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СОЦІАЛЬНІ МЕДІА ЯК ЕЛЕМЕНТ У КОМУНІКАЦІЙНОМУ ПРОЦЕСІ БРЕНДІВ

Середовище гіпермедіа виразно змінило сьогодні форму і характер маркетингової комунікації. Нові технології, основані на інформації, створюють і використовують цю інформацію, а також є основою створення характерного елемента сучасного, швидко зростаючого ринку. Ера технологій стала фактором розвитку сучасного маркетингу та його інструментів. Доступ до мережі Інтернет надав багато можливостей пошуку джерел інформації та обміну знаннями між людьми з різних частин світу. Соціальні медіа можуть стати привабливою альтернативою у реалізації комунікаційної стратегії. Ефективність зв'язку залежить від ринкової позиції і переговорної сили сучасних підприємств та їхніх брендів.

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SOCIAL MEDIA AS AN ELEMENT IN THE COMMUNICATION PROCESS OF BRANDS

The hypermedia environment definitely changed the form and nature of the marketing communication in recent times. New technologies, which are based on information, create and use this information and they form a characteristic element of modern, rapidly growing market. The era of technology has become a factor in the evolution of modern marketing and its tools. Access to the Internet has given many possibilities in the search for sources of information and the exchange of knowledge between people from different parts of the world. Social media can become an attractive alternative to the implemented communication strategy. Communication effectiveness depends on the market position and bargaining power of today's enterprises and their brands.
Key words: social media, brand, communication, marketing virtualisation.

The world of communication is constantly changing and one of its main catalysts is interaction. The concept of interactivity forces companies and their brand to verify all traditional forms of communication. It also assesses them and tries to adapt to the constantly new customer expectations [10]. Technological advances are probably ahead of our evolution, education and are possibly outdating basic principles of economics and capitalism. The economy is changing and as we remember our experiences, we try to forcibly integrate new phenomenon in familiar patterns. The profile and needs of the customer are also changing. The key to establishing a business transaction with a customer ceases to be a modern technology or even an innovative product or service but his preferences. Information Technology will change market space, in which the customer has become active, he has the knowledge and skills that enables him to get to the information. The customer expects more sophisticated sensations and emotions, which will become a part of building a relationship with him, as well as long-term bonds [1].

The aim of this article is to determine the possibilities of using social media in the process of brand communication. The first part of the article was devoted to a discussion of the concept of the Internet as a

medium, the concept of the brand and its image with particular emphasis on the emotions and memories that make the consumer choose specific brand. The second part deals with the analysis of research about cosmetics brands on social media.

Brand is the element that ensures the integrity of marketing communication of each company and gives the consistency of relations with its buyers. However, building a brand is not only supplying certain features to the product or running individual communication campaigns. The main aim of creating the brand and its value is closely linking a specific name and symbol of the product with a set of values that it has to represent and leave in the minds of customers. Therefore, the value is not determined only by the size of utilities that are guaranteed by the offered products, but also and perhaps largely, emotional benefits that translate into future decisions based on preferences for various goods and services. The appearance and functionality of the products are important but for the consumer there are only a small part of the real reasons for the purchase [17].

Digital media belongs to the Worldwide Web. Internet networks have now become very important tools in the process of creating the identity and image of an entire company and brands belonging to them. Internet advertising is the most modern medium. In 1969, work on the Internet started for the US military needs [11]. The most dynamic development of this medium began in the early 90s, when promotion of common utility of commercial WWW (World Wide Web) has been started. This created a network of interconnected information. In 1995, only 22 years ago, there were already 15 million Internet users worldwide. The Internet has grown so much that the number of its users exceeded 1 billion and is still growing rapidly [5]. This medium is primarily cheap, interactive, simple to use and operate – which distinguishes it from traditional media advertising [20].

The importance of social media is increasing both in the lives of consumers and in Internet itself. It has not always been so. The process of the growing the meaning of social media clearly accelerated since 2010. Although social media today are a type of network tools, similarly to them, there are also different with a longer history. Currently used set of network tools can be considered as Internet 3 due to the degree of advancement. Qualitative changes in the development of technological tools have a significant impact on the attitudes of consumers. This leads to necessity of changing the communication platforms by brands (eg. The transition from MySpace to Nasza Klasa to Facebook as the main social networking platform) but also to other planning activities, including the language we speak to the consumer. Each platform has a different character and consumers change preferences on the basis of the experience. You also have to remember that the segment of consumer technology, which includes social networking sites and mobile devices is the fashion market today. The new device models appear in sales every few months and rational factors are not the main motivation for purchase [1].

Brand is a word, but a word of a special kind – operating in the mind of human. This is the name, symbol, design or a combination of each, designed for identification of goods or services of seller or their groups and a way to distinguish them from the competition [12]. A brand shows a set of values, both functional and symbolic, which are important in consumers opinion. As a result, it can be seen as a world of ideas, emotions and inseparable values, which can be determined by each person in contact with the brand [3]. Therefore, the impact of the brand influences the purchasing behaviour of customers and more specifically, their purchasing decisions. People are buying these products, whose names are perpetuated in their consciousness best [12].

Brand not only allows the identification of the product, but is responsible for creating its image in the minds of consumers. It is a peculiar message, a promise that the brand is able to meet the expectations of its customers. As the experience and knowledge of the customer about the product and the brand rises, customer becomes more aware of how effectively the brand is able to satisfy his needs. It is an abstract concept created in the minds of consumers, based on associations and feelings related to the brand. They are a kind of beacons of further consumer behaviour, but also the communication strategy. It can be understood as a manifestation of selective attention, memorizing and perception. This means that the consumer chooses certain symbols and features under which builds this image in his consciousness. Consequently, the better the image of the brand, the greater the individual brand value for the customer [9]. From his point of view, it guarantees the scope and level of experience that the client desires and is willing to pay for. Brand value depends on the ability of pleasing the customers and is associated with satisfying primarily emotional values [16]. This often means creating a brand

that needs to be sensual, allowing a multi-level, multi-sensory dialogue with its customers. The first step towards this goal is the optimization of existing sensory stimuli and then complementing them with others. Every aspect of this process must be continually clarified.

All of the actions should be taken in a consistent manner and the originality and uniqueness of the brand must be carefully guarded [10]. This creates the opportunity to build relationships with customers in the sequential model based on appropriately selected stimuli for each of the three stages: establishing relationships, strengthening it and creating long-term relationships. The bond in this case is seen as the result of multiple contacts, interactions and represents the most advanced level of relationships. The resulting individual feelings associated with the brand, shape up the comprehensive way it is perceived by the customer. Therefore, brands can become "anchors" around which consumers build their lives. They consider them to be interesting when they can talk about themselves, when they reflect who they are or who they would like to be. They have to embody the dreams and aspirations [4]. Very often we choose these brands, which not only offer a product corresponding to our needs, but also allow us to feel better. As a result, we want brands that match our dream lifestyle [15].

However, the process of creating experiences and desired emotions related to it also require commitment from customers. Due to their expectations in this regard, we can distinguish: consumers requiring passive communication (they do not expect the organization to provide information), consumers with active state of the relationship (expect activities and support of relationship, but they do not have to be active), consumers requiring a unique relationship [18]. If they remain passive in the face of stimuli, which the brand directs at them, it is impossible to shape the experiences and memories that will become a prerequisite for re-contact with the brand. Every experience has its beginning in sensory perception. The impact on the senses is one of the components that make up the consumer experience [16]. Therefore, it is necessary, to find such values and tools of communication, which will be unique and will surprise through its distinctness and provide a certain uniqueness in customers mind.

Hypermedia space has now become the carrier of so many different kinds of stimuli that often leads to a growing chaos of information, weakening the effect of implemented communication process. There is a growing importance of integrating tools and ways of communication between businesses and customers. We are changing from independent communication planning of individual products, brands and events to greater attention to the coherence and harmony of communication, taking into account the coherence and synergy of offline and online spaces. The network brings us to a new dimension of buying and selling. In this perspective, the only market that exists is the one in the minds of customers with no objective products, but their perceptions. From the set of objectively existing products the customer sees only the ones that mean something to him (which he prefers) or provide him with other significant advantages [12]. Communication is therefore critical for any brand. It serves to familiarize with its buyers and create a bond between them and the brand. However, the communication of brands in the twenty-first century is done differently than before. The old models based on analytical approach and selecting one reasonable advantage for the customer are becoming less effective. Modern communication is a kind of art of seducing customers [14].

Social media are well suited for that, as they constitute of an ecosystem of many different channels, allowing for the emission of multimedia in various configurations. As a result, they lead to a fundamental change in the existing paradigm of brand communication process, imposing on it a new dimension of usability for the customer. Social media are usually defined as a group of applications based on Internet solutions and ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, enabling the creation and exchange of user-generated content, among which most often we mention: social networking sites, forums, blogs and vlogs, content communities, virtual world games and virtual world community. However, social media is primarily a channel of dialogue that can take many different forms, especially in the Internet world: from the videos, podcasts, photos and forum posts to tagging and adding people to lists of friends. All of the communication forms are specific to the sphere of social media and offer one or another opportunity for dialogue. These media provide a chance to engage and share experiences, which leads to conversation [2]. Increasingly, however, communication in cyberspace takes on the nature of the so-called multilogue and therefore intercommunication conducted simultaneously between the brand and its consumers and between consumers themselves. In this perspective, social media allow all parties for an equal dialogue, sharing

valuable or entertaining content, as well as providing assistance in various ways. It is important to be "humane" – so the unofficial profile of the brand in social media can be very attractive [13]. This potential can be used in the process of creating brand image, forming bonds and intensifying the sales, both through providing the information, particularly as an expert, as well as entertainment and the added value desired by the customer. As a result, the brands are beginning to no longer consider social media only in terms of instrumentation for reaching the customer, but as a qualitatively new market area, which is affected and who can shape according to their own expectations and aspirations.

The nature of social media allows for the evolution of the brand in the context of everyday life of its customers, so as to make it its integral part. On the other hand, the brand has to be some kind of adventure, a story that stirs excitement, engages the senses and imagination, thus including customers in their world. At the same time it is important to optimize the frequency and nature of experience created by the brand. This allows for the extraction of encoded in the clients mind memories to create new memories and desires that the brand will be able to satisfy. The customer needs something that, in his mind, will add to the uniqueness of the product, hence urging the purchase. Consumers are active and intelligent. They are looking for satisfaction not only in the way to satisfy immediate desires, but also their wider interests so they favour those brands that enrich their life chances [7]. Increasingly it is also talked about brands maturing into the presence in social media, which determines the nature and extent of their adaptation to the communication process. The analysis requires consideration of a number of factors, such as: the range and variety of used social media, their usefulness from the point of view of the customer, content and synergy in various media, frequency of messages and their character, the degree of awareness of the role of social media for the brand, of cause - effect relationship between the assessment of the effectiveness of activities in social media and the activities fulfilled through them. At the same time, it requires to take into account the e-customer profile and their preferences before the selection of specific social media in the process of considering various product categories (contextual communication), situational communication and existing ways of product placement in so called content [6].

Table 1

**Most often followed brands communication based
on social media platform Instagram**

Brand	Source	Number of followers of Instagram profile
Mac Cosmetics	https://www.instagram.com/maccosmetics/	13 878 254
Kylie Cosmetics	https://www.instagram.com/kyliecosmetics/	11 913 457
NYX Professional Makeup	https://www.instagram.com/nyxcosmetics/	10 371 696
Cosmetics	https://www.instagram.com/toofaced/	8 240 917
Tarte Cosmetics	https://www.instagram.com/tartecosmetics/	5 824 144
Urban Decay Cosmetics	https://www.instagram.com/urbandecaycosmetics/	7 735 243
Benefit	https://www.instagram.com/benefitcosmetics/	5 879 163
Maybelline New York Cosmetics	https://www.instagram.com/maybelline/	4 709 675
Smashbox Cosmetics	https://www.instagram.com/smashboxcosmetics/	2 781 694
e.l.f Cosmetics	https://www.instagram.com/elfcosmetics/	1 168 455

Source: Own elaboration with instagram.com data.

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Consumers value social media more nowadays because it makes them feel closer to the brand. They can view pictures that are published on the brands social media profiles, comment on the entries and check whether their idols use the brand as well. With the help of all the aspects the consumers can be in a live interaction with the brand, right now. The consumer can directly ask a brand for various information about the product, what works for mutual benefit of, both, the brand owner, as well as for the consumer. This makes the consumer feel special because such great brand has replied to the question and the company creates a friendly image and makes the feeling even more authentic.

Table 2

Most often followed brands communication based on social media platform Facebook

Brand	Source	Number of likes on fanpage
MAC Cosmetics	https://www.facebook.com/MACcosmetics/? fref=ts	16 855 669
Benefit	https://www.facebook.com/benefitcosmeticspoland/? fref=ts	5 824 770
Kylie Cosmetics	https://www.facebook.com/kyliecosmetics/? fref=ts	3 387 560
Urban Decay Cosmetics	https://www.facebook.com/urbandecayglobal/? fref=ts	3 375 029
Too Faced Cosmetics	https://www.facebook.com/toofaced/? fref=ts	2 202 246
e.l.f. Cosmetics	https://www.facebook.com/elfcosmetics/? fref=ts&__mref=message_bubble	1 842 562
Smashbox Cosmetics	https://www.facebook.com/SmashboxCosmetics/? fref=ts	1 774 149
NYX Professional Makeup	https://www.facebook.com/nyxcosmetics/? fref=ts	1 559 417
Tarte Cosmetics	https://www.facebook.com/tartecosmetics/? fref=ts	948 017
Maybelline NewYork Cosmetics	https://www.facebook.com/maybellinepolska/? fref=ts	318 020

Source: Own elaboration with facebook.com data.

The conducted analysis of the activity of cosmetic brands in social media confirmed the assumption that social networking profiles are most popular and are dominated by Facebook and Instagram.

In the tables above, you can see how many people follow a particular profile on Instagram or a fanpage in the case of Facebook. Social media are here on a winning position, since traditional media cannot see how many people are in the interaction with the brand at a glance. In social media every single person has the same access to such information. Social media also allow companies to investigate how many people are actually interested in the brand. The conducted analysis of the activity of cosmetic brands in social media confirmed the assumption that social networking profiles are most popular and are dominated by Facebook and Instagram.

Conclusions and further research. In the next few years, the brands will have to begin to stand out, as well as protect its uniqueness and put increasing emphasis on building its image. Traditional channels to promote the brand will still be used, but at the same time it will be necessary to refer to unconventional channels, which are already important today due to technological development [8]. It will be increasingly difficult to attract attention customer because the ether and cyberspace are so saturated with premises of marketing. For brands it means building the communication process based on cooperation and interaction

with the customer. If the brands want to be seen as the reliable and valuable in consumers view, they must ensure that the content delivered allows the implementation of needs in a multidimensional approach, referring largely to the emotional sphere. To enjoy the opinion of attractive brands, modern brands, they must strive to create a deep bond with the consumer. After all, a brand is not just an ordinary part of everyday reality, but the best friend [19].

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