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ІННОВАЦІЇ У СФЕРІ МАРКЕТИНГУ ЯК ФАКТОР ПІДВИЩЕННЯ КОНКУРЕНТОСПРОМОЖНОСТІ ВІТЧИЗНЯНИХ МОЛОКОПЕРЕРОБНИХ ПІДПРИЄМСТВ

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Досліджено особливості ринку молока та молокопродуктів України у сучасних умовах. Обґрунтовано заходи щодо підвищення конкурентоспроможності продукції молокоперобних підприємств шляхом втілення інновацій у їх маркетингову товарну та збутову політику. Доведено ефективність використання таких заходів на прикладі вітчизняного молокоперобного підприємства.

Ключові слова: конкурентоспроможність товару, ринок молока та молокопродуктів, інновації у сфері маркетингу, якість продукції, власні збутові підрозділи виробника.

INNOVATIONS IN THE FIELD OF MARKETING AS A FACTOR FOR INCREASING THE COMPETITIVENESS OF DOMESTIC DAIRY PROCESSING FACTORIES

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The article studies the peculiarities of Ukrainian milk and dairy products market under current conditions. It substantiates steps to improve the competitiveness of milk processing factories by implementing innovations in their product marketing and sales policy. The effectiveness of such measures is proven in the context of a domestic milk processing company.

Key words: product competitiveness, milk and dairy products market, marketing innovations, product quality, producer's marketing departments.

Problem formulation. The changeable operating conditions lead to increasing competition among companies for consumer preference for their products. Therefore, stable positions of certain producers' goods are based on the availability of competitive advantage that determines their competitiveness. The basis distinguishes product characteristics to meet a specific need in comparison with similar objects in the market at a particular time. The key factors of product competitiveness are their consumer-oriented characteristics and availability for consumers, which can significantly be improved through the innovations.

As for Ukraine which belongs to the agro-industrial countries in the world, the food industry being the main component of the dairy processing sector is of great importance. Milk is one of the most valuable nutrition products. Milk and dairy products belong to basic goods and are essential for human health. Therefore, the market for these products will operate under all economic conditions. Implementation of innovations by dairy processing companies will enhance the attraction of their products to consumers in both national and foreign markets. Refocusing Ukrainian producers to European markets will further actualize the study results.

Analysis of current research outputs and publications. Many scholars such as Balabanova L.V., Garkavenko S.S., Illiashenko S.M., Kardash V.Y., Moroz L.A., Porter M., Turcheniuk M. and others

studied the problem of product competitiveness. Most scholars narrow the definition of product competitiveness to its technical (qualitative) analysis and economic parameters. However, a number of scholars extend the interpretation. In particular, Kuzmin O.Y. and Horbal N.I. [1, p. 35] emphasize that the final purchase decision is only one-third connected with product quality, and two-thirds are determined by other marketing elements, such as the ability to get products on credit at the best price.

Current conditions actualize the approach to determining company's product competitiveness within marketing concept focused on cost for a customer [2]. Considering methodological approaches to assessing company competitiveness, Tarnavska N.P. [3, p. 149-150] notes that company competitiveness can be expressed in the form of an innovative resource accumulating the influence of certain factors including investments and intangible and tangible assets.

The interaction of company competitiveness factors has the effect of synergy. The problem of company competitiveness can be considered in the context of a stronger business orientation at consumers in giving them additional value. Analysing marketing cost sources as a competitiveness capacity factor for a construction company, Hrebnev H. introduces a structure of marketing cost sources [4], but he pays insufficient attention to marketing actions for its improvement and is confined to branding and organizational and informational support of marketing activities.

Considering company competitiveness, a number of authors pay attention only to strategic aspects, leaving aside tactical measures within individual components of the marketing complex [5, 6]. Moreover, Balabanova L., Firsova S. and Lytvyn K. pay great attention to company orientation at their competitors and the development of their competitive strategies, rather than at an emphasis on customer satisfaction.

Furthermore, most publications do not consider the peculiarities of measures developed to improve product competitiveness taking into account the economic sector peculiarities. In particular, the source [7] substantiates the necessity to use the systematic approach to innovations in business activities in order to increase company competitiveness in a changeable marketing environment; it also emphasizes the need to implement innovative solutions to all elements of the company's marketing complex. However, Taranenko I.V. considers an industrial company as a whole, without taking into account the specifics of its activities.

The source [8] considers company functioning problems in a rapidly globalising world and substantiates the essence of modern marketing and innovation activities. To improve the competitiveness and efficiency of economic operators, it offers clustering some industries.

In the sources [9, 10] the authors note that the basis of an effective industrial company development is building a system of cooperation between its marketing and innovation activities, namely marketing as the foundation of an industrial company innovative development and innovation as the way to rationalize and develop marketing.

Today, an important research line is to determine the nature of enterprise innovation within the implementation of individual marketing complex components in order to increase competitiveness in the market taking into consideration the peculiarities of markets for different goods.

In the source [11] the authors focus on studying the factors of integrated influence on the competitiveness of dairy processing factories related to the ratio of scale and differentiation, price and quality, price and elasticity, choice, etc. However, changes in the factors of marketing environment require constant attention to the problem of improving the competitiveness of dairy processing factories.

Article objectives. The purpose of the article is to study the market of milk and dairy products and to develop measures to improve their competitiveness through innovations implemented for individual components in the marketing complex of dairy processing factories.

Presentation of main materials. Despite the financial crisis, milk and dairy products market is actively developing. Russian withdrawal from Ukrainian dairy supply makes domestic producers change their product portfolio composition to increase a share of whole milk products.

The analysis of secondary marketing information demonstrates that Ukrainian milk and dairy products market is characterized today by such features as a high degree of saturation, strong competition of individual trademarks, rivalries among brands in trading institutions for a place on shelves. The

contemporary market is geographically divided among dairy producers; the producers focus on certain products and periodically promote their trademarks in the market.

Information on the production volume of major Ukrainian producers during 2012–2013 is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Production Volume of Milk and Dairy Products in Ukraine During 2012–2013

Production Volume of Milk and Dairy Products, Thousand Tons															
Producers / Products	2012							2013							2013 / 2012
	Milk	Fermented Milk Products	Yogurt	Cheese	Cream	Milk Mixes	Total	Milk	Fermented Milk Products	Yogurt	Cheese	Cream	Milk Mixes	Total	%
Danon	42.9	44.7	37.3	5.4	2.3		132.6	49.3	52.4	39.1	5.5	2.3		148.5	12.0
Loostdorf	100				5.2		105.2	106.2	0	0	0	6.1		112.3	6.8
Milk Alliance	39.6	28.8	1.3	4.3	1.8		75.7	46.9	31.2	5.8	6	0.7		90.6	19.6
Pepsico (Wimm Bill Dann)	28	38	7.8	16	0		89.8	27.7	34.2	8.7	17.3	0		88	-2.0
Galychyna	28.2	33.2	11.6	2.3	0		75.4	28.7	33.5	13.1	1.8	0		77	2.1
Concern "Prydniprovskiy"	22.3	19.9	8.1	3.7	0.8		54.9	2.1	21.9	11.9	4.4	0.8		60.1	9.5
Lactalis	13.2	21.1	7.9	18.7	1.3		62.2	11	20.3	8.4	16.8	1.4		58	-6.7
Hercules	24.4	31.4	2.8	1.8	0		60.4	23.3	29.1	2.2	2.1	0		56.7	-6.2
Temopil Dairy Factory	18.3	12	3.1	1.3	0		34.7	24.5	15.6	3.4	1.4			44.9	29.5
"Formula Smaku"	15.1	15.5	1.9	2.9	0		35.3	19.3	18.7	2.8	3.3	0		44	24.6
Terra Food	13.5	16.4	0.9	0.4	0.5	3.4	35.2	13.7	19.1	2	0.5	0.6	3.6	39.6	12.6
Other	168.9	145.6	7.3	22.9	24.3		369.1	165.9	116.6	8.9	25.6	30.9		348	-5.7
Total	514.5	406.4	90.1	79.9	36.2	3.4	1130.5	537.6	392.7	106.3	84.7	42.9	3.6	1167.8	3.3

Source: compiled on the basis of data [12]

The source [13] points out that the current level of competitiveness among domestic companies in the dairy sector is relatively low due to the following factors: small-scale milk production mode, high energy and labour-consumption of products, discrepancies between national standards and requirements for safety and food quality to European products, improper quality control system, low level of milk and dairy products market infrastructure development, weak integration connections among its subjects, etc.

The process of promoting competitiveness can be regarded as a philosophy of business management in a market that addresses a wide range of problems [14]: the study of consumer needs and their development; assessment of competitors' behaviour and capabilities; market development research; company business environment research; production of goods which would be superior to the competitors' ones. Generally agreeing with this point of view, the following task related to increasing company competitiveness should be added: development of other marketing complex components to strengthen the consumer value of goods.

On the basis of the foregoing it should be noted that the increase of product competitiveness should focus on developing the integrated system of interrelated elements taking into account all stages of the product life cycle and processes: market research; development of quality products and their packaging,

attractive price fixing, product sales, customer service, formation of reverse distribution channels and promotion of products in the market.

The basic criteria of product competitiveness are presented in the source [15]. They include the level of product quality and its stability; social targeting (correspondence of product characteristics with the specific needs of consumer social groups or specific buyers); reliability (special and protective marking of goods, conformity certificates, etc.); safety (safety of life, health, property and environment under usual conditions of use, storage, transportation and disposal, and occupational safety); the consumer novelty of goods; the reputation of goods ensuring a stable level of product quality; the information content of the product (the ability to express its social value through information about competitive advantage); and the price of goods.

The analysis shows that an important parameter of product competitiveness is its quality. As mentioned before, the requirements for raw milk in Ukraine and the European Union are different nowadays (Table 2).

Table 2

Requirements for Milk Quality Parameters

Indicators	Ukraine (DSTU 3662-97)			EU (Regulation 853/2004)
	High Grade	I Grade	II Grade	
1. The total number of microorganisms in 1 cu. cm	≤ 300 thous.	≤ 500 thous.	≤ 3 mln	≤ 100 thous.
2. Somatic cells per 1 cu. cm	≤ 400 thous.	≤ 600 thous.	≤ 800 thous.	≤ 400 thous.
3. Freezing point	Not controlled			0.52 ⁰ C (Directive 92/46/EEC, Ext. No. 94/330/EEC)

Source: compiled on the basis of data [16, p. 142]

A number of factors affect the quality of fresh cow milk. It quickly develops pathogenic microflora which makes milk spoil. Therefore, it is important to follow certain biotechnological operations in milk production, primary processing, storage and transportation to the place of destination.

In Japan improving the quality of products includes a widespread introduction of scientific developments in the field of management and technology to produce new products; computerization of all management operations, production analysis and control; maximum utilization of human capabilities by encouraging creative activity (quality circles) and forming corporate spirit, regular staff training; and corporate spirit development [17].

A new product is the object of consumption meeting new needs or answering the existing needs better than the preceding product [15]. Today, most new products offered in the market are updated products described by a higher level of consumer characteristics and meeting the existing needs better. Thus, they have to be thoroughly investigated. The milk and dairy products market analysis shows that nowadays consumers appreciate “natural” and “high-quality” fresh products, they prefer two or three brands, do not look for anything new and do not believe that a producer can really care about its consumers.

In order to improve the competitiveness of its products in the market, PJSC “Ternopil Dairy Factory” has been focusing on the maximum satisfaction of customer needs, primarily on natural dairy products (without such substitutes as vegetable fats and milk powder), short shelf life (3 days for milk, 5 days for kefir (traditional fermented dairy), 7 days for sour cream), and classic product range. The philosophy of the company is defined as follows: valuing the health of every person, we guarantee the quality and safety of our products. In order to really become the best dairy company in Ukraine, PJSC “Ternopil Dairy Factory” has developed a new strategy “fresh milk: from the cow to the shop” involving every day provision of consumers with natural fresh milk of high quality.

Fresh milk means just taken from the cow, steamed milk. However, it remains fresh only for the first two hours. During this period due to a special enzyme (lysozyme present in the udder of a cow) milk fights bacteria alone. Bacteria can get through the air or vessel in which the milk is placed, or even through hands.

The milk can be affected by *E. coli*, propionic, butyric, putrefaction and lactic acid bacteria, as well as by fungi, yeast, mold and bacto-fugate. Standard methods of heating milk (temperature treatment) prevent food from spoilage and bacterial growth, but such milk cannot be called fresh anymore, its molecular structure is changed and a lot of useful proteins and vitamins are destroyed [18].

In order to keep the steamed milk as fresh and natural as possible, PJSC “Ternopil Dairy Factory” has implemented the following measures within the framework of marketing commercial policy improvement:

- it has completely moved to manufacturing products according to DSTU (National Standards of Ukraine); the company does not allow using vegetable fats and milk powder; this step provided for a transition to a completely natural product without harmful additives, preservatives, vegetable fats and milk powder;
- it has changed the system of milk treatment; in order not to kill milk nutrients and not to change its molecular structure by high temperatures, an innovative approach of mechanical treatment used by a German company GEA Westfalia Separator GmbH has been implemented; the process of bacto-fugation (mechanical treatment) is as follows: the solid particles of milk including bacteria are replaced on the outlet of the disk by centrifugal force, and as a concentrated phase of bacto-fugate, they are thrown outwards via residue receiver; bacteria-reduced milk is moved to the centre of the disk and then to the outlet tube; the design of the disk is made to eliminate the contact of bacteria-reduced milk with bacto-fugate; thus, the subsequent contamination of milk in the disk cannot occur; as a result, due to centrifugal forces milk is purified from intestinal (92 %) and spore (96 %) bacteria and does not change its structure and properties;
- the system of “gentle pasteurization” has been implemented; it includes lowering the temperature of pasteurization; the higher the temperature affecting milk, the more interferences in its structure (damage to protein, calcium, phosphorus; fewer vitamins and nutrients);
- fresh milk technology is used.

In European countries “gentle” pasteurization is an indicator of the best milk. It ensures the preservation of most enzymes critical for proper digestion and good health. Nowadays, this is the most prudent way of processing which ensures the milk is “alive” and useful in its natural bacterial composition. In Germany this type of milk is called Frischmilch; in Poland – swieze mleko; in Slovenia – sveze mleko; and in Greece – ΦΡΕΟΚΟ Υᾶλα.

In 2014 PJSC “Ternopil Dairy Factory” was the first in Ukraine and the ninth in Europe to introduce GEA Westfalia Separator GmbH prolong, the latest technology of dual milk processing, for even more careful and advanced treatment and issued unique non-homogenized milk under the sub-brand “Molokiya Classic” with the natural milk fat content of 3.6 %.

The market of short-term milk is represented by 3 segments: market milk (rural), a narrow segment of eco-milk and traditional milk in polyethylene bags and bottles. According to the total number of sales in the regional centres, eco-milk and rural milk occupy a tiny market share. The situation with the traditional milk in polyethylene bags is more complicated. Before the 2009 crisis producers retired from this milk segment due to shortage of raw materials and dairy processing factories redirecting materials in more marginal products. Traditionally, saving on raw materials and quality, products in polyethylene bags are economic products at cheaper price. Another important point in the production and sales of milk in polyethylene bags is the state regulation of prices – such milk is included in the minimum consumer basket, so producers cannot raise the price on it or adjust it according to market conditions. For this reason, most milk packed in polyethylene bags is in fact not milk but rather either vegetable fats or milk powder. Today, a number of domestic producers returned to the milk packed in polyethylene bags, but the situation in the market of raw materials and in the state did not change, so, it is assumed that better raw milk is spent on other, more marginal products.

It is possible to improve the competitiveness of milk and dairy products through improving the goods packaging. The PET bottle is not the best way of milk packaging. First, the prolonged contact of plastic and product evolves harmful substances to the human body, and secondly, this bottle permits light

which can provoke the product heating. Therefore, innovation in this area was to find the package that would have a premium look and allow technologically pour product and retain short-term fresh product. PJSC “Ternopil Dairy Factory” was the first in Ukraine to start bottling milk in the Elopak packaging – Pure-Pak® Diamond Curve. This brought another challenge to the company – consumers cannot visually distinguish the Elopak packaging from the Tetra Pak long-term milk packaging. They look as the same cardboard boxes. Since all milk by Molokiya fresh milk technology is poured in the Elopak packaging, PJSC “Ternopil Dairy Factory” has to struggle with the stereotype of the package.

In Europe the concept of fresh milk has existed for a long time. For example, the major world companies produce such types of milk as UHT and fresh milk. These types of milk have different brands, and producers promote their brands within the segments in which they operate. All European consumers clearly differ one from another, it does not cause any problems for them to understand why the price on fresh milk is 20 % higher than on all other presented samples.

In order to reduce prices on milk and dairy products it is advisable to regulate the services of existing wholesale agents, including the ones working directly with retail agents. Indeed, the 2007 dairy products margin for a small wholesale agent of JSC “Galakton” was 21.9-23 %, while the permissible level should not exceed 7-10 % [19, p. 18-19.]. Therefore, to improve their marketing distribution policies, the dairy processing factories should open their sales offices in the regions and buy warehouses and vehicles (or outsource). This will better explore consumer needs in different regional markets and adapt them to their marketing program.

PJSC “Ternopil Dairy Factory” independently delivers fresh products in 12 regions of Ukraine in over 8,000 commercial companies. To achieve this, the company has created its own fleet of milk tankers (over 100 units) and cold storage trucks delivering final products (over 150 units). Building its own fresh-logistics PJSC “Ternopil Dairy Factory” completely refused from distributors and agents. Today, the company created its own sales departments with warehouses, refrigeration equipment and vehicle fleet in every sales region. Accordingly, PJSC “Ternopil Dairy Factory” can guarantee daily freshness not only because of daily raw milk collection from farms and daily production, but also because of daily deliveries to each outlet. People working in the sales departments of the company (about 700 people) are focused on providing the best quality product.

PJSC “Ternopil Dairy Factory” uses the latest approaches in promoting its products. The company conducts educational activities and shows its consumers the rational benefits of its products. Thus, the company faces the challenge of not only its brand promotion, but also of the category of its operation – the one of fresh milk. The investigated dairy factory is constantly spending money on research and new technologies.

The introduced innovations in marketing activities allow to significantly improve the market position of PJSC “Ternopil Dairy Factory”, as illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3

Comparative Analysis of PJSC “Ternopil Dairy Factory” Performance in 2007–2011

Indicators	2007	2008		2009		2010		2011	
	Result	Result	Growth Rate, %	Result	Growth Rate, %	Result	Growth Rate, %	Result	Growth Rate, %
1. Raw milk processing, tons	33750	42250	125	52000	123	68600	132	86500	129
2. Turnover, mln UAH	76	117	154	180	154	341	189	473	139
3. Investments	2.5	6.5	260	5.5	85	12	218	30.5	254
4. Number of regions with direct product sales	3	5	167	7	140	9	129	10	111

Source: compiled on the basis of data

Improving the performance indicators of PJSC “Ternopil Dairy Factory” affected its market positions (Table 4).

Table 4

Rating of Companies Producing Commercial Milk in April 2014

Rating	Company	Oblast
1	Loostdorf	Vynnytsia
2	Yagotyn Dairy Factory	Kyiv
3	Donetsk Dairy Factory	Donetsk
4	Ternopil Dairy Factory	Ternopil
5	Kremenchug Dairy Factory	Poltava

Source: compiled on the basis of data [20]

Innovations in marketing activities of dairy processing factories will attract both final consumers and consumer organizations (retailers).

Conclusions and further research prospects. Increased competition in milk and dairy products market forces producers to pay special attention to the ways of improving their competitiveness. This can be achieved through implementing innovations in their marketing activities, primarily in trade, sales and communication policies. Prospects for further studies are related to the study of financial crisis influence on consumers’ tastes and preferences for milk and dairy products, as well as to the study of how marketing activities of dairy processing factories can adapt to them.

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