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FEATURES OF THE MARKETING MIX IN RETAIL

ОСОБЕННОСТИ КОМПЛЕКСА МАРКЕТИНГА В РОЗНИЧНОЙ ТОРГОВЛЕ

Zhuchkevich O.

Vitebsk State Technological University, Belarus

Жучкевич О.Н.

Витебский государственный технологический университет, Республика Беларусь

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Abstract. The approaches to the concept of "marketing mix" and its importance for business are defined. The main retail trends in Belarus and the global market are considered. The composition, essence and specificity of the use of marketing tools in retail are revealed.

Аннотация. Определены подходы к понятию «комплекс маркетинга» и его значение для бизнеса. Рассмотрены основные тенденции розничной торговли в Беларуси и на мировом рынке. Раскрыты состав, сущность и специфика использования инструментов маркетинга в торговле.

The marketing mix is a key concept in both marketing theory and practical marketing activities. There are several approaches to determining its essence:

- the marketing mix is a set of marketing tools to achieve marketing goals;
- the marketing mix is a marketing concept that the company uses to justify the directions of interaction with the consumer;
 - the marketing mix is the variables that must be controlled by marketing;
- the marketing mix is the concept of promoting a company and products using various marketing models.

In practical activities the use of elements of the marketing mix allows one to influence demand, manage the sales process and ensure the achievement of the organization's goals in the sales of goods and services. On the one hand, this helps to increase the efficiency of the organization, and on the other hand, it helps to satisfy the needs of customers.

Traditionally, the marketing mix consists of four elements: product, price, place and promotion. However, depending on the scope of use, category of customers, tasks and goals, the marketing complex requires transformations. They are quite significant in the retail. This is due to the place that retail occupies today in the distribution system of goods. In 2022, the global retail market generated sales of over 27 trillion U.S. dollars, with a forecast to reach over 30 trillion US dollars in 2024 [1].

In Belarus, as of October 1, 2023 the number of stores of various formats reached 128 thousand. At the same time, the retail trade area increased by 1%, exceeding 7 million 270 thousand square meters. Thus, the provision of the population with retail space in the country reached a level of almost 860 square meters, and in Minsk it exceeded the figure of 1,000 square meters per 1,000 residents [2].

The specifics of marketing in retail are also related to the fact that modern retail is omnichannel, when along with traditional forms and methods of sales, new formats, new communications and technologies are becoming widespread. Omnichannel in retail is continuous communication with the client through the integration of disparate offline and online points of contact with the buyer into a single system for making a purchase.

In addition, a significant factor in retail is the high level of competition. So, the 17 largest chains in Belarus account for 52 % of the country's retail turnover

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of food products, while in many European countries 3–5 chains account for 70–95 % of the retail food market [3].

Therefore, a well-designed marketing mix is a must in today's highly competitive retail industry. The following should be considered as elements of the marketing mix in retail: product; price; promotion; place; process; personnel; physical evidence.

The product as a fundamental element of the marketing mix has significant differences in retail. More important is not the product itself, but the services for its presentation, since it is the service that should make the purchase of the product as easy and pleasant as possible.

Price as an element of the marketing mix involves not only the choice of pricing method and justification of the price level in the store, but also the optimization of non-price costs of consumers – travel time, waiting in line, emotional costs, etc. At the same time, such a concept as mutually beneficial long-term relationships, which often directly depend on the pricing system, do not matter in retail.

The components of promotion in trade marketing traditionally include advertising activities, sales promotion, public relations, and personal sales. However, the goals of ensuring promotion are somewhat different compared to industrial enterprises. As a rule, this is the implementation of unplanned and impulsive purchases, increasing the frequency of purchases, increasing the volume of a one-time purchase, ensuring its complexity, and others.

The most important location (place) factors for retail are: attractiveness of the region, market saturation radius of the trade area, intensity of human and transport flows, transport infrastructure, presence of competitors, layout of the sales area, size of the sales area. Merchandising plays a significant role in this, allowing retail sales to be stimulated by attracting the attention of customers to certain brands or product groups at points of sale without the active participation of sales personnel.

The purpose of such an element of the marketing mix as a process is to form such conditions for selling goods that are comfortable for the customers and effective for the organization. This is facilitated by the sales procedure, including the introduction of modern services, the development of standards and rules for the provision of services, the level of personnel qualifications, as well as the efficiency of the placement and display of goods.

Physical evidence emphasizes the special importance of the surrounding environment in the process of providing services, namely: type of the retail equipment, music, storage rooms, children's rooms and so on.

In modern business, the human factor is still relevant when selling goods. We are talking about those specialists who interact with customers when selling goods and services. This is most clearly manifested in retail, so people are considered as a marketing mix tool. In this case, the employee's qualifications, appearance, knowledge of consumer psychology and behavior are important.

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Thus, the marketing mix is a comprehensive tool that helps companies analyze and adjust their strategies to achieve maximum efficiency in the market. Inclusion of additional components along with the traditional 4P model allows for improved interaction with customers at all stages of purchase, which ultimately leads to increased commercial performance, increases the level of competitiveness of the organization, and ensures faster adaptation to changes in the market.

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