

CONTEMPORARY TRENDS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MARKETING PROMOTION TECHNOLOGIES

TENDINȚE CONTEMPORANE ÎN DEZVOLTAREA TEHNOLOGIILOR DE PROMOVARE ÎN MARKETING

Boris CORETCHI, ORCID: 0000-0001-8841-4838

*State University of Moldova
Chisinau, Republic of Moldova*

Alexandr CEAIKOVSKII, ORCID: 0000-0003-2233-1225

*State University of Moldova
Chisinau, Republic of Moldova*

CZU: 339.138:004

e-mail: boris.coretchi@usm.md

e-mail: alexandr.ceaikovskii@usm.md

Over the past few years, there has been an intense growth in internet commerce and the introduction of information technology into all areas of human activity. More and more companies are trying to bring their business online. To accomplish these tasks, traditional marketing, phone calls and face-to-face meetings are no longer enough. Every company is required to develop tools that can be implemented into the online environment. The push that has forced companies into the internet format has spawned in itself a new trend in marketing – e-marketing.

Keywords: *internet, online, marketing, targeting, digital marketing.*

INTRODUCTION

Most important reasons why e– marketing is currently at the center of attention for companies of all sizes representing all spheres of activity are the following:

1. The „migration” of consumers to digital channels;
2. The possibility of targeting;
3. The ability to collect and process vast amounts of information about consumers and, based on this, offer them proposals that are fully adapted to their tastes and needs.

When it comes to the „migration” of consumers to digital channels, it is certainly incorrect to say that the era of „traditional” (TV, print, and outdoor) advertising has ended. For instance, print advertising remains the main means of communication for a significant portion (56%) of luxury brands. Nonetheless, the trends are quite clear – the consumer spends more and more time in the digital environment.

THE MATERIALS AND METHODS

A diverse range of materials and methods was employed to conduct this study and present relevant results and conclusions, encompassing statistical data, previous studies, methods of analysis and synthesis, as well as comparative methods, among others.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Research conducted by Nielsen revealed that on average, a U.S. citizen over the age of 18 spent over 11 hours a day in any electronic environment or with an electronic device (researchers included television, radio, the Internet, smartphones, gaming consoles, and other devices). Of course, this does not always involve complete immersion; often electronic devices are simply on while a person is engaged in some activity. However, considering the modern pace of life, 11 hours – even if not entirely immersed – in an electronic environment is a gigantic figure.

Consumers are „plugged in” to the digital environment constantly, even while in motion: despite all prohibitions and restrictions, approximately 9% of all people driving a car use a mobile phone (talking or texting) at any given moment. Obviously, the proportion of passengers using public transportation is even higher. And if we consider the realistic prospect of the emergence of driverless cars in the near future, it is possible that the era of outdoor advertising is indeed drawing to a close: drivers and passengers will be equally immersed in the electronic environment and are unlikely to pay attention to billboards. Considering companies such as Tesla, Apple, and Google actively participating in the development of autonomous transportation, the discussion should not be about the project’s realism, but rather its timeline for realization.

Analyzing the statistics of online commerce in Moldova for the year 2022, it is noteworthy that clothing and accessories, services, and cosmetics were the most sought – after products.

The print circulation and internet audit bureau published a study of the Moldovan internet space in 2022. According to the presented data, Moldnet accounted for 1.13 million users who accessed it from desktop computers and 1.5 million from mobile phones. In the former case, 53% of visitors were female; in the latter, 52%.

In terms of age, 41% of all visitors were young people aged 15 to 30. 37% represented the age group of 31 to 50, and 22% were older.

Regarding income: 4% earn over 15,000 lei per month, of which 58% are men and 42% are women. 13% of users earn between 8,000 and 15,000, while 28% earn between 4,000 and 8,000. The majority (55%) have incomes of less than 4,000 lei per month per family member.

A third of visitors hold higher education degrees (among them, 58% are women). The same number of people graduated from secondary and vocational schools, while another 34% have primary education or are still studying.

By occupation, most internet visitors – 19% – are students/schoolchildren. They are followed by specialists and chief specialists (14%). In third place are retirees (9%), along with small business owners and freelancers. 8% are engineering and technical workers. 59% of visitors (668.000) are from the Chisinau region, with 327.000 from the city itself. 25% (284.000) represent the North with its center in Balti, and 16% (180.000) are from the South, including the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia.

In the past year, Moldovan online commerce registered 682.000 online shoppers from desktops and laptops, of which 55% were women and 45% were men.

The most popular items that people plan to purchase in the next 12 months (based on search engine statistics) include: clothing and accessories; services; cosmetics and beauty care products; smartphones and other gadgets; books, films, music; tourism services and bookings; software; cinema and theater tickets; home appliances; computers, etc.

Presently, the popularity of using e-marketing tools is growing increasingly. Every year brings new directions, changing clients' attitudes towards different platforms. Therefore, the task of each company is constant monitoring of trends and the preferences of its customers.

The most popular directions in e-marketing include:

1. Using various platforms

By being able to analyze which platform is currently at the top, companies will find it easier to establish communication with their customers. This knowledge will help them understand which social network their clients spend most of their time on.

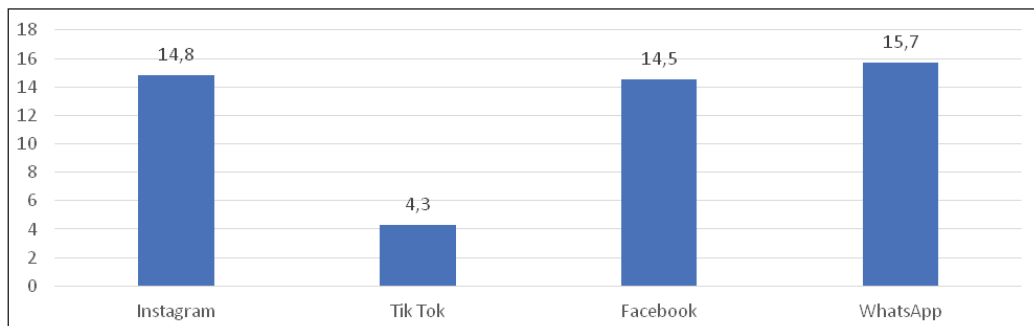


Fig. 1. Social Media Reach for the year 2022

Source: [4]

Analyzing global data among applications popular with customers, we observe that WhatsApp holds the top spot (15.7%). Instagram is in second place (14.8%). Facebook (14.5%) and TikTok ranks last (4.3%). However, it is important to note that TikTok has gained momentum in popularity over the past couple of months, with a 71% increase in reach.

When it comes to download numbers, the rankings are as follows:

First place: TikTok;

Second place: Instagram;

Third place: Facebook;

Fourth place: WhatsApp [2].

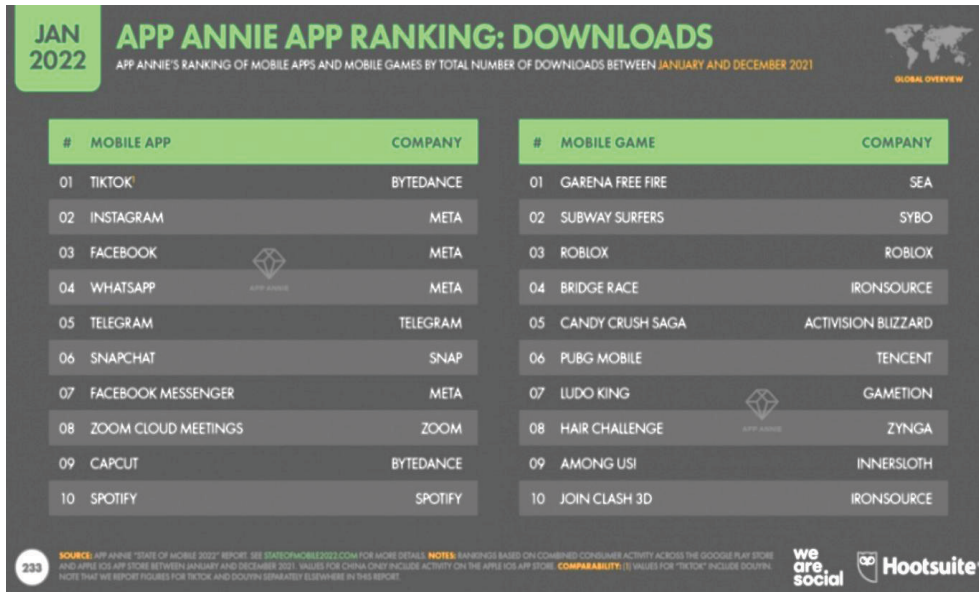


Fig. 2. Application Download Dynamics for the year 2022

Source: [2]

Download dynamics are a substantial metric because they indicate how interested customers are in an application and its standing within society. As previously mentioned, TikTok has gained popularity among people, which means many companies might begin promoting themselves through this platform to capture new audiences.

Another significant metric is the coverage of new users. On Instagram, the reach increased by 21% in 2022, totaling approximately 250 million new users. The overall user count reached 1.5 billion individuals. This metric should be considered if companies intend to market themselves through any social network.

Regarding TikTok’s reach, more than 650 thousand new users joined in 2022. 57% of all TikTok users are 18 years old and above. This metric is important to consider when a company aims to attract a specific segment of the population.

The next platform, YouTube, has a total user count of 2.5 billion people. On one hand, this platform has a large user base, but on the other hand, it’s challenging to stand out due to high competition.

After determining these metrics, a company should choose the platform that will provide the best coverage and yield the highest potential audience [2].

2. Utilizing social commerce

21st century, the age of technologies striving to make people’s lives easier. Companies endeavor to shift all their sales to social media, thereby allowing customers to make purchases without leaving their homes, ultimately saving time. Social commerce is a

relatively new concept, so one of the company’s tasks is to instill customer trust in online purchases. To achieve this, it is necessary to create a convenient, clickable website that provides all the information about the product or service.

Businesses can interact with customers through:

1. Click – through links;
2. Ordering products via direct messages;
3. Product catalogs on Instagram [3].

Analyzing the provided image, we observe that the customer is offered the choice of suit color and size. By simply pressing a button, the order can be placed directly through Instagram.

Advantages of social commerce for businesses:

- Minimal actions to make a purchase. To acquire a service or product, customers need to perform only a few simple actions (contact the seller directly or order through a website).
- Purchasing through social networks.
- Competition. As this field is relatively new, the number of competitors is minimal [3].

3. Conducting Live Broadcasts

Lately, the video format has become more popular than photos. This trend is due to the fact that people find it easier to absorb information through videos as they appear more accessible and comprehensible. When a company hosts live streams, it directly engages with subscribers, meaning the potential audience. This fosters trust and reliability.

Engaging the audience through live streams is perceived as active involvement in the process, making people feel like part of the team. Typically, during live broadcasts, individuals tend to learn more about the product, which significantly increases their desire to purchase it. Therefore, this tool can become a flagship strategy for numerous businesses.

4. Posting Short Video Clips

As we have already established, people prefer video content over reading text.

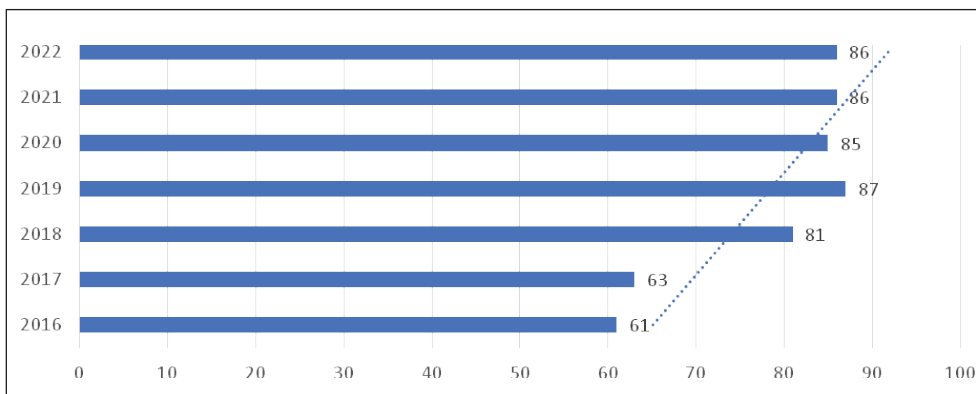


Fig. 3. Dynamics of Video Content Popularity Growth

Source: [4]

Analyzing this graph, we can see that starting from 2019, video content gradually began gaining popularity. People started consuming more information through videos rather than text. Currently, video content holds a leading position and is a sought-after element among users. However, there are nuances to consider. Long videos with monotonous introductions might not capture much interest from users. They tend to prefer simplified information that precisely conveys what's important and captivates their attention.

One advantage of short videos is the minimal time required for their production. The process is relatively straightforward; the key is selecting a suitable topic that resonates with the audience. TikTok is one of the main platforms that has developed this concept. Users create short videos that can be both educational and informative. Subsequently, we can see that this concept has been adopted by Instagram and YouTube.

5. Recording Podcasts

Podcasts are becoming increasingly popular. They offer an ideal way to delve into popular topics with invited experts. Additionally, this format can be consumed anywhere – during commutes, while working – as the audience doesn't need to focus on visual content; the emphasis is on the audio track. For example, in the photography industry, a podcast could feature an invited photographer discussing the intricacies of the field and addressing common questions. In this way, important information about a product can be effectively communicated in a short span of time [5].

Another advantage is that people can choose the type of podcast that interests them. This could be historical podcasts, music-related ones, podcasts about arts, and so on. When people access a particular podcast, they are interested in that topic, and advertisers can take advantage of this by including a link to their website, allowing people to learn more about them.

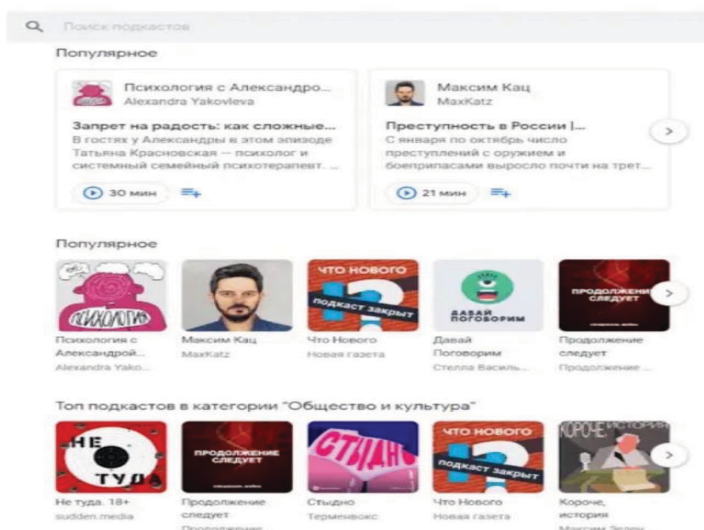


Fig. 4. Compilation of Podcasts by Themes

Source: [5]

Podcasts can be produced for different platforms. These might include dedicated podcast apps, YouTube, TikTok, Instagram. Each platform holds its own significance, and they can be mixed with each other. For example, a podcast on YouTube can be both heard and watched. In a podcast app, listeners are presented with audio-only content. And in TikTok and Instagram, short excerpts from the general podcast can be shared, engaging the audience and encouraging them to listen to the entire podcast.

Targeting is another benefit, allowing for a focus solely on market segments that match specific criteria, making it more efficient in market coverage. Traditional advertising in the press and on television might reach a broad audience, which is its indisputable advantage. However, modern consumers have become accustomed to tailored offers and are disinterested in content that doesn't resonate with them. Consumers want control over content and feel discomfort with unwanted marketing. For instance, during a television show break, a viewer might see commercials portraying them as simultaneously young and active, sick and in need of treatment, diabetic but eating cookies and candies, spending day and night with friends but changing diapers for a child, and so on. It's evident that, in each specific situation, at least some of this advertising (and the advertising budget) is either wasted at best or potentially alienating the potential customer at worst. At such a broad scale, the advertiser has almost no way of knowing who will watch the advertisement; only quantitative indicators can be estimated.

CONCLUSION

The use of digital marketing tools takes targeting to a fundamentally different level, avoiding contact with uninterested audiences and focusing only on those people and businesses who are potential customers. Digital marketing enables targeting based on personal attributes, interests, and areas of activity, thereby not solely relying on demographic characteristics for audience selection.

The ability to gather and process a large amount of customer information and make recommendations according to their preferences and needs is relatively new but has already proved its effectiveness. Modern marketing analytics tools, „big data,” provide comprehensive customer information (demographic and behavioral characteristics, brand relationships, stages in the purchase decision – making process, past queries and searches, viewed offers from other brands, etc.). This allows making the most relevant offer to the customer at a specific moment in the most convenient way for them. What modern consumers expect is for companies to know and cater to their interests and preferences and provide the necessary information and service level at a convenient time and place. People get upset when they receive „irrelevant information,” which they interpret as „lack of attention.” For instance, some online stores keep sending discount offers for children's items, even though their children have already started school.

Digital marketing has gained widespread acceptance mainly because, as mentioned earlier, achievements in digital technologies are being used to enhance the relevance and efficiency of traditional marketing tools, both in online and offline environments.

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