

## ДЖЕРЕЛА МАРКЕТИНГОВОЇ ІНФОРМАЦІЇ, ЩО ЇХ ВИКОРИСТОВУЮТЬ ПІДПРИЄМСТВА В СВІТЛІ РЕЗУЛЬТАТІВ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ – ПОРІВНЯЛЬНИЙ АНАЛІЗ

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Метою публікації є показати різноманіття значущості різних джерел маркетингової інформації в компаніях, що проводять різні види діяльності (виробництво, послуги і торгівлю) на польському ринку. Матеріал сформульовано за результатами досліджень, проведених кафедрою маркетингу Краківського економічного університету в 2013 році. Предметом дослідження було – обсяг і умови використання маркетингу компаніями в Польщі. Для всіх досліджуваних компаній обґрунтовано різні джерела інформації, власний досвід і інтуїція компанії переважають як найважливіші джерела інформації і не менш важливе значення для дослідження на замовлення мають спеціалізовані установи. Вид діяльності фірми не належить до диференціації джерел інформації, використовуваних компаніями. Компанії-виробники часто використовують готову інформацію з різних зовнішніх джерел. Сервісні компанії вважають за краще використовувати власні маркетингові дослідження, маркетингові дослідження на аутсорсинг у спеціалізованих установах, і вони також часто використовують власний досвід і інтуїцію. Торгові компанії часто використовують свої дані. Розмежування важливості використання інформаційних джерел компаніями в поперечному перерізі розглянуто як низький вид діяльності.

**Ключові слова:** маркетинг, маркетингова інформація, маркетингові джерела інформації, первинні джерела інформації, вторинні джерела інформації, внутрішні джерела інформації, зовнішні джерела інформації.

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## THE SOURCES OF MARKETING INFORMATION USED BY AN ENTERPRISE IN LIGHT OF RESULTS OF A RESEARCH – ANALYSIS COMPARATIVE

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The aim of the publication is to show the diversity of the significance of different sources of marketing information in companies conducting different types of activity (manufacturing, services and trade) on the Polish market. These are formulated on results of research conducted by the Marketing Department of Cracow University of Economics in 2013. The subject of the research was: “The scope and conditions of marketing use by companies in Poland”. For all researched companies validity of the various sources of information is the same. Company’s own experience and intuition prevail as the most important information sources and least important to the study commissioned specialized agencies. The type of company’s activity does not relate to differentiation of information sources used by companies. Manufacturing companies often use ready-made information from various external sources. Service companies prefer to use their own marketing research, market research outsourced to specialized agencies and they also often use their own experience and intuition. Trading

**companies often use their own data. Differentiation of the importance of the use of information sources by companies in cross-section of the type of activity is low.**

**Key words:** marketing, marketing information, marketing information sources, primary sources of information, secondary sources of information, internal sources of information, external sources of information.

**Statement of the problem.** In the conditions of the contemporary market economy, the success of an enterprise, which may be defined in a variety of ways, is largely dependent on the efficiency of using marketing in the management of a company. The efficiency and effectiveness of marketing decisions is mostly dependent on the ability to define, gain access to, evaluate and apply the potential sources of information. There are multiple sources of information, yet the role of each is different for the enterprises and it changes with time. The presented theses have been supported by the results of the research conducted by the faculty of the Institute of Marketing at Cracow University of Economics in 2013, focused on the scope and prerequisites for corporate application of marketing. The author of this paper was in charge of recognizing the role of marketing in the process of making marketing decisions by the enterprises. The sample included 442 enterprises employing over 50 staff. The enterprises were randomly selected among the companies currently operating on the Polish market. Within the surveyed enterprises, 37,1 % were engaged in manufacturing, 36,9 % in services, and 26,0 % in commerce.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.**

In modern scientific literature problem selection of sources of marketing information used by an enterprise in light of results of a research are highlighted. In particular, these are questions regarding the assessment of the level of conformity these sources to marketing goals.

**Goals of the article.** This paper aims to present the graded importance of multiple sources of acquiring information by the enterprises engaged in various types of business activity (manufacturing, services, and commerce) on the Polish market. The paper also discusses the frequency of use of identified sources of information, presenting the selected features of the enterprises and the characteristics of the markets they serve.

**The main material of research.** The main sources from which enterprises derive marketing information, and which were analyzed in the survey, include their own records, their own observations and experience, findings of specialized market research agencies, and secondary external sources. The importance of particular sources of information for various types of enterprises varies, as shown by tab. 1.

*Table 1*

**The frequency of selecting the importance of various sources of marketing information across various types of activity (expressed in %)**

Specification		The importance of the selected sources				
		Vital	Very important	Significant	Marginal	Unimportant
Enterprise own marketing research	W	16.9	29.7	28.7	10.3	14.4
	U	21.0	21.6	25.8	11.6	20.0
	H	20.8	29.2	23.9	9.2	16.9
Research commissioned to specialized agencies	W	2.2	10.2	15.0	22.6	50.0
	U	3.9	11.2	12.9	17.9	54.1
	H	1.6	15.1	14.3	21.4	47.6
Information provided by external sources	W	6.7	31.6	37.8	11.4	12.5
	U	6.4	31.0	39.0	11.8	11.8
	H	5.3	37.9	38.6	9.9	8.3
Enterprise own records	W	24.9	37.0	24.9	6.9	6.3
	U	20.7	43.9	22.2	5.3	7.9
	H	27.9	38.0	27.9	3.1	3.1
Enterprise own experience and intuition	W	39.1	45.7	11.2	1.0	3.0
	U	40.7	35.6	15.5	4.6	3.6
	H	38.8	43.4	16.2	0.8	0.8

*Note: W – manufacturing companies, U – service providers, H, commercial companies*

*Source: own work*

A scrutiny of the data listed in tab. 1 allows to observe certain regularities. Even though the importance of various sources of information varies, yet the same characteristics can be noticed among the enterprises engaged in various types of activity. The most frequently used items include enterprise own experience and intuition. Depending on the type of the conducted activity, those two sources have been described as vital and very important by 82 % to 85 % of enterprises (40 % considered it vital). Every twelfth service enterprise considered the foregoing sources marginal or without importance. The same opinion was held by every twenty fifth manufacturing enterprise and every sixty second commercial enterprise. Generally speaking, there are not many indications of attributing that source to the features of enterprises or their markets. Among the manufacturing enterprises, the indications to this source have been differentiated by the competitive structure of the market and the category of end consumers.

The enterprises operating on the dispersed markets are more likely to consider the above sources vital (by 6 p.p.), yet the enterprises serving entities financed from the state budget more frequently consider them vital (by 13 p.p.). None of the enterprises catering for individual customers considered those sources marginal or without any importance. For the service enterprises, the only feature bringing variety in the application of those sources is the intensity of competition on the market. The enterprises operating on weak competition markets are much less likely to consider those sources vital (by 25 p.p.) and more likely to consider them without any importance (by 18 p.p.). Enterprises operating on moderate competition markets are more likely to consider the sources vital (by 11 p.p.)

The importance of that source varies among commercial enterprises depending on the financial standing of a company, the dominating capital structure and owners' oversight. It is true that the companies with the dominant foreign capital and foreign oversight, or with mixed capital structure, are much less likely to consider that source of information vital (by 19 and 14 p.p. respectively). At the same time, none of them considers the source marginal or without any importance. Those companies which have both domestic capital and oversight are much more likely (by 7 p.p.) to indicate that source as vital.

Company's own records may be an important source of marketing information, and it is comparable for companies engaged in various types of activity. That particular source of information is considered vital or very important by 62 to 66 % of companies (every fourth manufacturing company and every fifth service company considers it vital). Generally speaking, there are no many differences in indications depending on the features of the companies and their markets. Among the manufacturing companies, the rank of that source of information is dependent only on the dynamics of the market. The companies operating on a dynamic market are more likely to consider that source of information vital (by 5 p.p.) Companies active on the declining markets are much less likely to consider it vital (by 15 p.p.), and more likely as marginal (by 21 p.p.) or without any importance (by 12 p.p.).

The frequency of indications of that source of information for companies depends on the dynamics of the market and the diversification of customers. The companies which operate on the dynamic markets are much less likely (by 6 p.p.) to show that source as vital. The companies operating on markets with a few groups of clients with diversified needs are less likely to consider that source vital (by 4 p.p.). The significance of the source for a commercial enterprise is dependent on the dynamics of the market and the diversity of customer needs. The enterprises operating on the declining markets are more likely (by 6 p.p.) to consider that source vital, while for the enterprises dealing with customers that need individual approach are more likely to indicate this source as vital (by 13 p.p.). In turn, enterprises dealing on the market with a few groups of customers which display specific needs, such indication is much less likely (by 9 p.p.). The enterprises operating on the markets with no distinctive diversification of customer needs indicate that source much less likely (by 3 p.p.).

Market research records are less frequently used as a source of information, even though the frequency of use of that source is similar for the enterprises engaged in various types of activity. Over 42–50 % of enterprises indicate that source as vital or very important (on average, every fifth commercial or service enterprise and every sixth manufacturing enterprise considers that source vital). Every seventh manufacturing company, every fifth service company and every sixth commercial company considers that source unimportant. Generally speaking, the differences in indications of that source within various features of enterprises and the markets they serve are negligible. The differences in choosing that source

depend on the variety of customer needs and market volatility. The enterprises that operate on the market with no distinctive differentiation of customer needs are much less likely (by 5 p.p.) to consider that source vital. Yet, they are more likely to consider it without importance (by 13 p.p.).

The enterprises operating on the market whose customers need an individual approach are much more likely to consider that source vital (by 5 p.p.). The enterprises operating on the market with volatile changes in customer preferences are much more likely to indicate that source as vital (by 10 p.p.), and also they are much less likely to consider that source having no importance (by 6 p.p.). The companies functioning on the market where customer expectations are negligible or non-existent are more likely to consider that source without importance (by 20 p.p.). They are much less likely to consider that source vital (by 8 p.p.). The enterprises functioning on the market with significant yet slow changes in customer preferences are less likely to consider that source vital (by 20 p.p.). Among the service companies, the importance of that source is determined by market volatility, the intensity of competition, the range of operation and the degree of diversity of customer needs. The companies functioning on the market where customer needs change fast are more likely to consider that source vital (by 6 p.p.), and less likely to consider it unimportant (by 6 p.p.). The enterprises operating on the market where customer needs are negligible or non-existent are less likely to consider that source vital (by 7 p.p.) and more likely to consider it unimportant (by 19 p.p.). The enterprises operating on the market with moderate competition are more likely to indicate that source vital (by 7 p.p.).

The companies operating on markets with weak competition are less likely to consider that source vital (by 7 p.p.) and more likely without importance (by 26 p.p.). The enterprises functioning on regional market are less likely to consider that source vital (by 7 p.p.) and also less likely to indicate it as having no importance (by 7 p.p.). The companies functioning on the market without a large diversity of customer needs are less likely to consider that source vital (by 3 p.p.) and more likely to indicate it as having no importance (by 14 p.p.). The enterprises dealing on the market which requires an individual approach to customers are more likely to consider that source vital (by 3 p.p.) and less likely to indicate it as having no importance (by 7 p.p.).

The frequency of reaching for that source of information by the commercial enterprises is determined by the volatility of the market, market dynamics, diversity of customer needs and the degree of adjustment to the contemporary market economy. The enterprises operating on the rising market are more likely to consider that source vital (by 5 p.p.) And less likely to indicate it as the one of no importance (4 p.p.). None of the enterprises operating on a declining market would consider that source vital. The companies functioning on the market with rapidly changing customer preferences are likely to indicate that source as vital (by 10 p.p.) and less likely to consider it as of no importance (by 8 p.p.). The companies operating on the market undergoing minor changes or none at all are less likely to indicate that source as vital (by 8 p.p.) and less likely to consider it of no importance (by 16 p.p.). The companies functioning on the market where an individual approach to customers is required are more likely to consider that source vital (by 11 p.p.) and less likely to indicate it as of no importance (by 6 p.p.).

The enterprises which consider their adjustment to the contemporary market economy above the industry average are more likely to indicate that source of information as vital (by 5 p.p.) and less likely to consider it unimportant (by 8 p.p.).

Marketing information derived from various external sources is definitely less likely to be applied, even though the frequency of its use is similar within companies engaged in various types of activity. Over 38–43 % of companies consider that source as vital or very important (every fifteenth manufacturing or service company, and every nineteenth commercial enterprise consider it vital). Every eighth manufacturing company, every fifth manufacturing or service company, and every twelfth commercial company consider that source unimportant. In general terms, the differences in the frequency of use of that source across the features of enterprises and their markets are negligible. Financial standing of a company is the only feature that diversifies the importance of that source amongst manufacturing companies. The

companies that consider their financial standing to be very good are more likely to indicate that source as vital (by 20 p.p.). Yet, they are more likely to consider it unimportant (by 3 p.p.).

None of the companies which consider their financial situation difficult describe that source as vital, and they are more likely to consider it unimportant (by 6 p.p.). The indications of importance of that source for service companies are dependent on the variety of customer needs, volatility of the market, and the financial standing. Companies operating on the markets where changes of customer preferences are negligible or non-existent are more likely to consider that source vital (by 5 p.p.) or even more likely to define them as unimportant (by 14 p.p.). Companies operating on the markets where customers' needs change quickly are less likely to consider that source vital (by 4 p.p.). In turn, the companies operating on the markets with little diversity of customer needs are more likely to consider that source unimportant (by 16 p.p.). Those functioning on the markets with a few groups of customers with clearly defined needs indicate that source as unimportant (by 8 p.p.).

The companies with a good financial standing are more likely to consider that source vital (by 4 p.p.), and less frequently unimportant (by 5 p.p.). None of the enterprises in a difficult financial situation has considered that source vital, and they are more likely to describe it as unimportant (by 8 p.p.). The financial standing is the only factor that decides about the importance of that source for commercial companies. Those companies which describe their financial situation as very good are more likely to consider that source vital (by 3 p.p.). The companies which have an average financial standing are more likely to consider that source unimportant (by 7 p.p.). The companies with a poor financial situation are less likely to describe that source as vital (by 14 p.p.), and they are more likely to consider it unimportant (by 12 p.p.).

The importance of the results of the research commissioned to specialized agencies is negligible. All types of enterprises have ranked the importance of that source in a similar way. Over 12–17 % of enterprises describe that source as vital or very important (every forty fifth manufacturing enterprise, every twenty sixth service enterprise, and every sixty third commercial enterprise consider it vital). That source proved to be unimportant for a half of manufacturing companies, over one half of service companies, and almost a half of commercial enterprises. In general terms, the differences of the importance of that source along the features of companies and the markets they serve are substantial. The importance of that source for the manufacturing companies is decided by six features; the category of the end user, the diversity of customer needs, the intensity of competition, competitiveness of the market structure, financial standing of companies, majority capital and owners' oversight. The importance of that source for service companies is dependent on the degree of adaption to the contemporary market economy, the category of served customers, majority capital, owners' oversight and market volatility. Amongst the commercial enterprises, the importance of that source is dependent on majority capital, owners' oversight and the financial standing<sup>1</sup>.

**Conclusions and recommendations for further research.** In summary of the presented information it is possible to formulate a few conclusions:

– The importance of particular sources of information is the same for all types of enterprises. Companies' own experience and intuition are the foremost, while the research commissioned to specialized agencies seems to be least important. It is intriguing to note that the importance of information furnished by the external sources is relatively low, for all types of companies. This may be attributable to the low awareness of the availability of such information, or insufficient instruments of searching for it;

– The differences in use of various types of information by the enterprises in various lines of business are negligible, and yet some regularity may be observed. The manufacturing companies are more likely (in comparison to other types of businesses) to use information provided by the external sources. The service companies are more likely to use their own marketing information; they are more likely to commission research to specialized market agencies as well as to use their own experience and intuition. The commercial companies are more likely to use their own records;

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<sup>1</sup> Due to the fact that the importance of that source is marginal, no detailed characteristics of its application have been provided.

– Within the manufacturing companies, there are eight discernible features differentiating the importance of particular sources of information. Most differences can be found in the use of information collected by the research commissioned to specialized agencies (six features of companies and their markets). Least differences could be found in the use of companies' own records and the information provided by the external sources. As far as the service companies are concerned, the importance of various sources of information is attributable to nine features of the companies and their markets. Most differences can be found within the use of companies' own research (six features of the companies and their markets). Least differences are discernible within the use of companies own records as well as their experience and intuition (two features each). Among the commercial enterprises, most differences were apparent in the importance attributable to companies own marketing information (four features). Least differences were found in the use of companies own experience and the application of information provided by various external sources (one feature each);

– Having analyzed jointly the indications of all types of companies about the importance of various sources of information it is clear that their importance is attributable to ten various features of companies and their markets. Most differences are attributable to the variety of customers' needs (seven cases), volatility of the market (five cases) and companies' financial standing (five cases). Least difference is attributable to the range of operation (one case) and the adjustment to the contemporary market economy (two cases). Among the service companies, variety of customers' needs is the most common reason for the differentiation of source importance (seven cases), market volatility (five cases). Least differentiation is attributable to the range of activity (one case).

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