

Marketing Digital Strategy for Promoting Brand of Global Retailer Achieving Sustainability

Olena Bilovodska^{1,*}, Olena Boienko², Volodymyr Omelchenko³, Kostynets Iuliia⁴, Olena Ievseitseva⁵ and Hanna Omelchenko⁶

¹*Department of International Economics and Marketing, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine*

²*Department of Marketing, Vasyl's Stus Donetsk National University, Ukraine*

³*Department of Management, Mariupol State University, Ukraine*

⁴*Department of Marketing, Economics, Management and Administration, National Academy of Management, Department, Ukraine*

⁵*Department of Marketing and Communication Design, Kyiv National University of Technologies and Design, Ukraine*

⁶*Economics and International Economic Relations Department, Mariupol State University, Ukraine*

Abstract: Development of the marketing strategy is a necessary process to promote the brand, create and implement the general company's program. And considering the speed of digital tools' development, the adaptation of the customer to certain approaches, there is a constant search for new effective strategies and methods of promotion. After all, those strategies and methods that were relevant 3-4 years ago (for example, mass-following, hashtags, etc.) are now not effective enough for global retailers especially. The purpose of this paper is to assess the current state implementation of global retailer's digital marketing strategy for its brand promotion. So using modern marketing methods of analysis, a marketing management issue was identified, namely the development of a digital strategy of global retailer, which must be solved to improve the business activities of the company and to achieve sustainability. The marketing activity of global retailer in case for H&M Ukraine was analyzed and the current state of implementation the H&M Ukraine's digital marketing strategy was assessed. The main digital tools used by the company were described and their performance evaluation was provided. Based on the results of analyze data, the recommendations for improving the digital marketing strategy of the company were formed.

Keywords: Promotion Strategy, Marketing, Brand, Global Retailer, Consumer, Website, Digital Tools.

1. INTRODUCTION

At the present stage of development there is a significant change in consciousness and lifestyle of people under the influence of informational and socio-cultural factors. The use of marketing tools such as regular advertising, sales promotion, etc. is no longer enough to promote a product or brand, because they do not affect the minds of consumers and usually do not bring the maximum effect. So, development of the marketing strategy is a necessary process to promote the brand, create and implement the general company's program. Its goal is the efficient allocation of resources to reach the target market.

This problem is the subject of research by many scientists and practitioners. Thus, J.-J. Lamben deepened and expanded certain issues of organizational strategy, developed by M. Mescon more than 30 years ago. In particular, J.-J. Lamben recommended starting to create the development of company's strategy on analyzing the portfolios of its activities

based on Boston Consulting Group matrix of markets typology. He supplemented this matrix with the trajectories of successful and unsuccessful companies. However, today a number of modern scientists and specialists dealing with the problem of forming the strategy, mostly follow the approach of positioning. So, D. Fayvishenko studied the "creation and implementation of the success principles of the brand positioning strategies". I. Butt, U. Kumar and V. Kumar investigated the factors influencing the development of positioning strategy, among them customer, competitor and innovation orientation, marketing capability, environmental dynamism, organizational performance, product life cycle and industry environment. J. Romppanen analysed and explored "the possibilities of the Segmentation, Targeting and Positioning (STP) marketing method and give the reader tools to use this marketing strategy".

In addition, researchers study and improve approaches to shaping different types of marketing strategies and for different companies. For example, D. Sokovkina explored the key aspects and methodological principles of forming an adaptive marketing strategy. I. Gryshchenko, O. Chubukova, O. Bilovodska, O. Gryshchenko and Yu. Melnyk proposed the approach "to evaluate the strategies of distribution man-

*Address correspondence to this author at Department of International Economics and Marketing, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine; E-mail: o.bilovodska@knu.ua

Table 1. Main stages of the Traditional Marketing Process with the Involvement of Digital Marketing Tools.

Stages	Marketing Tools (Including Digital Technologies)
1. Selection of the target segment	market research, internal sources of information, external sources of information
2. Consumer attraction	e-mail, SMS, advertising, SEM, SEO, media advertising, digital advertising, lead generation
3. Impact on the consumer	targeting, corporate website, widget advertising, content marketing, product placement, search engine optimization, social media promotion, podcasting, influence marketing, blogging, chatbots, website sponsorship, pay-per-click, referral programs, search marketing, retargeting
Consumer retention	online promotion strategy and loyalty program
5. Evaluation of the effectiveness of digital marketing strategy	web-analytics

Source: expanded by the authors (based on [17]).

agement for innovative products in logistics by the chemical companies according to the consumer's perspectives". O. Bilovodska, A. Kholostenko, Zh. Mandrychenko and O. Volokitenko evaluated "the business strategy of chemical companies according to the manufacturer's principles of innovation management". A. Kasych, P. Suler and Z. Rowland considered the theoretical, methodological, and analytical aspects of implementing a strategic approach to the management of corporate environmental responsibility in practice. O. Gryshchenko, V. Babenko, O. Bilovodska, T. Voronkova, I. Ponomarenko and Z. Shatskaya proposed "strategic marketing support according to sustainable development for green tourism business". L. Malyarets, O. Iastremska, I. Hershchenko, O. Iastremska and V. Babenko suggested "an analytical approach to construct partial criteria in a multi-objective optimization problem in economics as stochastic dependencies of development components on indicators in the form of latent factors, that should be marked by factor analysis". It is recommended to use as an information basis for the implementation of strategic enterprise's management.

Also, many scientists investigated the implementation of digital tools into the business process. O.V. Prokopenko, V.V. Bozhkova and Ya.S. Romanyuk determined the role of Internet platforms in the conditions of a new logistic system and carried out the comparative analysis of modern Internet platforms usage. V. Kondarevych, K. Andriushchenko, N. Pokotytska, G. Ortina, O. Zborovska and L. Budnyak studied the basis, tasks and structural elements of digital transformation in the enterprise. V. Vovk, Y. Zhezherun, O. Bilovodska, V. Babenko and A. Biriukova analyzed the using of the latest technology to carry out financial transactions the process of business digitalization. A. Kasych, Y. Yakovenko, and I. Tarasenko explored the essence of digital tools as IoT, monitoring system, ERP, predictive modelling and services available to businesses as well. O. Prokopenko, L. Shmorgun, V. Kushniruk, M. Prokopenko, M. Slatvinska and L. Huliaieva investigated "the possibility of digital technology to improve the efficiency of business processes". The authors propose the toolkit for quickly adapting to the conditions of the digital economy and improving customer experience. However, due to the significant development more research of digital communications, creation of effective marketing strategies and its evaluation for promoting the company's brand is needed. So, the purpose of this paper is

to access the current state implementation of global retailer's digital marketing strategy for its brand promotion.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The methodological basis of the study is a set of scientific techniques and methods of scientific knowledge, including formal-logical method and comparative analysis, decomposition, structural logical approach.

The evaluation of the marketing strategy is based on the approach presented by O. Romanenko. This researcher determines the main stages of the traditional marketing process with the involvement of digital marketing tools (Table 1):

So we have chosen H&M Hennes & Mauritz AB (H&M) as an object of the research the features of each point of planning and evaluation of marketing activities in the digital environment. This company is a Swedish brand of clothing and cosmetics, the distinguishing feature of which is fashionable and high-quality clothing at affordable prices. Its headquarters is located in Stockholm.

In 2020, many stores faced difficulties due to the pandemic. To overcome the negative consequences, a digital marketing strategy came to the fore.

H&M is in 71 markets worldwide, but online stores are represented in only 47 of them, four of which were added in 2018. H&M's online sales increased by 30% in 2019 due to the integration strategy of the digital marketing strategy. H&M's strategy was focused on offline stores, and this is understandable given the brand's success. However, the focus on offline sales has become a key negative factor that has prevented from seeing the potential of e-commerce. H&M only started selling items online in 2010, ten years after ASOS.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Selection of the Target Segment

By identifying and focusing on target customer groups in the digital environment, a company can better meet the needs of its priority customers and strengthen its market position. The concentration allows the organization to significantly increase the efficiency of internal and external resources (for more details see).

Companies actively use the capabilities of the Internet, in particular social networks, to identify the target segment. With their help it becomes convenient to analyze consumer preferences, tastes, frequent inquiries about certain products, places of purchase and, thus, to identify among the market the segment on which the company would be more appropriate to focus its attention and work further with this segment.

Also, companies producing “fast fashion” clothes often focus on target segments of the nearest competitors. In this case, the formats of competitors’ outlets, their representation in social networks, the availability and characteristics of websites, content created for the audience, etc. are analyzed.

The company’s website is a place where a significant part of the target audience is concentrated and where the target con-

sumer decides to buy the product online or in the store, so it is worth paying attention to its convenience and functionality. A resource such as Similar Web helps to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of the company’s websites and its competitors, as well as the sources of traffic of target consumers to further effectively work with them. Using the electronic resource given in the example, a table with the percentage of traffic, advantages and disadvantages of the considered company and its main competitors in the market was compiled (Table 2, Table 3).

The target audience of the analyzed H&M: H&M brand clothing is positioned primarily as fashionable and inexpensive. The main buyer of the brand is young people who want to get stylish clothes for a small price.

Table 3. Competitor Advantages and Disadvantages the Company’s Websites (Compiled by the Authors).

Website	Competitor Advantages	Competitor Disadvantages
hm.com.ua	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The loyalty program is established 2. Ability to online identify all available offline points within the country and city 3. A wide range of goods 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Relatively worse quality of goods compared to competitors 2. 90% of the main page is not translated into Ukrainian even after choosing this language 3. Lack of convenient navigation on the website by product categories
stradivarius.com	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High quality goods 2. Own mobile application 3. Good design of the website and application 4. Adaptation of the website for people with sensory disabilities 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of delivery 2. Narrower product range - absence of men's clothing line
reserved.com	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High activity in social networks 2. Relatively low prices 3. Wide range of goods 4. Good delivery of goods 5. Convenient website navigation 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Absence of mobile application 2. Relatively worse quality of goods
pullandbear.com	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Availability of a mobile application 2. Active social position 3. Convenient navigation 4. Ability to view the product at 360° 5. Adaptation of the website for people with sensory defects 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inconsistency of the range of accessories on the website and in stores
bershka.com	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Own mobile application 2. Relatively frequent updates of collections 3. Active social position 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Absence of a website for the Ukrainian market 2. Relatively worse quality of goods 3. Products quickly go out of style

3.2. Interaction with Consumers

3.2.1. Consumer Attraction

Attracting the consumer through the implementation of the strategy of promoting the company's products on the Internet in the information society when using the digital marketing system can be carried out on the basis of the following strategies (digital marketing): “Advertising platforms testing strategy”; “Traffic promotion strategy”; “Enterprise image

management strategy”; “Targeting strategy”; “Proactive promotion strategy”.

H&M uses an “Enterprise image management strategy” and “Traffic promotion strategy” (when the number of landing pages in the search engines index and active ranking places in the search engine index is increased in order to increase the traffic of the website, at the same time the information must match the consumers' search queries as much as possible). The following two approaches are used to manage the

image of the company. First, promotion of information search queries, products of competitors, competitive brands, activates the impact on potential consumers who are consumers of competitors' businesses. Second, the increase in citations on social networks. Employees of the marketing department must create and increase a positive information impact on the target segment of the Internet resource, react, respond and eliminate the negative reaction, because existing users independently distribute advertising information. The effectiveness of an advertising campaign depends on the quantity and quality of advertising content. All this will affect the positive reaction of existing and potential users of the company website and will stimulate them to carry out certain commercial actions.

H&M uses media and banner advertising, SEO (search engine optimization), SMM (social media marketing), SMO (social media optimization) to attract consumers.

In terms of SEO, H&M's strategy in this regard has not existed for a long time, which has affected its effectiveness in search engines.

No online store can afford to ignore search traffic. A good search ranking directs cheap traffic to the website and is a valuable channel to attract customers.

The first website the company launched used Flash (Flash technology from Macromedia, one of the tools for creating animation on the Internet), which meant that Google could not index huge parts of the website.

After that, the company improved its search performance thanks to a redesigned website, but then experienced a huge drop in search rankings due to a change in website architecture and the transition to a new host name.

As a result, the number of H&M pages on Google's first page dropped from 829 to 181, which meant a huge loss of search visibility.

In the figure above, one can see that H&M was able to recover from early SEO mistakes. Since then, customer engagement has grown, but this lack of SEO has cost H&M dearly in terms of lost traffic and potential sales over the past eight years.

H&M's promotion strategy focused on outlets, which is understandable given the brand's success. However, this trick meant that H&M worked too slowly because it did not use the potential of e-commerce.

As noted, H&M began selling online only in 2010, ten years after ASOS. Websites and social networks were also poorly designed, with many shortcomings in use, which made it difficult to attract sales from the website and reduced involvement in social networks. It has since improved, but the H&M website was imperfect in the first years after launch. Even now, the website in some countries is either completely absent or inconvenient to use (as a website for Ukraine).

The company is constantly improving its image, becoming more environmentally friendly, for example, by accepting clothes for recycling, giving a 10% discount in the process. The company also quickly resolves scandals involving it. For example, in early January, a scandal involving a Swedish mass market spread on the Internet. There was a photo of a

colored boy in a hoodie with the print "Coolest monkey in the jungle" in the lookbook of the new children's collection. This incident did not leave the r'n'b musician The Weekend indifferent, who in 2016 began collaborating and released several collaborations with the brand. Representatives of the brand hurried to remove the hoodie from the website and made an official apology.

3.2.2. Impact on the Consumer

The main influence of H&M is through targeted advertising on social networks, retargeting (advertising aimed at customers who have already visited the website / made a purchase, etc.), as well as through search engine optimization (discussed in the previous paragraph), blogging (in particular, in Instagram) and collaboration with famous brands or celebrities. Let's focus on the last point. For 15 years, the Swedish retailer and one of the largest giants in the field of fashion H&M has been collaborating with the most famous designers in the industry, thus influencing consumers and attracting them. The main factor in the success of H&M's cooperation with other brands is that the company creates conditions under which luxury clothing becomes available for purchase at mass market prices. All collaborations are actively advertised on social networks and are widely publicized, because brands are world-famous, so H&M has a significant impact on the consumer.

The collaborations began with the brand's first partner, fashion designer Karl Lagerfeld, in 2004. Karl Lagerfeld became the first designer to work with H&M. The designer T-shirts, shirts, jeans and rhinestones jackets presented in the collection were sold out in just one hour. However, Lagerfeld himself was dissatisfied with the fact that his clothes could be purchased by anyone.

All H&M collaborations: Karl Lagerfeld x H&M, Stella McCartney x H&M, Viktor & Rolf x H&M, Roberto Cavalli x H&M, COMME des GARÇONS x H&M, Jimmy Choo x H&M, Matthew Williamson x H&M, Sonia Rykiel x H&M, Lanvin x H&M, Versace x H&M, Marni x H&M, Maison Martin Margiela x H&M, Isabel Marant x H&M, Alexander Wang x H&M, Balmain x H&M, Kenzo x H&M, Erdem x H&M, Moschino x H&M, Giambattista Valli x H&M, Simone Rocha x H&M.

In 2021, H&M announced the release of a new design collaboration - this time with Simone Rocha. The collection will include women's, men's and even children's items, as well as lip balm and blush. Sales of the collaboration started on March 11 this year.

3.2.3. Consumer Retention

Consumer retention is carried out through the implementation of an online communication strategy (described earlier) and the development of loyalty programs.

As mentioned earlier, the company cares about the environment, so it has created a loyalty program, members of which receive Conscious points for environmental choice. By making an environmentally friendly choice (for example, handing over unnecessary clothes in H&M stores, giving up packages at the checkout or buying Conscious goods), customers receive Conscious points, which are converted into

 Facebook Pages	28
 Twitter Handles	21
 Instagram Accounts	1
 YouTube Channels	1
 LinkedIn Accounts	1

Fig. (1). Representation of the brand in social networks (number of pages).

bonuses that can be used on the next purchase. Therefore, consumers are beginning to pay more attention to Conscious labels and make environmental choices. So, package refusal at checkout: 500 Conscious points. Delivery of unnecessary clothes in stores: electronic voucher for a 10% discount on 1 item and 1000 Conscious points. Purchase of Conscious goods: 1

UAH 1 = 1 point.

Thus, the customer loyalty program is based on common values. The company understands that the buyer can choose a certain company or brand because they carry values that are clear and close to the consumer. This is how H&M cares about the environment.

Advantages of the loyalty program:

- a positive image is formed in the company;
- customer trust increases;
- disadvantages of the loyalty program;
- such loyalty program is not intended for the masses;
- it is necessary to adhere to the stated principles so as not to distrust customers.

3.3. Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Digital Marketing Strategy

The company can evaluate the performance online with the help of financial results, which are not publicly available. Over the past few years, fashion retailer H&M has slowed down in terms of market reach. H&M plans to increase online sales due to the coronavirus pandemic, while closing 250 stationary stores worldwide.

The retailer closed about 140 stores in 2018, following poor results in 2017, and revised its plans to open stores last year from 175 worldwide to 130.

H&M is still expanding its physical presence, but has begun to move away from more than a decade of rapid growth.

The threat from competing retailers, both online and offline, is partly responsible for changing H&M's strategy.

Here are some data to more clearly assess the effectiveness of marketing activities of the company [23]:

1. H&M Group's net sales for the first quarter amounted to SEK 40,060 million (54,948). Net sales decreased by 21%. The reason was the second wave of the pandemic wide restrictions.
2. About 1,800 stores were temporarily closed, or about 36 percent of the group's total stores.
3. Online sales continued to grow.
4. Gross profit amounted to SEK 19,057 million (28,034). This corresponds to a gross margin of 47.6%.
5. Profit on financial items amounted to SEK -1389 million.
6. Cash flow from operating activities amounted to SEK 5936 million (6837).
7. Sales increased by 55% in local currencies for the period 1 - March 28, 2021 compared to the same period in 2020.
8. H&M's customer loyalty program currently has more than 120 million members in 26 markets.
9. H&M members can now earn points for more informed choices, such as bringing old clothes to collect H&M clothing, choosing climatic delivery options, bringing their own bag when buying and choosing products made from more durable materials.
10. In March, H&M was launched online in Qatar through a franchise, and H&M was also launched on the Zalora e-commerce platform in Indonesia. In April, the launch of H&M in Zalora will be extended to the Philippines, Malaysia and Singapore.

Regarding the Ukrainian market, H&M is actively represented on social networks, including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram (Fig. 1). They also have different profiles, depending on the geographical location. H&M's social media campaigns are attracting a lot of interest. The "Rewear It" campaign, which they conducted in connection

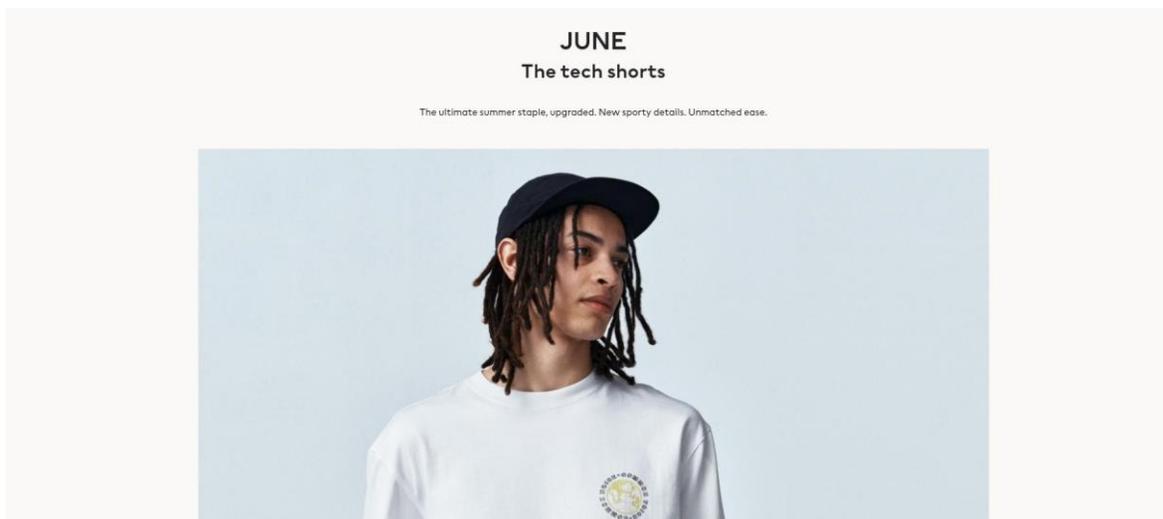


Fig. (2). Example of the interface of the Ukrainian website of the company.

with the World Recycling Week with the participation of M.I.A, encouraged their followers to recycle. Take a closer look at the results of their work on social media to discover strategies that encourage engagement (Unmetric Analyze tracks more than 100,000 brands. It currently tracks 52 H&M social media profiles):

Consumer experience needs some improvement. To be competitive on the Internet, H&M needs to increase the convenience and functionality of its website (Fig. 2). This is especially important given that the target H&M market is people under 25, who active users of Internet resources.

For example, going to the page of the summer collection, one expects to see a catalog of products that is easy to flip through, but the website allows to see only individual photos in large format. There are other issues. For example, the information on the pages may not be enough.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the analysis using modern marketing methods of analysis, a marketing management issue was identified, namely the development of a digital strategy of H&M, which must be solved to improve the business activities of the company. The marketing activity of H&M Ukraine, in particular in the clothing market, was analyzed, and the current state of implementation of H&M Ukraine's digital marketing strategy was assessed. The main digital tools used by the company were described and their performance evaluation was provided.

Over the past few years, H&M has managed to increase its online sales, but so have many online stores, as more and more people buy online.

Based on the above data, the recommendations for improving the digital marketing strategy of the company were formed:

1. Correct mistakes in terms of user experience with the company website and SEO, so that H&M can reach its full potential online. After all, many poten-

tial sales were lost due to poor SEO strategy, website design errors and poor delivery conditions.

2. Make delivery and ordering possible through the store's website.
3. Increase the amount of organic traffic to the website (because the level of paid traffic exceeds 95%).
4. Maintain the image of a company that cares about the environment, improve the loyalty program by opening a consumer club of the company and applying a bonus loyalty program.

DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no any known financial or non-financial competing interests in any material discussed in this paper.

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