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## ПОЛЬСЬКІ ПІДПРИЄМСТВА СФЕРИ ПОСЛУГ НА МІЖНАРОДНОМУ РИНКУ: МАРКЕТИНГОВІ ПЕРСПЕКТИВИ

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Розглянуто питання інтернаціоналізації послуг у контексті сучасних змін, що відбуваються на глобальному та національному ринках. З теоретичного боку розглянуто міжнародні орієнтації компанії, підкреслюючи специфікацію міжнародного обігу послуг; проаналізовано проведені дослідження функціональних стратегій польських компаній сфери послуг на міжнародному ринку. Наведено стратегії розвитку для підприємств сфери послуг на міжнародних ринках, а також подальші напрямки досліджень у галузі інтернаціоналізації послуг.

**Ключові слова:** послуги, інтернаціоналізація, маркетингові стратегії, підприємство сфери послуг.

## POLISH SERVICE ENTERPRISES IN AN INTERNATIONAL MARKET: MARKETING PERSPECTIVE

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In this article the author elaborates on issues of services internationalisation in the context of contemporary changes, taking place in global and national markets. From a theoretical aspect, the writer is about to review international companies orientation, emphasising specification of international services turnover. From empirical aspect, based on the author's own research, functional strategies conducted by Polish service companies in an international market are analysed. In the last part, development strategies for service companies in international markets are indicated, and also further directions of research in the area of services internationalisation.

**Key words:** services, internationalisation, marketing strategies, service company.

**Problem formulation.** Literature research shows that marketing strategies in foreign markets result from so called strategic orientations of companies activity in foreign markets. There are four main types of

strategic international orientations of companies: ethnocentric, polycentric, regiocentric and geocentric (global), and also its variation – transnational orientation [1, p.53-58].

In table 1 strategic international orientations of companies have been compared, taking into account the following criteria: goal (philosophy) of company activity, a characteristic of a product – services, internationalisation forms applied, company organisation and examples of services in which a particular orientation prevails.

Table 1

**Comparison of international strategic orientations in services**

| <i>Criteria</i>                      | <i>Ethnocentric strategy</i>   | <i>Polycentric strategy</i>                                  | <i>Regiocentric strategy</i>   | <i>Global strategy</i>  | <i>Transnational strategy</i>  |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|--|---|--|
| <i>Strategic assumption</i>          | Domestic market orientation and export   | Particular foreign markets orientation                       | Region orientation   | Global market orientation   | Global market orientation  |
| <i>Character of a service</i>        | Several countries and segments-similar service                                   | A lot of countries and segments-service differentiation      | Several regions-service differentiation  | A lot of countries-service standardization  | A lot of countries-partly service standardization and differentiation                                  |
| <i>Forms of internationalisation</i> | Direct export, Service company   | Subsidiaries, branches, licences, franchising, joint venture | Subsidiaries, branches, licences, franchising, joint venture, strategic alliances        | Subsidiaries, branches, licences, franchising, joint venture, strategic alliances, business networking          | Subsidiaries, branches, licences, franchising, joint venture, strategic alliances, business networking |
| <i>Form of an organisation</i>       | Service post abroad  | Geographical organisation                                    | Geographical and product organisation  | Product organisation  | Networking and matrix organisation   |
| <i>Examples of services</i>          | services: programming, online services (e.g. banking, advertising, intermediary) | services: consulting, banking, insurance, transport          | services: gastronomic, tourist, carrying passengers, business (legal, banking, auditing) | services: gastronomic (fast food), hotel, carrying passengers by air, business (consulting, financial, IT, B+R) | services: business (advertising, market research, project, consulting), architecture, tourist          |

Source: [2, p. 262]

International orientations and their differentiation, described in table 1, show that a strategic challenge for companies, operating in an international market, is a decision to choose a standardized strategy, or an adaptation strategy. This problem relates to service enterprises which – due to characteristics and diversity of their services– have limited possibilities as for choosing forms of activity and a range of standardization. Standardization is difficult to achieve, especially in services based on human work and low technology, and as a result of a strong effect of cultural factor on service recipients' behaviour. According to some researchers, majority, 85% of services, is – in relation to this – offered in foreign markets as part of a licence, franchising or direct investment[3, p.357].

**Analysis of current research outputs and publications.** General concept of international marketing means “all company operations conducted as part of economic activity outside/above political borders of its own country” [4, p.23]. As for service companies, a specific feature of shaping elements of an marketing program (mix marketing of services), directed at an international market is visible.

In relation to services – comparing them to material goods – assessment of their globalization potential is more complicated. Numerous foreign service posts, using an identical logo of a brand, are not an indicator of a transnational or global strategy. In practice, service companies apply multinational strategies of marketing more frequently, and it results from conditioning of globalization potential of services, in particular an object of their effect, according to which are:

- contact services whose objects are people – physical presence of a service provider is required in a foreign market, taking into account possible forms of this presence,
- services whose objects are material things, owned by buyers – some of these services are connected with physical location of a service provider, but some can be provided remotely,
- services based on information, affecting human intellect or non-material resources of buyers – having the biggest globalization potential, because thanks to ICT technology development they can be delivered at a distance.

Factors concerning demand, cost, technology, law and competition decide on globalization potential of a particular group of services. Currently, technological factors in particular are decisive in globalization of many services sectors. It is becoming possible due to chain disintegration of added value and to offshoring of services development. Significant part of this process have transnational corporations, offering mainly business services.

**Article objectives.** It can be stated that against a background of analysis of achievements to date, services characteristic appears in international turnover. The main purpose of this article is analysis and assessment of service internationalisation potential offered by Polish service entities. Detailed aims include: analysis of functional strategies elements conducted by Polish service enterprises in an international market, and assessment of their activity perspectives in foreign services markets until 2015. Methods which have been used in research, are subject to research objectives, and their description is contained in a further part of this article.

**Presentation of main materials.** Analysis of various models of companies internationalisation, conducted by the author, has enabled to define a notion of company internationalisation, and recognition that it is a process of multi-sided changes taking place in: a system of company management, structure of its target markets, marketing activity concept, and also in managers and workers’ attitudes and consciousness. These changes are subject to company strive for being present in foreign markets in different organizational forms, with use of specially chosen methods of market activity, in accordance with an applied strategy of development.

In modern Polish and global economy, there is real premise to understand service enterprises the following way. At the same time, we can state that in Polish economic realities there are no barriers that would hinder service companies from choosing and implementing a model of internationalisation in their activities. In the light of these assumptions, the author has done some research on Polish enterprises attitude in foreign markets, searching for answers to these questions:

- To what extent are Polish service companies prepared to follow the way of internationalisation?
- What conditions have to be fulfilled to enable Polish companies to implement internationalisation of their activities?
- What marketing activities should be developed so that an internationalization strategy will enable service enterprises to achieve market goals?

Direct research done from 2010 to 2012 has allowed to find an answer to the questions asked above and has given inspiring clues as for subsequent research [5, p. 126-129].

At the stage of empirical research there are two accepted trends:

- diagnostic trend, based on direct research on service companies' managers, which is present at least in one foreign market,
- prognostic trend, based on experts' opinion on activity effectiveness of Polish service enterprises in foreign markets.

To empirical, diagnostic research (research on a group of managers), a technique of surveys and direct interviews have been applied, using specially prepared a research tool, such as a questionnaire form, directed at managers of service companies. The scope of this research included:

- the scope and company internationalisation ways, including issues such as: forms of cooperation with a foreign entity in a Polish market, the spatial scope of presence in foreign markets,
- marketing development concerning a company activity in a foreign market, including marketing activities done before taking a decision on entering international markets, and marketing strategies development in a market already entered.

To prognostic research a method of experts' assessment has been applied, i.e. specially selected to research specialists of management, marketing and international business. A circle of experts consisted of 25 academic representatives, who are familiar with economy in practice. In order to do research, a perspective until 2015 has been accepted, taking into account high economic and market volatility, which limits a time range of predictions to a medium-term range. A research tool used for collecting experts' opinions is a questionnaire, consisting of the following aspects:

- external conditioning affecting a process of services internationalisation,
- internal conditioning connected with entering and operating a service company in an international market,
- sale forms development of services in an international market,
- changes in a services strategy in an international market,
- means of marketing communication in an international market,
- internationalisation possibility of different types of services.

Collected research results allow to notice that issues of services internationalisation is not a popular area of research, which has resulted in a selection of managers and experts willing to cooperate. We can treat then the obtained results as an important, but preliminary stage of research development on these issues.

In the subsequent part, the author is to present observations against a background of empirical research, conducted in the two groups of respondents.

Synthetic empirical research results on internationalisation of Polish service companies:

a) research results in a group of service companies' managers.

A geographical area of a company location managed by respondents – managers was Dolnośląskie Province (research was conducted with a cooperation with Lower Silesia associations of companies and association of employers). In total, 50 people have answered questions in the questionnaire, among others: company founders or co-founders (24 people), members of the board (6 people), department managers and marketing, export, import or trade specialists (13 people). All these people have had appropriate competence and expertise in company activities within internationalisation. As for characteristics of companies activity represented by managers, it is as following:

- activity profile: 28% of companies of so called homogeneous service profile, next 22% of trade and service companies and 50% of companies of mixed profile, i.e. trade-service-production;
- a range of a service: both business clients (e.g. IT services, market research, consulting, repairs and maintenance of machines, legal, training, financial services, decoration, leasing, transport, storage, gastronomic) and individual clients (hotel services, gastronomic, recreational, decoration, technical, designing, medical, repairing);
- a legal status of an activity: first of all, limited partnerships (38%) and a registered business enterprise (36%); different types of partnerships (36%);
- a size of an enterprise: micro and small amount to 66%, medium size enterprises amount to 26%;

- length of business activity: the most often small and medium enterprises operate from 6 to 10 years, and big companies from 16 to 20 years,
- average time of entering foreign markets amounts to 5 – 6 years since the moment of a company establishment.

As a result of direct research on the respondents group described above, we can specify main results, indicating a range of internationalisation, and a character of marketing operations of Polish enterprises in an international services market [5, p. 158-1159]:

- Decisions about internationalisation of service companies are influenced by strong factors, such as: a size of a foreign market, profitability of foreign trade, and also cultural similarity, and access to capital.

- Service activity in international markets is especially sensitive to a cultural factor, due to direct contact between a service provider with a recipient in many services. It is important to remember that service company workers are a first, internal market for a company, therefore their operational and market efficiency depends on a system of internal communication in a company, proper training programs and motivation schemes.

- Service activity abroad needs more capital than the other, because investments of service providers are about transferring a whole service process and commitment of all company resources at the moment of providing a service to potential foreign recipients.

- Managers give relatively little attention to having a formal strategy of development, directed at internationalisation of service activity, and a management team does not have sufficient expertise in international markets, which are in an area of their business interests.

- A very useful thing in a process of internationalisation of native service companies can be building deeper business relationships with foreign entities, present in our market which, for example, lead to contract or cooperation forms of development, and enable to operate in conditions similar to an international market.

- A main foreign market for service companies is the EU market, because of relatively easy access, including markets of neighbouring countries (Germany, The Czech Republic).

- New forms of service companies' presence have prevailed in foreign markets using available IT technologies, which in some business sectors can replace forms of activities, with a necessity of large investment in foreign markets, especially in services based on advanced technology.

- The main barriers in an internationalisation process of service companies is lack of capital, low credit availability (financial factors), and not sufficient expertise and skills of management and service personnel (e.g. they do not speak foreign languages).

- Managers of service companies confirm beneficial effect of internationalisation on an increase in turnover and employment, and greater innovation of a company.

- In the future, managers of service companies will be forced to operations differentiating service offers, because customer expectations, in a range of services individualisation, grow and such activities will be supported by information and communication technologies in services

b) research results in a group of experts.

Expert research was conducted in 2012 in a group of 25 selected people, representing a circle of management, marketing and economics specialists, and also experienced experts.

A period taken into consideration during expert research, means in practice building time and implementation of a development and marketing strategy connected with it. Among many findings resulted from conducted expert research, the following factors, including internationalization of services, forms of services sale, communication activities, mentioned below are significant [5, p. 171-189].

The most important factor in the future will be competitiveness of prices of services, in context of other entities, operating in a particular sector in a host market. According to experts, potential foreign buyers expect attractive prices (lower than local entities) and provision of a good quality offer. These two elements can therefore contribute to Polish companies' competitive advantage over foreign entities.

Implementation of an ideal strategy, concerning customer service in foreign markets, requires particular organizational and marketing solutions. In relation to services susceptible to standardization,

success is in drawn up procedures of services provision, material resources and workers' excellence. Solutions such as franchising, support implementation of these assumptions in practice, application of new technologies provides also tools to control a standard of service provision. Services in which a strategy of adaptation is applied, the role of staff professionalism is growing, and so is a need to monitor their performance with an active role of customers (customer satisfaction with a service).

The most perspective forms of selling services abroad, according to an accepted criterion of their application frequency, are the following: sale of services by means of electronic channels, sale through Polish and foreign intermediaries, sale within cooperation with an international company, contracted sale of services – licences, franchising.

Among a set of factors, which in the following years, will affect decisions about strategies of services in foreign markets are, first of all, innovation of services offer (92 % of recommendations), and a level of a customer service quality (also 92 % of recommendations). Therefore, new information – communication technologies have revolutionized some service sectors (e.g. finances, telecommunication, education) so much, that their value for a customer will be significantly rising. Formulation of a service strategy, on the basis of customer service quality, is a domain of traditionally supplied services, where contacting directly a customer, so called soft skills of a service provider matter (politeness of servicing, knowledge of psychological aspects, empathy, ability to communicate in a foreign language).

Service companies activity abroad requires professionally prepared programs of communication with a market. A service provider should be aware of differences resulting from various cultural conditions of potential buyers, both in a retail and business market. Only 36 % of experts think that ethnocentrism will be present in customers' behaviour in a foreign market of services, and marketing communication should take it into consideration. The rest of experts reckon that in a perspective to 2015, ethnocentrism in services will not be strong, so it will not affect significantly marketing communication programs of service enterprises. All experts have agreed on the fact that in the nearest future electronic channels of promotion, overtaking traditional forms, will develop drastically. Lower costs of the Internet connections will be in favour of it, and also a possibility to reach a target group of recipients, an increase in equipment and usage of mobile devices by consumers.

**Conclusions and perspectives for further research.** A base of activities in foreign markets is expertise in a target market, which requires gathering useful market information, and sometimes doing own (or contracted) market research, as basic sources for drawing up a development strategy and a marketing strategy of a company. An important factor, supporting internationalisation of service entities is a management team's higher awareness of the meaning of internationalization process for a company and its benefits. In a Polish market of services, decisions about entering foreign markets are mostly initiated by company owners, or a management team – having some experience in working abroad. Managers of companies which are already present in foreign markets, are not afraid of barriers and limits connected with different business environment very much. Such fears are typical for those managers who lack international experiences.

Service entities, representing a sector of small and medium enterprises, do not have formalized strategies of development, in which a process of internationalization would be recorded. Entering and presence of these entities in foreign markets is an effect of market opportunities occurrence, often taking place in a domestic market, than an effect of planned and organized marketing activities.

For selected entities, offering business services, entering foreign markets often means development of innovation. Innovation activities are visible in a range of product improvement, a process of services delivery and marketing communication, where application of advanced internet tools increases effectiveness of targeting potential and chosen buyers (their segments).

Many service entities should build future strategies of development on the basis of new technologies and usage of the Internet, and also apply electronic forms of trade. Using electronic forms of service sale and customer service 'at the distance' accelerates, thanks to overcoming geographical and personal barriers, internationalisation of service entities' activity. There are examples of relatively young service companies in IT sector which, due to the Internet technology support at a preliminary stage of operations, offer their services in a foreign market. This tendency will consolidate in the near future.

It is necessary to measure values, which marketing actions contribute to an enterprise, in particular an indication of a level of a return on investment in services. Marketing managers of services should analyse financial results of marketing initiatives and their influence on effectiveness of company operations. It is essential to gain better knowledge, improve qualifications, directors' and marketing workers' skills, and also use, to a greater extent, services of external specialists, e.g. the Internet advertising, customer data processing, or market research.

Summing up, implementation of a service marketing strategy in foreign markets is a challenge for managers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, because not only do they deal with so called difficult (thus specific) product, but also with dynamic changes, in terms of demand and consumption, new understanding of a role of marketing, as a concept of creating and supplying a customer with value and deepening digitalization of economic life. These phenomena, on the one hand, are pushing service entities into internationalization of their activities, on the other hand, they are a great marketing challenge.

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## **РОЛЬ СОЦІАЛЬНИХ МЕРЕЖ НА РИНКУ МОЛОДИХ СПОЖИВАЧІВ (ПРИКЛАД ПОЛЬЩІ ТА НІМЕЧЧИНИ)**

*ã de Пурбе П., Хмєлевські К., 2013*

**Представлено загальну характеристику Інтернету та соціальних мереж у Польщі та Німеччині з урахуванням групи молодих споживачів. Вихідними даними для цього дослідження є особливості молодих споживачів, зокрема їх роль на ринку. Показана роль Інтернету та соціальних мереж на ринку молодих споживачів.**

**Ключові слова:** Інтернет, соціальні мережі, молоді споживачі.

## **THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE YOUNG CONSUMERS MARKET – CASE STUDY FOR POLAND AND GERMANY**

*ã de Pourbaix P., Chmielewski K., 2013*

**This text aims to present the general characteristics of the Internet and social media in Poland and Germany, taking into account the group of young consumers. Background to this observation are the characteristic of young consumers, in particular their role in the market. The purpose of the authors is also to show the role played by the Internet and social media in the market of young consumers.**

**Key words:** Internet, social media, young consumers.

**Problem formulation.** The aim of this paper is to analyze the role of the Internet and social media in Poland and Germany with a special emphasis on young consumers. Moreover, the characteristics of the young consumers and their particular role in this market will be presented. Furthermore, the role of social media for consumers as well as companies will be discussed. The research method used in this paper is a meta-analysis of