ultimately it will improve customer loyalty, information on the website and other sources, and also improve quantitative and qualitative indicators of services sales. Thus, multi-channel marketing tools in combination with specialist competencies, will facilitate interaction and not impact the consumers.

Organization of marketing activities in direct (traditional) distribution channels remains a pressing problem for most domestic logistics enterprises. This is primarily due to the fact that marketing can be viewed as a standalone channel of sales of logistics services, and as the final link in the multi-level chain of supply. With this approach communication between all members of the customer value chain of logistics services becomes particularly important, primarily to minimize the conflicts in distribution channels and establish feedback of enterprise, which provides services with all parties. In a typical structure of distribution channels, the scientists distinguish: producers and industrial consumers, wholesalers, retailers and end customers, among which there are links that allow to achieve specific marketing goals of every participant of market exchange.

It should be noted that the object of marketing impact in the activities of logistics enterprise is a service, which is mostly inseparable from its provider. Herewith, logistics service itself, combined with the physical commodity, makes it more visible and create logistics product that is the subject of market exchange (fig. 1). It is a functional component of the quality of logistics services (enterprise's reputation, accessibility for receiving and consumption, understanding of specific customer needs and professional competence in dealing with it) is the result of effective application of the marketing and integrated marketing communications in the field of logistics services.

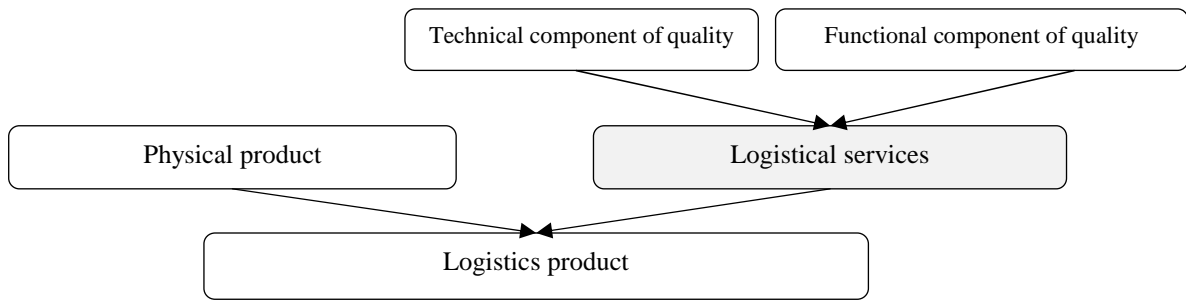


Fig. 1. Components of logistics product

With such approach most appropriate to its sales organization is usage of direct channel, and the role is crucial. However, as consumers becoming more educated, they mostly use modern technology to establish communications with producers of products or providers of services as well as for purchase.

Therefore, for providers of logistics services it is important not only to attract maximum clients using all existing technical means and digital technology, but also to establish and maintain feedback. In this respect the leading role has contact personnel, behind the use of any digital channel is the human factor. In addition, enterprises should reach the balance in terms of efficiency of personal contact with the consumer, or channels using digital technologies depending on the profile of the consumer and the cost of contact establishment.

As noted by C. Lovelock [14], contact personnel establishes first contact with the customer, allowing to form a first impression and formulate the expectations from the proposed service, provides direct interaction with customers during servicing and after it, and from which, in most cases, depends on the quality of service and service process.

In our opinion, in logistics companies contact staff include individual employees, groups or the entire staff that is directly or indirectly involved in the communication process with all contact audiences at different stages of the creation of customer value of logistics services.

Interaction of contact personnel of logistics companies at different hierarchical levels is demonstrated in fig. 2.

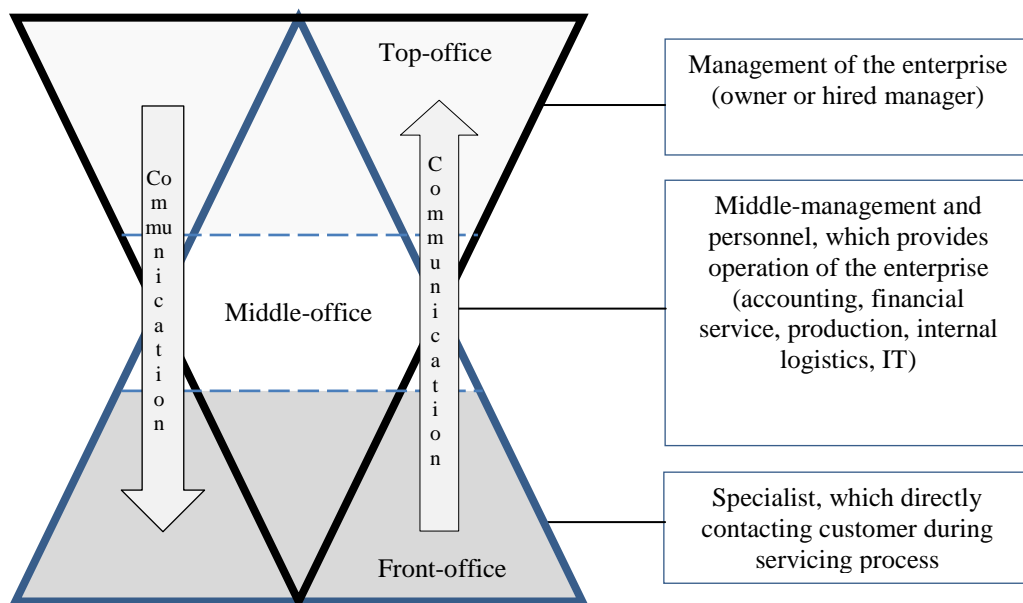


Fig. 2. Interaction of logistics companies' contact personnel at different hierarchical levels (own elaboration)

We should note, that it is reasonable to add top-managers to the contact personnel of logistics enterprises, which arrange meetings and establishing contacts with the interested audiences, specialists of marketing & sales department, which communicate with suppliers and middlemen, advertising department specialists, who contact with the representatives of TV- and radiocompanies, advertising and informational agencies, PR-agencies, IT-specialists, which are establishing connections between existing and potential customers, using electronic resources of the enterprise's web-site, accountants, who, report about activities of the company to the tax-agency and control bodies, and also communicate with bank representatives; personnel (experts), who provide logistics services directly to the customer, in other words, everyone, who communicate with target and contact audiences of the logistics enterprise.

Earlier mentioned categories are a kind of intermediaries in the transmission of logistics services to the final consumer. Such mediation is to ensure interests of business owner, external customers and other stakeholders as well as own interests of employee. Moreover, contact personnel cannot reach their own interest (commercial or non-commercial) without satisfying of customers interests or interests of other counterpart.

These categories of contact personnel should understand the value and properties of services to be motivated in the best customer service. Therefore, the top management of enterprise should build relations with contact personnel as with a partners. Given this, it is proposed to recognize as contact personnel of logistics enterprises the client-oriented managers and specialists of the enterprise, providing establishment and support of long-term mutually beneficial relations with all contact audiences for maximum satisfaction of needs and marketing objectives of the company.

Interaction of contact personnel of logistics enterprises with different contact audiences by the nature and frequency of contacts is demonstrated in the tab. 1.

Table 1

Interaction of contact personnel with contact audience of logistics companies (own elaboration)

Contact zone personnel	Contact audience	Nature of contact (action)	periodicity of contact
1	2	3	4
Top Office (Business owner, top manager)	– Credit and financial institutions	opening accounts and other financial documents processing	one-time contacts, official inquiries and invitations or, if necessary
	– mass-media	presenting information about the company in various media	
	– State institutions	registration procedures	
	– Citizen Action Group	charity, sponsorship	
	– Local public	support of the projects	
	– Society as a whole	representative actions	
	– Enterprise staff	staffing measures under the collective agreement	
	– International organizations	signing of agreements, representative actions	
	– Consumers (final and intermediate)	response to claims and complaints (if necessary)	
	– suppliers	coordination of disputes and agreements	
	– brokers	selection and signing of agreements	
– competitors	representative actions		
Middle Office (specialists of departments accountant, logistics specialist, IT – Specialist)	– Credit and financial institutions	Payment of accounts, and other transactions	as per functional duties or subject to coordination with the company management
	– customers	additional clarification on the technology of Service	
	– staff	provide information on payroll, issuing of certificates	
	– Suppliers and intermediaries	clarify the terms of the agreement, participation in resolving of disputes in court	

1	2	3	4
Front office (Call – center, experts that provide direct service and contact with consumers)	– customers	identification of needs, ordering, creation, offering and sales of services, securing of guarantees	periodic and constant contact
	– staff	creative interaction between the different departments to meet their own and “external” interests	
	– Mass media	provide information on the competitive advantages of enterprise	
	– State institutions	specifying information and preparing reports on inspections	
	– Public activity groups	consultation and participation in projects, coordination, compliance with environmental and social standards	
	– Local public	implementation of joint projects, consulting	

Middle office does not serve customers, but interacts with contractors. It encompasses set of all business processes, procedures, regulations to ensure the processes of preparation and decision-making of top office. Note, that according to different scientific approaches middle-office functions, which in the literature is also presented as the back office can be distributed among senior staff office and front office. Contact personnel of the front office, in addition to direct interaction with the client in the process of servicing, provides organization of work of service and support staff, registers and forms contractual relations and customer database. It should be noted that establishing of bilateral mutually beneficial relations with all contact audiences – business-consumers of logistics services, community organizations and individuals that are showing real interest of the company and may affect the achievement of it's marketing purposes is particularly important for effective marketing of logistics companies.

Interaction of enterprise with contact audiences should be based on the scheme, encouraging maximum cooperation of one contact audience and ensuring effectiveness of possible actions of other audiences. Since the action (or inaction) of the aggregate contact audiences can promote, or vice versa - prevent, operation of logistics company.

Conclusions and recommendations for further research. The study allows to emphasize the need and feasibility of multi-channel communication activities in logistics businesses, which should be based on achieving balance of usage of competency of personnel, which directly serving consumers and modern information channels that are within the scope of “digital marketing”.

The enterprise must generate an individual set of multi-channel communications depending on consumer profile, its possibilities of usage of information channels, preferences, trust, habits. Multi-channel communicational interaction contributes to alternativeness of a choice of channels of communication by consumer of logistics services, eliminating unnecessary links in the chain of creation of customer value and minimize the costs of purchase and allows effective interaction with the consumer, examining all dimensions of it's requests, responding quickly to them. The justification of methodological tools of efficiency of multi-channel marketing is a prospect for future scientific research study.

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