

РОЛЬ МАРКЕТИНГОВИХ ІННОВАЦІЙ У МАЛИХ І СЕРЕДНІХ ПІДПРИЄМСТВАХ

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Інновації відіграють важливу роль у розвитку підприємства. Згідно з загально-прийнятим поділом виділяють такі інновації: продуктові, процесні, організаційні та маркетингові. Найпопулярніші серед малих і середніх підприємств є продуктові інновації. Маркетинг інновацій висвітлюється через їх похідний характер по відношенню до інших видів інновацій.

Ключові слова: інновації, маркетинг інновацій, малі та середні підприємства, конкурентоспроможність підприємств.

THE ROLE OF MARKETING INNOVATIONS IN SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES

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Innovations play a major role in the development of enterprises. According to the generally accepted division innovations are divided into: product, process, organizational and marketing innovations. The most popular among small and medium-sized enterprises are product innovations. Marketing innovation are taken less frequently, due to their derivative nature with respect to other types of innovation.

Key words: innovation, marketing innovation, small and medium-sized enterprises, the competitiveness of enterprises.

Problem formulation. The importance of innovation for the development of small and medium-sized enterprises so far in subject literature has been discussed on several occasions, particularly in the context of its influence on the competitive position in the market. Hence, it is common belief that innovation plays a key role for the enterprise in the fight for the client [1, p.21]. This assumption has now become so popular that it can pass even as an accepted paradigm, the "correctness" of which is currently not subject to an in-depth review, becoming a starting point of many analyzes in the wider field of economic sciences (including the management studies discipline). Popularity of this assumption contributed to the treatment of innovation (in the literature often referred to as innovativity) [3, p 20] as a general factor which is not subject to division into components, which in practice leads to large distortions. It turns out that not all kinds of innovation are perceived to the same degree by the company as factors positive for their development. and consolidation of their market position. Moreover, a holistic approach to innovation blurs the differences in the level of involvement of the different "components" of business organizations, including the amount of work coming from the human factor, being the staff (research, marketing and sales departments) and management staff (managers) whose job is to create the right development strategy (including innovation strategy) for the future. The man is, after all, the primary and basic component of any organization affecting either directly (or indirectly) the formation of its value through knowledge. Thus, for the smooth functioning there is the need to draw attention to the "human" element and combine the optimal number of different types of innovation activities in order to "fix" the effects of undertaken innovations (mainly product) and, consequently, improve customer satisfaction [2].

Analysis of current research outputs and publications. Innovation as a whole is a very broad and capacious term, most common referring to the changes of a technological and technical nature (changes in

the products and methods of production), which in the literature is referred to usually as a narrow recognition of innovation and wide, where innovation means change in different areas of life involving the assimilation (implementation) of knowledge. The scope of accepted definitions usually depends on the area and the span of the carried out analysis. However, in economy (especially in management sciences) most often innovation is referred to its principal and the exact meaning (in the strict sense), meaning usually "novelty" in relation to the organization as a primary entity (participant) of innovation processes. Discussions on the concept of "innovation" are to the greatest extent related to its subjective character (ie, what it applies to and what it is connected with), what is the time of introduction of new products (eg, three years), and may it have only a single and unique character, which in practice means that imitation and copying are not perceived as innovative changes but imitation (however many definitions allow improvements) [4, p 104]. In objective terms innovation can concern: new products and services [5, p.646] facts, processes and phenomena of technical and social character (...) [6, p.11], thoughts, behaviors and things (...) [7, s.138], processes (ideas) aiming at the creation of an invention [8, p 17], idea, behavior or thing [9, p 16] or the function of possessed knowledge [10, p.48]. Uniqueness as a key feature of innovation is highlighted in such definitions as: the definition of E. Mansfield (innovation is the first application of the invention) [11, p 1], C. Freeman (innovation is the first commercial launch of a new product, process, system or device) [12, p 169] or S. Kasprzyk (innovation as a new, as of yet unknown way to meet new needs) [13, p 21]. On the other hand, among the supporters of including repeating of certain phenomena into innovation (lack of a single application character) one may find, for example R.A. Webber (innovation can mean the modification of products, processes (...) or technology) [14, 468] or J. Penc (it is the modification of processes, products, techniques and methods (...)) [15, p 143]. These definitions show the great variety of interpretations of innovation, where it includes almost all the possibilities: from ideas, concepts, things or behaviors (with separate and rather discontinuous nature – hence the unique and original character of these changes) [16, pp. 26] up to the perception of innovation as a process, future-oriented company growth-oriented strategy, or a function of available knowledge (having a continuous character and evenly distributed over time).

Article objectives. The purpose of the article is to answer a few questions based on own research.

Presentation of main materials. As previously noted, the analysis of the importance of innovation in the development of enterprises calls for the determination of its types and activities usually undertaken in its scope. The most "popular" division includes classification according to which innovation is divided into: product, process, organizational and marketing innovations. Distinguishing of such types of innovation was first made by JA Schumpeter, who is called, not without reason, "the father of innovation". This division, very traditional and now one of many approved in science functions today, being a node for numerous analyzes. Its fixation in the literature comes from a marked accentuation of differences in the sources and the end results of innovations implemented in organizations. An example of the former can be no doubt PF Drucker, who believes that the changes within the company come from external factors (mainly the market) and therefore it is necessary to observe the environment [17, p.41]. This environment determines the type of the change in the product, process, approach to marketing and the creation of new forms of distribution [18, p 45]. The rather exhaustive description of the above classification of innovation was made by J. Baruk [19, p. 107-108]:

- product innovation – base on development of a new product (or improving of existing ones), becoming the fastest means of generating revenue and increasing the company's competitiveness in the long term,
- process innovations – rely on the introduction of new manufacturing techniques and technologies (increasing usability and customer satisfaction) through increased automation, which helps to reduce costs and lower market prices,
- organizational innovations – are associated with qualitative and quantitative alterations influencing the functioning of the organization, including structural changes aimed at ensuring its greater efficiency,

- marketing innovations – related to the identification of new markets and providing better customer service. An important part of the identification process is the segmentation of markets, the aim of which is to determine the potential (and current) possibilities of selling products directly aimed at maximizing revenue. The task of marketing innovations is to use new solutions (for example they can be: new packaging, new forms of advertising, or new pricing strategies), which are used (among others, in separate segments) to encourage customers to purchase innovative products.

Research shows that in 2009-2011 the most often used of the above innovations in the total number of enterprises (including SMEs) are process and product innovations (respectively 12.4% and 11.2% in industrial and 9% and 6.3% of service companies). Much less important are the organizational innovations (8.3% in industrial and 9.1% in services) and marketing (7.9% in industrial enterprises and 7.8% in services) [20, p. 43-44]. In contrast, in the group of innovative companies the highest recorded share was for the process (88.5%), product (75.5%) and organizational (67.3%) implementations. The least important for entrepreneurs are marketing innovations, because only 56.3% of subjects made such implementations [21, p.30-38]. These data clearly illustrate the existence of a belief in organizations about the role that they play in creating and ensuring of competitive advantage. Giving less importance to new marketing solutions seems to be an erroneous reasoning in the long term. This in fact limits the effect of market "fixation" of new products, as innovative marketing can not only directly increase sales of new products (services), but also (with new techniques) ensure its high long term level by increased complexity and customer satisfaction. Making a list of areas in which the marketing innovations should be the soonest implemented most often mentioned are [22, p.4-5]:

- distribution – all respondents see the need for innovative changes, including 37% of those surveyed stating that this need is urgent and 52% that the need is high,
- promotion – all respondents see the need for innovative changes, including 33% stating that this need is urgent and 41% that the need is high,
- prices – where 7% of the respondents does not see the need to introduce innovative changes, 7% believe these changes are urgent, 22% believe that they are important and 41% give them medium importance,
- the design of products or services – as much as 41% does not feel any need to make any innovative changes (or grades them at a very low level), 11% believe the need for change to be an urgent need, and 26% grade this need on the average level.

In summary, the most desirable changes in marketing innovation (in the above tests) seem to be the following areas: distribution and promotion. They are even more important because of their impact on shaping of the image of the company, and thus the volume of sales and the penetration of new markets. These business objectives are realized by defining a new marketing strategy, significantly different from the current marketing objectives. It should be noted, however, that the marketing innovations fundamentally do not concern the change in the area of the product itself (use changes), but adaptations for example to the requirements of potential customers (introduction of the so-called expanded product) and actions aimed at the psychological effect through loyalty programs, reduced prices policies, the introduction of purchases financing mechanisms, etc. Among these examples one should not neglect the development of the Internet and new techniques of communication with potential buyers of goods and services, including new techniques for promotion and advertising (via the Internet, word of mouth, etc.) [23, pp. 273]. For the purposes of this study the following definition of a marketing innovation was adopted: it is every change (which is new to the company) in terms of marketing methods contributing directly or indirectly to better identification and meeting of customer needs, taking into account the improving of the image of the product (the company) and in the end leading to increase in sales and improving of the financial health of a business organization.

The purpose of this short paper is to analyze the area of assessing of the importance of marketing innovation among small and medium-sized enterprises in Poland on the basis of own research.

Marketing innovations among small and medium-sized enterprises – evaluation of use. These studies were carried out at the turn of 2011/2012 in five provinces in Poland (Mazowieckie, Łódź, Greater Poland, Silesia and Lesser Poland), in which the principal objective was to identify the innovation needs of small

and medium-sized enterprises (they were a continuation research from previous years). A number of tasks were isolated in this study, such as: identification of the conditions for the development of enterprises, the need for innovative solutions, identification of the existing potential and capacity for innovation, etc. From the point of view of this study, the collected data allowed to verify a few basic hypotheses:

1. The most common (compared with the data above) types of innovative implementations among innovative SMEs are still process innovations, and the least popular are marketing innovations, therefore marketing innovations do not play a significant role in the development of surveyed innovative enterprises.

2. The importance of marketing innovations (and thus their popularity) in the surveyed companies is directly dependent on the size and scale of enterprise and the implemented innovation.

3. The benefits of the implementation of marketing innovations are rather an indirect than direct influence on the development of the company

The obtained data allowed to negatively verify the first hypothesis. When comparing data from 2008 (Innovativeness Camerton) with data from own studies it is clear that still the most popular types of implementations are process innovations (Table 1).

Table 1

Most often implemented types of implemented innovative changes among small and medium-sized innovative companies in Poland (in %)

	Product innovations	Process innovations	Organisational innovations	Marketing innovations
Implemented innovative changes	76.22	74.52	24.14	47.06
Not implemented innovative changes	23.78	25.48	75.86	52.94

Source: own elaboration

However, the third place goes to marketing innovations, for implementation in this area has been undertaken by as many as 47.06% of the surveyed companies. Changing the position from fourth to third suggests the growing importance of marketing solutions among these organizations. This is probably due to the fact of the higher (more direct) impact of these changes on the client, which especially in the period of economic stagnation is more important in the fight for customers and creation of a competitive advantage.

Second hypothesis was verified positively (based on the data below.) There is a clear dependence of the importance of marketing innovation from enterprise size and scale of implemented innovations / Table 2 /.

Table 2

(w%) Relationship between marketing innovations and the enterprise size and scale of introduced innovations (in %)

	Company scale*	National scale **	Global scale ***
Micro enterprises	24.8	22.72	12.78
Small enterprises	20.48	15.64	10.48
Medium-sized enterprises	7.46	10.45	12.36

* Company scale means that the country's main competitors already have such solutions

** National scale means that innovation has solutions superior to ones offered by national competitors

*** Global scale means that innovation equals or exceeds the solutions offered in foreign markets

Source: own elaboration

For national scale innovations (meaning enterprise and/or national scale) there is a clear declining trend of the importance of marketing innovation with the scale and size of the company. The bigger the company is, the less importance is given to implementation of marketing solutions. This may be the

outcome of the fact that larger entities (medium-sized) have a stronger market position, which stems directly from their nature (size) and therefore do not have to permanently deploy new solutions in the field of marketing (focusing their attention on other solutions, such as process or product). The only exception is for "global scale", where the marketing changes become essential to medium-sized companies. Probably this is due to two facts: first, in the international markets increased economic power resulting from their size allows them to expand outside with their (innovative) products, and secondly it requires them to have strongly innovative solutions that allow them to "conquer" foreign markets.

Also, the third hypothesis was verified positively. A large majority (about 33% -2%) indicates the indirect benefits of marketing innovation (Table 3).

Table 3

The benefits of implementation of innovation (marketing) by enterprises

	Micro enterprises	Small enterprises	Medium-sized enterprises	Total
Indirect effects				
Increasing the range of products	29.34	27.86	43.56	33.34
Improving the quality of products	32.45	30.57	13.38	26.78
Increasing knowledge of the market	3.59	3.79	0.00	2.36
Direct effect				
Entry into new markets	11.83	24.78	10.45	15.66
Improving the financial situation	3.11	3.57	3.77	3.56
The increase in turnover	9.47	8.36	10.37	8.89

Source: own elaboration

Only about 15 – 9% of surveyed companies believe that marketing innovations directly affect the development of the company. The quite skeptical approach to this type of novelty may result from their large inertia and the need to spread out the effects over time. Undoubtedly, the fastest market effects can be achieved with regard to product innovation (in which the market receives an "immediately" finished product, preferably even tested earlier by customers in terms of its usefulness).. However, one should not forget that the implementation of new marketing solutions associating product novelties contributes to the growth of scale of the achieved by the organization market effects and their fixing for a longer period of time. So it is necessary, as noted earlier, to combine different types of innovative solutions with a view to improve customer satisfaction and provide a competitive advantage for small and medium-sized enterprises.

Conclusions and perspectives for further research. The above studies (albeit presented in fragments) allow to draw several important conclusions. First, the importance of marketing innovation for the development of small and medium-sized enterprises is still limited and undervalued by those entities. The reason for this is the large "spread" of effects resulting from them in time. Second, there is a clear relationship between the tendency to use this kind of solution and the size of the entities and innovative implementations scale. This relationship means a decrease of this tendency of larger companies and its growth in relation to smaller companies. The exception here, however, are innovations implemented in a global scale where size and the accompanying economic strength matter. In this case, the scene is dominated by larger companies (medium). Thirdly, the entities in most cases often indicate the indirect rather than direct benefits of the marketing novelties which is due to their inertial nature, and the market itself. However, combining both product solutions (instant) with marketing innovations can provide companies with a advantage sustainable in the long run.

The previous observations of the phenomenon of the development of innovative companies in Poland indicate a need for deeper research in this area. They should focus on the analysis of the causes of this development (or lack thereof), the created abilities and the need of innovative development as well as

tendencies associated with the process of opening a business on the environment, which may provide a boost to accelerate the fixing of innovation in the discussed sector of enterprises.

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