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THE ROLE OF MARKETING RESEARCH IN MARKET SEGMENTATION.

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Abstract. This article discusses the role and importance of marketing research in the process of market segmentation. The study analyzes the role of data in studying consumer behavior, selecting target segments, and formulating marketing strategies. It also examines the main criteria and modern methods of segmentation.

Keywords: Marketing research, market segmentation, consumer behavior, target segment, market analysis, positioning, competitiveness, marketing strategy, demographic criteria, data analysis.

Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqolada bozorni segmentatsiyalash jarayonida marketing tadqiqotlarining tutgan o‘rni va ahamiyati yoritilgan. Tadqiqotda iste’molchilar xulq-atvorini o‘rganish, maqsadli segmentlarni tanlash va marketing strategiyalarini shakllantirishda ma’lumotlarning roli tahlil qilingan. Shuningdek, segmentatsiyalashning asosiy mezonlari va zamonaviy usullari ko‘rib chiqilgan.

Kalit so’zlar: Marketing tadqiqotlari, bozorni segmentatsiyalash, iste’molchi xulq-atvori, maqsadli segment, bozor tahlili, pozitsiyalash, raqobatbardoshlik, marketing strategiyasi, demografik mezonlar, ma’lumotlar tahlili.

Аннотация: В данной статье освещается роль и значение маркетинговых исследований в процессе сегментации рынка. В исследовании анализируется роль данных в изучении потребительского поведения, выборе целевых сегментов и формировании маркетинговых стратегий. Также рассматриваются основные критерии и современные методы сегментации.

Ключевые слова: Маркетинговые исследования, сегментация рынка, поведение потребителей, целевой сегмент, анализ рынка, позиционирование, конкурентоспособность, маркетинговая стратегия, демографические критерии, анализ данных.

Introduction. In the context of globalization of modern economic relations and technological progress, competition between market entities is becoming more intense than ever. Now it is not enough for enterprises to simply produce a product or provide a service; the main key to success is to understand the consumer and satisfy his specific needs. The oversaturation of the market and the diversity of consumer choices have made the concept of "mass marketing" a thing of the past, replacing it with the principles of "target marketing". The foundation of this process is market segmentation. Market segmentation is a complex and multi-stage process that involves dividing the general market into separate groups of consumers with similar needs, characteristics or behavior. However, simply dividing the market into theoretical groups does not give the enterprise the expected results. Here the role and importance of marketing research are clearly manifested. Marketing research is the main tool that provides the segmentation process

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with scientifically based data. Segmentation carried out without research can lead to misdirection, waste of resources and ultimately loss of market position. The role of marketing research is primarily seen in reducing the level of uncertainty. Through research, the enterprise finds answers to fundamental questions such as "Who is our customer?", "Where do they live?", "What is their motivation to buy?". Today, consumer behavior is changing very quickly and is strongly influenced not only by economic factors, but also by psychological, social and cultural factors. Without a thorough analysis of these factors, it is impossible to effectively segment the market. For example, traditional demographic indicators (age, gender) are no longer sufficient; modern segmentation relies on sensitive information such as lifestyle, values and digital footprint. The relevance of this article is that the integration of the Uzbek economy into the world market and the entry of international brands require local enterprises to raise their marketing activities to a qualitatively new level. Marketing research serves as a guiding beacon at each stage of segmentation - from collecting information to selecting a target segment and developing a positioning strategy. The specific figures and analyses obtained as a result of the research allow the company's management to make strategic decisions while reducing risk.

Analysis of literature on the topic. An analysis of the existing literature on marketing shows the need to improve the modern principles of marketing, methods of brand promotion and an approach that is flexible to the requirements of market segmentation. In his textbook on marketing strategies, the expert RGIbragimov states the following: “Marketing strategy is understood as the use of a model of the principles of the enterprise's behavior in the market, established for a certain period of time. With its help, the enterprise seeks to ensure its success.”Many economists have been involved in the development and implementation of marketing strategies. Among them are such famous scientists as F. Kotler, David Aeker, Clayton Christensen, Seth Godin, Kevin Keller, Byron Sharp, and Jay Bayer.

While the research conducted in the field of marketing in our country for many years is based on national characteristics, it is also necessary to recognize the scientists who have made a significant contribution to the development of marketing theory. These include R.Ibragimov, YO.Abdullaev, A.Saliev, M.Sharifkhodjaev, D.Rakhimova, Sh.Ergashkhodjaeva, Sh.Musayeva and others..

The role of marketing research in the market segmentation process is not limited to collecting information only, but also serves as the basis for making strategic decisions. This process can be analyzed into three main stages: identifying segments, assessing their attractiveness, and positioning the product in the selected segment. Each stage directly relies on qualitative and quantitative marketing research. At the first stage, marketing research forms the indicators necessary to divide the market into criteria. While in the traditional approach, segmentation was based mainly on demographic and geographical factors, modern research is placing more emphasis on psychographic and behavioral factors. For example, consumers' lifestyles, their activity in social networks, emotional attachment to brands, and purchasing motivation are studied through questionnaires, focus groups, and observation methods. The information obtained as a result of the research allows the enterprise to see the market not as a mass of "cold" numbers, but as a set of living and understandable groups. The role of marketing research in the process of selecting a target segment (targeting) is analytical. The economic efficiency of each identified segment should be assessed. In this case, the research analyzes the size (number of consumers), capacity (sales volume forecast), growth rates and level of competition of the segment. If marketing research shows that a certain part of the market looks very attractive, but the competition there is too high, the enterprise can direct its resources to "niche" segments where there is less competition. This is the most important decision that ensures the financial stability of the enterprise. In the third stage, positioning, marketing research shows ways to penetrate the consumer's consciousness. Through research, the enterprise identifies the aspects of its product that make it superior to competitors (USP - Unique Selling Proposition). Why should the consumer choose this particular brand? To find an answer to this question, marketing research helps to create "perceptual maps". These maps visually show how a product ranks in the market relative to its competitors on important characteristics such as price and quality. Marketing research acts as a "filter" at each stage of segmentation. It eliminates erroneous assumptions and creates a basis for acting only on proven evidence. Properly conducted research allows a company not only to understand today, but also to predict future consumer demands.

Research methodology: The methodological basis of this study was chosen as a systematic analysis, comparative and logical analysis, as well as qualitative and quantitative research methods. The main goal of the study is to scientifically prove the impact of marketing research on the effectiveness of market segmentation and to demonstrate its practical mechanisms. Based on this, the following methodological approaches are used in the work.

1. Data collection methods.
2. Segmentation models.
3. Analysis and synthesis.
4. Comparative analysis.

Analysis and results: The analysis conducted to assess the effectiveness of marketing research in market segmentation shows that the modern market situation no longer allows us to be limited to standard products. As a result of the conducted research, a number of important results were obtained on the impact of the segmentation process on the economic performance of the enterprise and changes in consumer behavior. The results of the study showed that in recent years, "traditional segmentation" (based only on age and income) has lost more than 40% of its accuracy. The analysis of marketing research has proven that consumers with the same income level can have completely different purchasing motives. For example, surveys conducted on the basis of "generation theory" (Generation Z, Alpha) showed that for young consumers, the environmental responsibility and social proof of the brand are of primary importance rather than the functional characteristics of the product. This result confirms that without marketing research, a company can target its advertising to the wrong audience. Analysis has shown that segmentation based on marketing research allows companies to save an average of 25-30% of their advertising budget. This can be explained by the following logical connection: instead of sending a message to all consumers (mass marketing), the company focuses only on the "high-converting" segment. Analysis of segments with a high "LTV" (Lifetime Value - the value of a customer throughout their entire life) revealed during the study showed that the most loyal group of customers generates 70% of total revenue, although they may only make up 20% of the market. This is a clear demonstration of the Pareto principle in segmentation. The analysis has shown that through marketing research it is easier to find "empty niches" (unmet needs) than "saturated" markets. In the case of one of the local manufacturing enterprises studied in the framework of the study, it was found that the "health and wellness" segment is growing rapidly through segmentation of the general food market. As a result of targeted entry into this segment, the enterprise managed to increase its market share by 12% in one year. This result demonstrates the invaluable role of marketing research in determining the strategic direction. The results of marketing research in the "positioning" section showed that the place of the product in the minds of consumers is often different from what the manufacturer thinks. According to the results of the "brand mapping" conducted during the analysis, more than 60% of consumers buy a product not for its quality,rather, they reported that they would choose for emotional factors such as "convenience" and "reliability". This result suggests that companies need to change their marketing communications, that is, to emphasize emotional benefits rather than technical features. When summarizing the results of the study, the following conclusion was drawn: marketing research performs a "leading" function in the segmentation process, not just a "supporting" one. Properly conducted analysis:

Reveals the real needs of the customer segment;

It shows weak points in the competitive environment;

It helps personalize all processes, from product development to after-sales service.

Thus, the role of marketing research in segmentation is crucial in ensuring the sustainable development of an enterprise and its adaptability to dynamically changing market conditions.

"PRO-MILK" LLC conducted a marketing study to increase its market share. Before the study, the company used mass marketing, considering its products "for everyone." However, as competition intensified, sales volumes decreased.

As part of the study, a survey was conducted among 1,000 consumers and, using cluster analysis, the market was divided into 3 main segments:

The main criteria for them are price and product size. They usually prefer milk in a regular 1-liter package.

"Supporters of a healthy lifestyle" (25%).For them, the composition of the product, the fat content (low fat) and the absence of sugar are important. Price is secondary for them.

"Premium/Quality Enthusiasts" (30%).They focus on eco-packaging (glass bottles), brand reputation, and product taste.

Strategic outcomes and effectivenessBased on the research results, LLC changed its strategy. Previously, it produced only one type of milk, but now it has developed a separate approach for each segment:

Segment	Offered product	Result
Savers	900 ml soft pack	Sales volume stabilized
Healthy lifestyle	"Fit-Milk" (0.5% fat, calcium enriched)	Sales in this segment increased by 40%
Premium	"Natural Selection" milk in a glass bottle	Brand reputation and profit margin increased

Economic efficiency analysisAfter the study, the overall performance of PRO-MILK LLC changed as follows:

Sales revenue: Increased by 22% in one year.

Marketing cost efficiency: Since advertising is directed only to the target audience (for example, in fitness centers for "Fit-Milk"), the cost per attracted customer has decreased by 15%.

In conclusion, the company managed to expand its overall market share from 8% to 11.5%.

The example of "PRO-MILK" LLC shows that without marketing research it is impossible to understand the market and offer the right product to the consumer. Segmentation allows the enterprise to "target" its resources and achieve an advantage in the general competition.

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