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**MASTER’S THESIS**

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**T A S K**  
**TO MASTER THESIS**

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#### 4. Work plan

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4.	Completing of the second section according to the supervisor recommendations. Preparation of the thesis' third section
5.	Completing of the third section according to the supervisor recommendations. Preparation of a report for a scientific conference with a presentation of the main results of the thesis
6.	Writing of the introduction, conclusions of the thesis. Making references list
7.	Submission of the thesis to the Department of Management and Administration

#### 5. Date of assignment issue June 30, 2023

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## INTRODUCTION

The dynamism of the external environment, the acceleration of business processes in the digital space in today's world requires enterprise managers to respond instantly to market challenges and solve internal production problems. Marketing communications are aimed at stimulating the sale of products, improving the process of customer service, in particular through information support. Therefore, the company's profitability directly depends on the effectiveness of marketing communications aimed at satisfying consumer requests through a permanent information policy.

Today, without a doubt, one of the key trends in working with the consumer is the orientation of emphasis on the communication activity of enterprises in the virtual environment – the Internet. Nowadays, the customer who does not use mobile communication or Internet services is becoming almost an exception, so the research of the fixed Internet connection market is relevant. IT companies focus their efforts on the development of information technologies that use modern methods of intelligent data analysis and investigate the behavior of customers who use the services of IT companies.

The concept of marketing communications has been widely studied by the following scientists: Philip Kotler, Gary Armstrong, Chris Fill, David Ogilvy, Richard Fildale, Don E. Schultz, Stanley I. Tannenbaum, John R., Rossiter, Larry Percy.

The aim of the study is to substantiate theoretical approaches and develop practical recommendations for the development of directions for improving the management of marketing communications at the enterprise.

Achieving the set goal requires solving the following tasks:

- to determine the content of the concept of marketing communications, their goals and functions;
- to summarize the company's marketing communication tools;

- to determine the peculiarities of the formation of integrated marketing communications;
- to justify the role of marketing communications in increasing the efficiency of the enterprise;
- to assess the current state of the company's marketing communication activities and substantiate the feasibility of its improvement;
- to propose directions for improving the management of marketing communication activities in order to increase the efficiency of the company's activities;
- to economically justify the feasibility of implementing the proposed measures.

The object of the study is the process of managing marketing communications at the enterprise.

The subject of the study is the theoretical and practical aspects of the development of directions for improving the management of marketing communications as a factor in increasing the efficiency of the enterprise.

In order to achieve the set goal, the following general scientific methods were used in the research process: historical-logical – to study the essence of marketing communications management, system analysis – in the case of a comprehensive study of the management object and the formation of the obtained indicators of the state of development and the effectiveness of the use of marketing communications of IT companies, analysis and synthesis – to analyze the company's country marketing communications; economic-mathematical – to determine the economic component of the implementation of the proposed measures for the development and effective use of marketing communications; correlation-regression analysis – to establish relationships between marketing communications and the effectiveness of the company's activities; graphic – for a visual representation of statistical material, as well as a schematic representation of individual theoretical and practical provisions.

The scientific novelty of the obtained research results lies in the improvement of theoretical and practical recommendations for companies in the IT sector to improve

the use of marketing communications.

The practical significance of the obtained results presented in the work consists in the development of new directions for the development of marketing communications, defining their role and increasing the effectiveness of the marketing department.

The information sources used include: company reports, data presented on the information portal of the DOU programmer community.

Approbation of work results. The main results of the research on modern marketing communications management tools are presented at the International scientific and practical internet conference “Problems and prospects of ensuring sustainable socio-economic development of territories”, Kharkiv (October 27–28, 2023).

# SECTION 1

## THEORETICAL FUNDAMENTALS OF MANAGEMENT OF MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS OF THE ENTERPRISE

### 1.1 The essence, goals and functions of marketing communications

Today's business is evolving faster than ever before. Today's markets are saturated with goods and services, and competition is extremely high. In order to stand out from other businesses, it is important to have an effective marketing strategy that will put your company in the forefront. A key factor in business success is the effective use of marketing communications. Consumers today have become more informed and demanding. They actively search for information about goods and services on the Internet and consume content in various formats. Effective marketing communications help attract and retain this audience. Modern marketing tools allow you to measure the effectiveness of each marketing event. This allows companies to optimize their strategy and investments.

The main emphasis in marketing is on defining and satisfying the needs of the consumer. To determine consumer needs and implement marketing strategies and programs aimed at their satisfaction, marketers need information about consumers, competitors, and other market participants that they are interested in. Moreover, a number of factors have appeared in recent years that have further increased the need to obtain detailed information. As the business scale of companies grows, so does the need for information about larger and geographically distant markets [37, 48]. It is difficult not to agree with the statement of supporters of the theory of information society that we live in an era of total power of information distributed through various channels with the help of sophisticated information technologies. The key element of the "information society" is communication. In turn, the information space is literally permeated with advertising, brands demand loyalty from consumers from the pages of traditional mass media, the Internet [35].

A complex and dynamic marketing environment, its sharp transformation is caused not only by a new paradigm of economic development (a long-term factor of transformation), but also by factors that intensified sharply and aggressively – the pandemic, quarantine restrictions, changes in consumer behavior, activation of online sales. In times of war and market turbulence, marketing communications remain a key element of the marketing strategy of enterprises in many spheres of activity.

The efficiency of the enterprise can be affected by positive and negative factors. The positive factors contributing to the improvement of activity efficiency include: factors of resource provision of the enterprise; factors ensuring the planned level of economic and technological development; factors affecting the commercial and social efficiency of economic activity.

One of the key factors in the effective operation of modern enterprises on the domestic and international markets is the ability to strategically organize a complex of marketing communications. The complex of marketing communications directly affects the enterprise's resource provision, interaction with consumers and clients, and thus ensures the effectiveness of its activities and development.

Marketing communications should be understood as the process of transmitting information about the enterprise and its product with the aim of influencing the target and other audiences and receiving counter-information about the reaction of these audiences to the influence exerted by the enterprise [34].

Marketing communications, often referred to as marcom or integrated marketing communications (IMC), is a multifaceted concept that involves various forms of communication used by organizations to convey messages to their target audiences. Different authors and experts in the field of marketing and advertising have offered their definitions of marketing communications. Here are a few definitions by different authors (Table 1.1).

These definitions highlight the broad scope of marketing communications, encompassing various communication channels and tools used by organizations to engage with their target audiences, create brand awareness, and ultimately drive

consumer behavior. The field of marketing communications continues to evolve in response to changing consumer behavior, technological advancements, and new communication platforms.

Table 1.1 – Definition of marketing communications

Author	Definition
Philip Kotler and Gary Armstrong [42]	Marketing communications include all the tools an organization uses to communicate with its customers, including advertising, sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing, personal selling, and online marketing
Chris Fill [25]	Integrated Marketing Communications is a strategic business process used to plan, develop, execute and evaluate coordinated, measurable, persuasive brand communication programs over time with consumers, customers, prospects, and other targeted, relevant external and internal audiences
David Ogilvy [53]	The function of advertising is to sell goods. To do this, it must attract attention, engage the interest, spark desire, and prompt action
Richard Fizdale, Don E. Schultz, Stanley I. Tannenbaum [26]	Integrated Marketing Communications is the process of developing and implementing various forms of persuasive communications programs with customers and prospects over time. The goal of the program is to influence or directly affect the behavior of the selected audience
John R. Rossiter and Larry Percy [65]	Marketing communications are the means by which firms attempt to inform, persuade, and remind consumers, directly or indirectly, about the products and brands that they sell. This is achieved through advertising, public relations, sales promotion, and a variety of other communication tools

Marketing communications is a two-way process that involves influencing target audiences as well as receiving feedback from consumers.

The structure of the marketing communications complex is influenced by the type of product, the degree of purchasing power of potential consumers, the promotion strategy, the state of competitors, financial capabilities and the goals of the enterprise.

As the term implies, marketing communications function within the marketing system. Traditionally known as the advertising element of the 4P marketing complex, the main goal of marketing communications is to reach a certain audience, with subsequent influence on its behavior (Fig. 1.1).

The objectives of marketing communications are derived from the company's mission and overall marketing objectives. The main goals of marketing communications are demand formation and sales stimulation. In addition to the main goals, secondary goals are distinguished, that is, those that should be implemented after

the achievement of the main goals. In table 1.2. the classification of the goals of marketing communications depending on directions and main tools is considered. The classification of goals by direction mainly helps to structure them and compare them with each other.

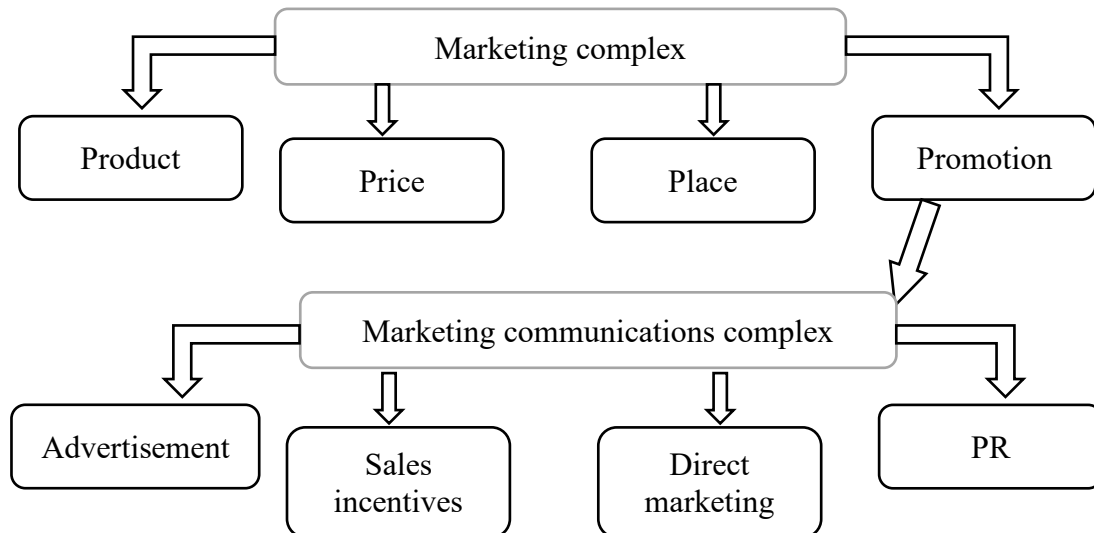


Figure 1.1 – Communications in the marketing mix (compiled by the author according to [59])

This classification takes into account various aspects and strategies of marketing communications, based on the main directions and tools of communication. Organizations can choose the goals that best suit their needs and strategic objectives.

Most business-related goals are focused on generating and maintaining sales. The goals related to the tools are aimed at ensuring consumer loyalty, forming and maintaining a toolkit of marketing communications.

The development of marketing communications is directly related to the development of marketing and innovative development [38]. Thus, F. Kotler noted that marketing as an element of philosophy, on the one hand, and as a complex system of actions, on the other hand, should be aimed at the innovative development of industrial enterprises [41]. A qualitatively formed complex of marketing communications and innovative activity are the driving forces for the development and effective existence of a modern enterprise. Marketing allows you to determine the needs of the market and forms the basis for creating an innovative product that will

be in demand on the market.

Table 1.2 – Classification of goals of marketing communications (compiled by the author according to [72])

Brand related	Business related
Increasing brand recognition among the target audience. Bringing the brand to the market or expanding its participation in the market. Learning the unique features of the brand and its values Building a positive image of the company and improving its reputation Crisis response and reputation management.	Attracting new customers or consumers Retaining existing customers and increasing their loyalty. Creation of loyalty programs and rewards for regular purchase. Attracting customers to additional services and products.
Product related	Tools related
Increasing the number of products or services sold. Closing sales and driving consumer activity. Increase average check and profitability. Launching information campaigns for new products or services. Dissemination of information about innovations and advantages of new offers. Attracting consumers to purchase new products.	Increasing consumer loyalty. Expanding the audience through various channels (online, offline, etc.). Identification and development of specific tools. Providing a portfolio of communication tools. Interaction with the public, partners and public organizations.

Today, innovation and a creative approach in a competitive environment are considered to be one of the main factors of the company's development and successful operation. The ability to innovate is the ability of companies to quickly generate new ideas, methods, introduce new products and services, or improve existing ones. One of the main conditions for the introduction of innovations is the presence of an effective marketing system that connects the enterprise with end consumers to constantly identify new needs and requirements of buyers.

At one time, P. Drucker said: "Any enterprise has only two functions – marketing and innovation. Only they create a result" [23]. He believed that marketing and innovation were an important foundation for the company's success.

Marketing communications, often referred to as marcom or integrated marketing communications (IMC), serve various essential functions within an organization's marketing and business strategy. These functions include (Fig. 1.2).

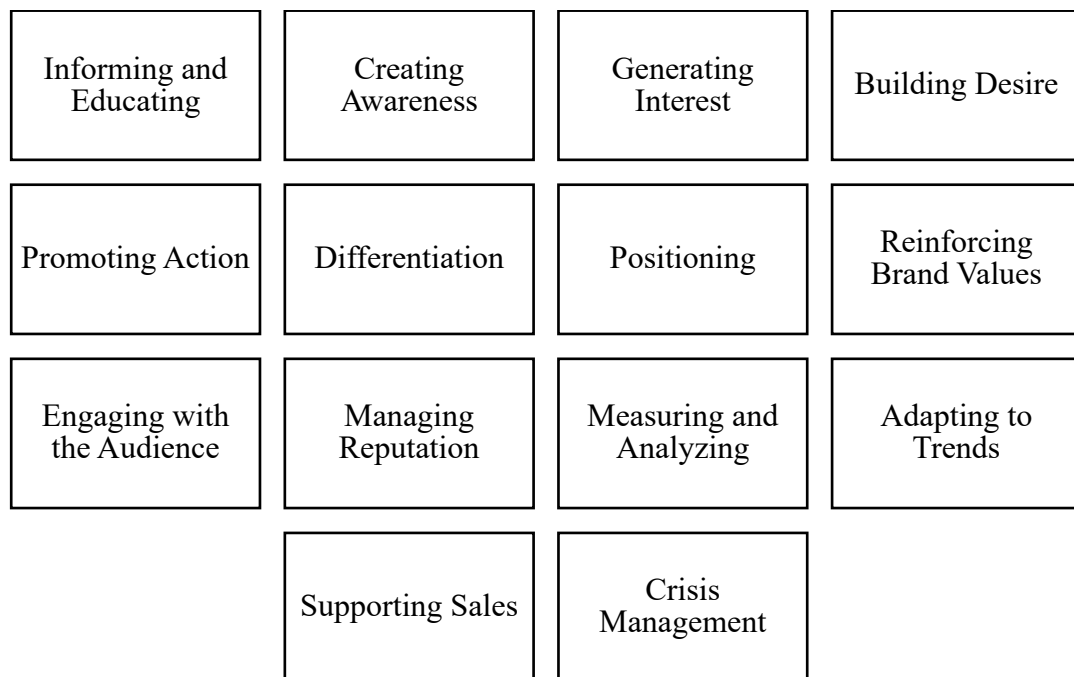


Figure 1.2 – Functions of marketing communications (compiled by the author according to [7, 23])

Marketing communications provide information to consumers about products, services, features, benefits, and how they can fulfill their needs. They educate consumers about a company’s offerings. One of the primary functions of marketing communications is to create awareness about a brand, product, or service. This includes raising brand awareness among the target audience. Marketing communications aim to capture and hold the audience’s interest. They do this by presenting information in a compelling and engaging manner. Effective marketing communications strive to build a desire for the product or service being promoted. This involves making the audience want the product or service.

Ultimately, the goal of marketing communications is to motivate the audience to take action. This action can include making a purchase, signing up for a newsletter, sharing content, or any other desired behavior. Marketing communications help to differentiate a brand or product from its competitors. They highlight what makes a product unique or better. Communications play a role in positioning a brand in the minds of consumers. It’s about creating a specific image or perception of the brand. Marketing communications often reinforce the core values and messages

associated with a brand. They remind customers of the brand's promises and what it stands for.

Through various channels, marketing communications engage with the target audience, whether it's through social media, email, content marketing, or other means. Communications can help manage a company's reputation, addressing any negative issues or crises that may arise. An essential function is measuring the effectiveness of marketing communications. This includes tracking key performance indicators (KPIs) and analyzing data to refine future strategies. The marketing communications function needs to adapt to emerging trends and technologies, whether it's social media, influencer marketing, or AI-driven personalization. Marketing communications can support the sales process by providing sales teams with relevant materials, leads, and tools to close deals. In times of crisis, marketing communications can play a role in managing and mitigating damage to a brand's reputation.

These functions collectively help organizations promote their products or services, connect with their target audience, and achieve their marketing and business objectives. The specific mix of functions and strategies can vary depending on the company, its industry, and its goals.

Marketing in general and the marketing communications system in particular have long been not just one of the elements of the management system, but one of the driving forces in the development and support of the effective activity of the enterprise. Planning and a comprehensive approach are the basis of the formation of a high-quality and effective toolkit of marketing communications.

Marketing communications planning is a component of marketing planning and is not possible without formulating a marketing strategy.

A marketing strategy is a program of marketing activities of an enterprise, which includes medium and long-term decisions that determine benchmarks and direct individual marketing measures to achieve the set goals. Marketing strategy is one of the functional strategies of the enterprise and includes market, product, price, sales and communication strategies.

Marketing communication strategy is a complex program of actions aimed

at selecting priority tools and measures of marketing communications, their optimal combination and strengthening of their integrative impact on consumers [34].

Marketing planning is a management process of coordination of marketing goals, the company's potential (opportunities and resources) and the conditions of the external environment [34].

Marketing communications planning is a sequential process consisting of several stages. Table 1.3 formulates the basic stages and gives their content.

Table 1.3 – The process of planning marketing communications (compiled by the author according to [24])

	Stages	Content
1.	Analysis of input data	analysis of the results of initial research to collect information that will be used in further stages
2.	Determination of strategic goals and objectives for them	strategic goals and objectives for marketing communications are defined, taking into account the mission of the enterprise, the goals of the organization and other strategic factors
3.	Definition of marketing strategy	choosing a strategy that meets the goals and mission of the enterprise
4.	Definition of communication strategies	
4.1.	Research of communication strategic possibilities	determination of possible options for strategic decisions
4.2.	Definition of communication strategy	creating a strategy that integrates strategic decisions with various communication tools
4.3.	Detailing the communication strategy	refinement of the media plan and programs for various communication tools
5.	Formation of the communication strategy budget	calculation of the budget, which takes into account the chosen method and the choice of communication measures
6.	Implementation and control of the implementation of the communication strategy	implementation of strategy and monitoring of results
7.	Evaluation of the strategy in accordance with the stated goals	evaluation of the effectiveness of the communication strategy based on predetermined indicators
8.	Adjustment or change of communication strategy	if necessary, the causes of gaps are analyzed and measures are developed to correct the situation

Taking into account the complexity of the market interaction of economic agents and consumers, marketing communication in the provision of innovation processes should be organized throughout all stages of the innovation cycle. The growing number

of innovations and the reduction of time between the introduction of new products require proper communication support for all stages of the innovation cycle [25].

Planning of marketing communications of innovative enterprises has certain features:

- the need to take into account the negative impact of the external environment;
- the problem of choosing the optimal means of conveying information;
- the need to apply an integrated approach [26].

As with the planning of any economic activity, certain obstacles and difficulties may arise when planning marketing communications:

- the existence of interconnection and mutual influence between marketing elements;
- difficulties in determining the basic elements in the complex of marketing communications;
- constant emergence of new elements of marketing communications;
- inconsistency in the work between the divisions of the enterprise;
- lack of resources and information;
- inconsistency between information messages and the organization's mission and goals;
- lack of understanding of the need to plan a complex of marketing communications.

The marketing approach to defining a “new product” is to evaluate changes in the form, value, utility, content, or packaging of products that are relevant to consumer decisions and satisfy consumer needs and requirements. That is why it is important, based on the tools of marketing communications and psychological influences, to clearly explain such changes on the part of manufacturers for the desired perception by potential consumers. Such communication clarification should be based on the application of new consumer properties of innovative developments in informational interaction [39].

Considering all of the above, the main tasks of the marketing complex in the enterprise management system are:

1. Identification of unsatisfied and undefined consumer needs (marketing research and segmentation of the market by consumer needs provide an opportunity not only to make assumptions about potential customers, but also to identify potential problems of consumers and unsatisfied needs that can be solved by innovative products).

2. Understanding consumer behavior and attitude towards the product (analysis of marketing trends reveals cultural, social and psychological dynamics that must be taken into account by the company's management when developing an innovative product and forming communications with consumers).

3. Interaction with consumers (using the marketing mix, potential consumers are informed about the main purpose, functionality and advantages of using the innovative product).

4. Development of the entire consumer experience ecosystem (implementation of innovations is possible only with an integrated approach).

5. Definition of a market strategy adapted to both innovatively oriented enterprises and customers (emphasis not only on the product, but on all elements of the 4P complex: product, price, place, promotion).

In the absence of (or insufficient) information about the market, customers, users and their needs, wrong decisions are made, which can ultimately lead to the failure of an innovative product.

Approximately 60 to 80% of new products fail, the reasons for which are based on a lack of customer focus, an underappreciated role of marketing, and an ineffective mix of marketing communications. That is why, in the management process, innovative managers and project managers should pay attention to the marketing system in general and the formation of an effective set of marketing communications in particular.

Therefore, in the following subsections, we will consider the main tools of marketing communications and the prerequisites for creating integrated marketing communications at enterprises.

## 1.2 Tools of marketing communications in company management

Marketing communication tools are a set of means that are used to deliver information to the target audience. Most of them have changed due to the active development of information technology. For example, advertising in social networks, affiliate marketing and many other things are all marketing communication tools.

Forrester research shows a significant increase in spending on automation in the marketing sphere. By 2023, according to the report, global spending on IT tools will exceed \$25 billion, which means growth of 14%. And every year the use of technology in routine processes will only grow [2].

Usually, marketing communication tools complement each other and affect consumers in a complex way. Advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, direct marketing, and public relations (PR) are generally recognized as the main tools of marketing communications. These tools are fundamental for both traditionally oriented and innovatively oriented enterprises. Let's consider each of them in more detail.

Advertising is a paid form of non-personal one-way information message through mass media or other means of communication with consumers. Advertising is a very common tool of marketing communications and is used for targeted influence on the consumer audience.

Direct marketing is an interactive marketing system that uses one or more means of communication to increase sales, improve consumer response, etc. Direct marketing is aimed at forming two-way communications between producers and consumers.

Public relations is an important tool for building a reputation, creates a positive attitude about the manufacturer, helps consumers better understand the company and its products. Public relations involves interviews, press releases, editorials and even sponsorship of major sporting events.

Personal selling is an individual oral presentation of goods and services to an existing and potential consumer for the purpose of a purchase-sale act. As a component of the complex of marketing communications, personal sales should

ensure the formation of appropriate ideas about the product and encourage the consumer to buy. One of the advantages of this tool is the provision of two-way communications between producers and consumers.

Personalization involves the use of a number of tools (analysis of big data (online communities, text analytics, mobile first surveys, social media analytics, big data analytics, mobile qualitative, artificial intelligence, virtual technologies) in marketing research, in data analysis, in the formation of trade offers, expansion of the range of additional services, when working with a specific buyer without involving him in the processes of forming marketing programs. For example, Amazon, Target, and Lowes have launched an AR feature that lets shoppers visualize the furniture in their homes. Pinterest offers Lens to find visually similar Pins, an artificial intelligence powered visual search that lets shoppers find and buy items just by taking a photo, identify the product, issue a list of sites that offer it, compare prices and delivery conditions.

One of the most promising innovations, which applies to communications, merchandising, and sales, are interactive storefronts, which combine a video screen with direct contact: a passerby can stop and play an interesting game, try a product, change the storefront interface. Interactive interactions strengthen the consumer's emotional contact with the brand. The COVID-19 pandemic has intensified the trend of interactivity to minimize human-to-human contact and to reduce personnel costs.

Sales promotion is a wide range of measures implemented with the aim of ensuring or accelerating product sales along the entire route of its movement in the market environment [4]. Sales promotions are generally short-term in nature and include product demonstrations, free samples, prizes, promotions and contests.

In addition to the traditional ones, Internet communications are also highlighted, the role of which has only steadily grown in recent years. Theoretical and empirical tools of marketing communication are also distinguished. Theoretical communications are generally informational in nature, aimed at achieving a general dialogue with the audience. Experiential communications have a more practical nature and involve personal contact with the consumer.

On the basis of this classification, a matrix for the selection of marketing

communication tools in the activities of enterprises was formed (Table 1.4).

Table 1.4 – Matrix of selection of marketing communication tools in innovative activities of enterprises (compiled by the author according to [11])

	Theoretical communications	Empirical communications
Traditional communications	Aim: a generalized explanation of the features of new products. Tools: personal appeals, direct marketing, promotions, surveys, contests, specialized (as well as territorial) mass media, automobile directories.	Aim: influence on the formation of needs, preferences, tastes and features of information perception of consumers. Tools: trial marketing, exhibition and fair activities, websites, personal presentation of products; improvement of internal corporate communications, which affects for the transfer of personnel.
Internet communications (virtual)	Aim: achieving a general dialogue about innovative developments in information networks. Tools: banner advertising, media advertising on thematic sites, rating sites, direct online marketing.	Aim: establishment of an interactive dialogue with the consumer, participation of consumers in the creation and approval of new products. Tools: dialogues on partner sites, social networks, forums, online polls, online voting, feedback exchange.

According to this matrix, a combination of traditional and theoretical tools provides a theoretical explanation of innovations in a traditional way. The combination of traditional and experiential communications is aimed at creating a full-fledged targeted influence with the aim of forming consumer preferences and needs. The combination of theoretical and virtual communications ensures proper consumer awareness of the innovative product and creates a virtual dialogue between the innovative enterprise and potential consumers. The combination of virtual and experiential communications provides an interactive dialogue with consumers and provides an opportunity to get acquainted with the characteristics of an innovative product.

In recent years, the concept of mass marketing is increasingly losing its relevance. In the conditions of the active development of information technologies, the creation of new communication channels and their use in marketing activities, there is a reorientation towards micro markets and clearer target groups of consumers. Thus,

the transition from a mass market to a concentrated market causes structural changes in the marketing system, in response to which new communication tools appear. Some of them are given in table 1.5.

Table 1.5 – Characteristics of the latest tools of marketing communications (compiled by the author according to [24, 38])

Marketing communication tool	Characteristic
Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning	Technology that functions according to the principle of the human brain, a mechanism of logically ordered actions of a machine that independently makes decisions in the context of a given request. These can be technologies for creating: sites, content, client recommendations, e-mail newsletters, algorithms for ranking and displaying news in social networks, photo filters, advertising campaigns, etc.
Affiliate marketing	Networks built on the principle of affiliate marketing pay affiliates rewards for attracting new customers, user registrations or sales that occurred due to this attraction; the main goal is to gain a new audience thanks to the existing one
Internet of Things (IoT)	A set of physical objects that are interconnected through digital technologies provide the opportunity to obtain information about the client and, on this basis, to satisfy the needs of clients with the right connection, at the right time on the right device
Guerrilla marketing	Mobilization of marketing efforts of the enterprise to achieve the set goal at minimal costs and using original approaches
Event marketing	It is aimed at organizing special events, providing the consumer with a personal positive experience of communicating with the brand, thus forming an emotional connection with it. Often, it is not the fact of participation that is important, but the information wave about the event and the user's feeling of involvement in the process
Influence marketing	The essence of this tool is the cooperation of a company with an influencer to promote its own products. This is a great way to attract new audiences to your product and build a loyal following
Local marketing	Promotion of goods by voluntary participants with the help of organizing people for active propaganda
Provocative marketing (PM)	Based on the absolute novelty of each project. It does not give ready-made solutions, but works secretly, affects the subconscious, intrigues and involves in an emotional game, calls on the consumer to independently search for the encrypted content of the advertising message. PM provokes the creation of conflicting opinions, generates a wave of rumors. Has no standard mechanics, more economical than advertising
Entertainment marketing	It consists in using techniques of the entertainment industry to popularize goods and services. It is important to create a positive atmosphere that will be associated with a specific enterprise, and to make marketing communications bright and playful
Life-placement	This is a combination of theatrical productions and marketing promotion, where life itself is the stage. The actors are specially trained promoters, the props are a product or service, the script is a pre-developed campaign plan, and the audience is ourselves

Marketing communication tool	Characteristic
Teaser	This is an advertising message constructed as a riddle, which contains part of the information about the product, but the product itself is not shown. Teasers usually appear at an early stage of product promotion and serve to create intrigue around it
Product placement	This is an advertising technique, which consists in the fact that props in films, TV shows, computer games, music videos or books have a real commercial counterpart. Usually, the advertised product itself, its logo, or its good quality are mentioned
SMM (social media marketing)	Promotion of goods by means of social networks. A comprehensive concept that covers blogger videos, viral advertising, groups in social networks and other forms of information dissemination
WOM technology	This is the technology of “viral” dissemination of information due to the “word of mouth” effect. When witnessing some strange events, people tell about them to friends, relatives, acquaintances; photo and video materials spread spontaneously on the Internet
Flash mob	Execution by a group of people of previously discussed actions for original and interesting advertising of a product
Buzz marketing	It is characterized as the management of the reaction to a certain (advertising) event using the techniques of psychological influence of “contagion”, imitation, fashion. It is also the generation of rumours, the resonance of public opinion after the event, and involves the creation of excitement and hype around the product
Big data	Tools for analysis, comparison, forecasting of various data sets. Sources of data through digital technologies and new methods of data collection and measurement
Marketing automation	Technologies of collection (active and passive research), analysis of information and personalized interaction with customers
Mobile marketing	Involvement of users’ mobile devices in the implementation of Internet marketing
Digital marketing	Marketing built on the basis of digital technologies has a broader concept than Internet marketing. Uses various types of marketing to promote the product, which are related to the digital sphere

Along with the above, ATL and BTL measures are distinguished in the structure of marketing communications. ATL (from the English “above-the-line” – above the line) are measures to place direct advertising in traditional mass media. ATL marketing has a wide scope of application, but does not focus on narrow target segments and does not provide for feedback communication with consumers. The main components of ATL include: television, print media, radio, outdoor advertising, Internet advertising, advertising in transport.

BTL (below-the-line) does not include traditional media. BTL refers to means of promotion that are not direct advertising and involve communication with consumers: public relations, direct marketing, personal selling, exhibitions,

sponsorship.

However, now some scientists and practitioners consider the traditional classification outdated and the demarcation conditional. Increasingly, the transition to integration is determined by noting the use of the TTL combination (“through the line”).

TTL communications are used to combine separate messages into a single whole. Their main feature is that the messages are connected by a common idea, and among the promotion channels, those that will be able to convey this message to the target consumer in the best way are chosen. With the intensification of competition, only “coordinated use of various communication tools makes it possible to achieve a higher overall result – faster and more efficiently ensures stable long-term contact with the target audience, wide awareness and loyalty of consumers” [47].

Digital marketing in China has gained paramount significance due to the country’s rapid digital transformation, widespread internet access, and the emergence of new user demographics. Overlooking digital channels in this market equates to missing out on substantial opportunities. However, mere awareness is insufficient; to thrive in this dynamic landscape, a deep understanding of the prevailing trends is necessary. This knowledge can be leveraged to tailor business strategies effectively. By doing so, both B2B and B2C companies can optimize their Return on Investment (ROI) and foster growth in this market.

The common notion is that the digital audience primarily comprises younger individuals. However, in China, the population aged 50 and above, often referred to as the “silver-haired” generation, is increasingly spending a significant amount of time online. This trend is expected to continue growing in 2023. Notably, it is projected that in the coming years, silver users will become more digitally proficient, engaging in a wider range of online activities and showing greater willingness to make online purchases.

To underscore the significance of this demographic, while in 2021, those aged 50 and above represented 25% of the total population, by 2035, this group is expected

to make up 30%. In 2022, the digital penetration rate was at 85%, with approximately 300 million users born after the 1960s, showing a 5.2% increase compared to 2021. This underscores the evolving and expanding digital landscape in China, with opportunities to engage a diverse audience [46].

While CRM systems in Western countries are primarily fueled by data gathered through user interactions on brand websites, the landscape is different in China. In China, this information is predominantly sourced from social networks, leading to the emergence of what can be referred to as Social CRM (or sCRM) rather than traditional CRM.

The primary channel for collecting such data in China is WeChat. Tencent's WeChat platform provides various services that enable companies to gather and analyze data throughout the entire customer journey, from pre-purchase to post-purchase phases. Each interaction, such as scanning a trackable QR Code, accessing a Mini Program, or engaging in a private chat with Customer Service, is associated with a unique and specific ID code. By integrating third-party platforms like JINGdigital, Drip, or Knight, this behavioral data can be translated into actionable insights and implemented in targeted marketing and engagement strategies. This approach underscores the significance of social networks and platforms like WeChat in shaping customer relationship management in the Chinese market.

The year 2022 witnessed the rise and solidification of new internal marketplaces within applications initially conceived as social platforms. China has firmly established itself as the world's largest social commerce market, with a projected value of \$103.3 billion by the end of 2027. This remarkable success can be attributed to the unique dynamics of the customer journey in China. Chinese users seek seamless experiences that enable them to access information, evaluate products, make purchases, and complete payments, all within a single platform, without ever leaving the app.

It's crucial to recognize that social media serves as the primary channel for awareness and consideration among local consumers. Thus, integrating social stores into these platforms becomes exceptionally effective, enabling target consumers to make purchases as a natural extension of their journey.

Furthermore, the distinct usage patterns of these platforms should be considered. In China, marketplace research typically follows the emergence of a specific need, whereas in social commerce, it's the brand's communication, particularly the creation of valuable content, that stimulates a new need for users to fulfill. This is where Western brands with limited recognition can find increased sales opportunities. The key lies in integrating a proprietary store within the brand's official channels.

For those venturing into the market, being present on these "super apps", where the line between social and e-commerce has become blurred, is a necessity. Platforms like Douyin, WeChat, and RED are essential for brands, even those new to the market, to engage with the increasingly interconnected world of social commerce in China.

The choice and correct combination of marketing communication tools is only a component of the success of the application of the marketing communication complex. To ensure systematic and effective marketing communications, it is necessary to form the right content, direct it to the right consumers at the right time with the help of the right communication tools (Fig. 1.3).

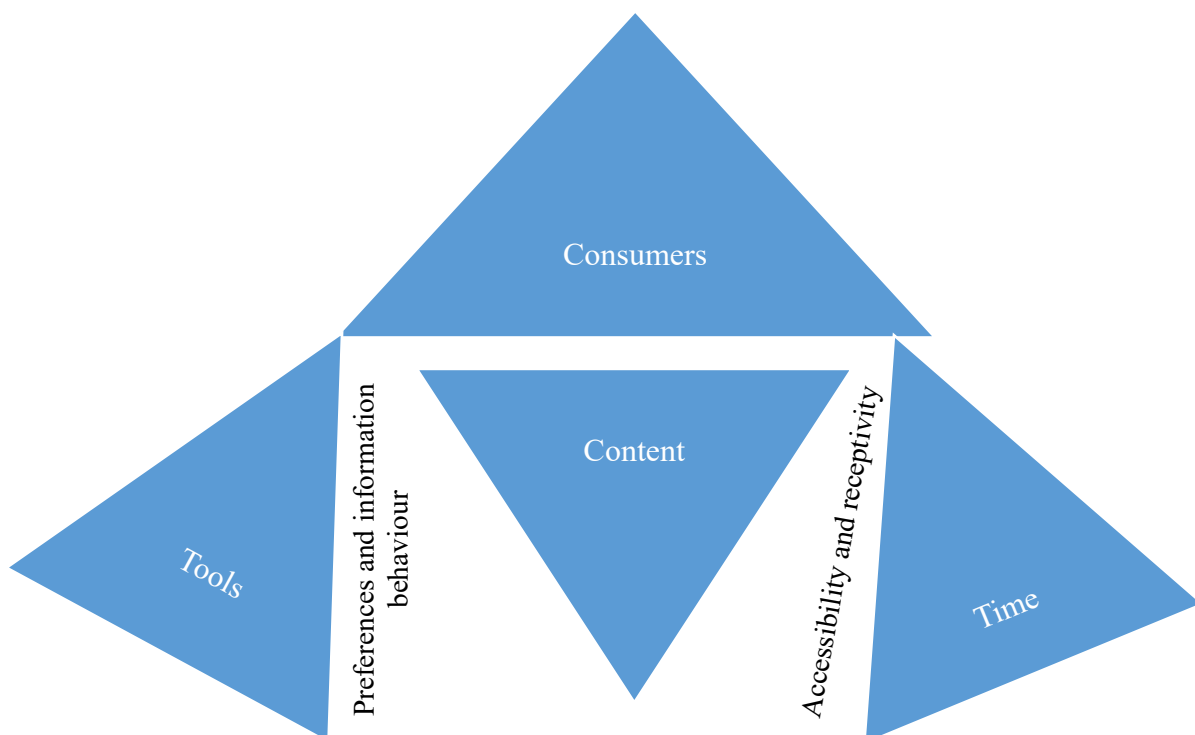


Figure 1.3 – A comprehensive approach to ensuring the effective operation of marketing communications (compiled by the author according to [24, 11])

Therefore, for the effective promotion of goods and services, it is necessary to form a universal promotion tool – integrated marketing communications, which, using different elements at the same time, provide an opportunity to strengthen each other and obtain a synergistic effect. The use of the latter allows the enterprise to create a complete image in the mind of the buyer, and also provides an opportunity to appeal to the logical and emotional component, without losing the effect. At the same time, the marketing communication policy ceases to be intrusive and aggressive in the minds of consumers, and also encourages market subjects to communicate with the company for a long time. We will talk in more detail about complex marketing communications in the next section.

### **1.3 Prerequisites for creating integrated marketing communications**

The creation of integrated marketing communications at enterprises is a reaction to radical changes in modern society. In particular, the perception of intelligence, innovation, information, technical capabilities and other aspects of human activity has undergone a change.

Modern companies are constantly trying to find new ways to communicate with consumers and improve existing ones, to convince consumers of the quality and advantages of their products. This leads to the fact that marketing communications play a critical role in creating and maintaining relationships with consumers. Growing competition in the market increases the interest in the development of sustainable and integrated connections.

In the past, the purpose of marketing communications was to sell products, but now there is a revolution in consumer-oriented development. There is a gradual transition to relationship marketing, which requires a change in the concept of marketing communications. Instead of a simple set of tools, they are turning into an integrated system of marketing communications.

A successful combination of different marketing tools leads to the creation

of integrated marketing communications. This strategy provides a comprehensive system of actions for innovatively oriented enterprises, aimed at achieving maximum economic efficiency through the synthesis of various marketing tools and principles of management of communication processes.

It should also be noted that integrated marketing communications (IMC) is a strategy that transforms the activities of the marketing department from separate functions to a single interconnected approach. IMC covers different marketing channels and combines them into a single, clearly defined message.

The most significant contribution to the development of the paradigm of integrated marketing communications was made by such scientists as: P. Smith, K. Berry and A. Pulford [69, p. 64–73]. Based on the analysis of the works of various scientists regarding the classification of integrated marketing communications, it was concluded that the most complete and adapted to modern conditions is the classification of P. Smith and other cited scientists. Despite the fact that the work was published in 1993, the trends highlighted in it are able to successfully adapt to the changing conditions of today. Their proposed classification of IMC includes personal selling, sales promotion, advertising, direct marketing, sponsorship, exhibitions and fairs, branding, packaging, point-of-sale advertising, personal communication, and the Internet and new media.

The American Marketing Association defines IMC as “a planning process designed to assure that all brand contacts received by a customer or prospect for a product, service, or organization are relevant to that person and consistent over time” [45].

The emergence of the concept of integrated marketing communications in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is associated with a change in the concept of marketing and the growing relevance of an integrated approach to marketing communications. There are several positions regarding the primary factors of their occurrence. F. Kotler and K. Keller point to the problem of qualitative and quantitative expansion of the market offer in the economy, in connection with which the attention of consumers is scattered and, accordingly, enterprises should purposefully and

creatively use multiple forms of communication [41].

At the same time, some researchers have linked the emergence of integrated marketing communications to the decline in the effectiveness of television advertising in Western markets in the middle of the last century, which is associated with addiction to television, growing distrust of information received in this way, and a lack of creative ideas. This led to the need to rethink approaches to communication and the emergence of ideas on the integration of marketing tools.

So, we will further note the prerequisites for the emergence of integrated marketing communications in the 90s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which reflect significant trends and challenges that influenced the evolution of marketing and communication strategies.

With the increase in the number of advertising messages and the oversaturation of advertising, consumers have become less responsive to traditional methods of marketing communications. This stimulated businesses to look for more innovative and effective ways of communicating with consumers.

With the growth of competition and the diversity of manufacturers, businesses began to pay attention to more narrow and targeted audiences. This required more precise and specific communication approaches.

Consumers have become more demanding and informed. They make efforts to understand the values, mission and identity of the brands. Therefore, brands had to deliver a consistent message and create value.

The development of the Internet has opened up new opportunities for interaction with consumers. This included the ability to communicate through websites, social media, email and other digital channels.

Growing awareness of the importance of retaining loyal customers has led to increased interest in integrated marketing communications as a means of maintaining and developing customer relationships.

The increasing globalization of markets required taking into account cultural, linguistic and national characteristics when creating marketing communications. This is reflected in the need to adapt messages for different regions and countries.

These backgrounds demonstrate how rapidly the field of marketing and communications is evolving and how integrated marketing communications has emerged as a response to the growing demands and changes in the consumer and business environment.

Integrated marketing communications require a certain degree of coordination and unity between the various elements of the communication strategy. A number of criteria can be used to determine the level of integration of communications.

All communication messages must be interconnected and consistent with the company's brand, values, mission and positioning. This means that even if different channels are used, the messages should reflect a single strategy.

Graphic design and visual elements should be the same or as close as possible to the company brand in all materials and communication channels.

Using a common language, tone and style of communication in all messages helps to create a unified and recognizable brand image.

Integrated communications assume that different communication efforts will be directed at one or a similar target audience. This helps ensure consistency and engagement of messages.

Collection and analysis of feedback from consumers and clients of all communication channels for further adaptation and improvement of the strategy.

Using common metrics to measure the results and effectiveness of communication efforts. This helps to assess the contribution of each element to the integrated strategy.

Having a clear marketing communications plan that integrates different elements and channels into one strategy.

Allocation of budget between different communication efforts in such a way that they support the overall strategy [27].

These criteria help determine the level of communications integration and ensure that all elements work together to achieve common marketing goals.

Paul R Smith and Ze Zook highlighted the following principles of integrated marketing communications:

1. Ensuring dialogue with the consumer.
2. Integration of the general business strategy with the needs of a specific consumer.
3. Coordination of business communication within the framework of a set of marketing communication tools.
4. Creation of integrated marketing communications for each brand, brand separately [70].

Integration of marketing communications increases the importance of the promotion complex. This allows you to maintain a single positioning within each target segment, communication tools reinforce each other and create a synergy effect. Synergism is manifested in the fact that the effect of the complex use of means of communication differs from the simple addition of effects from the use of each means separately [38].

Integrated marketing communications make it possible to solve two interrelated problems at once:

1. Creation of a system of communication messages using various means of a complex of marketing communications, which would not contradict each other and would be coordinated among themselves.
2. Achieving maximization of the effectiveness of marketing communications through the search for optimal combinations of the main means of marketing communications [59].

David Pickton and Amanda Broderick look at IMC in the complex:

- Complementary: all elements of the system support and complement each other.
- Continuity: communications are continuous and interconnected.
- Consistency: different messages related to the brand reinforce each other.
- Coherence: all communications are logically connected [59].

When developing an integrated marketing communications plan, it is important to carefully analyze and define the target audience, which often consists of current or potential customers. It is also important to identify customer characteristics, which may

include age, education level, gender, income, and geographic location. Once the audience is identified, the developer of the integrated marketing strategy tries to satisfy the needs of the client by identifying the target demographic problems.

Based on the fact that integrated marketing communications operate on several levels, four types of integration are distinguished:

**External integration:** Involves delegating marketing tasks or interacting with marketing firms or agencies instead of doing it internally. Outsourcing can be useful when a firm seeks an objective assessment and perspective from experts who are not affiliated with the company.

**Internal integration:** Includes the actions of the top management, aimed at ensuring the coherence and commonality of the actions of the internal departments of the enterprise. It also covers informing employees about innovations, advertising, standards and partners.

**Horizontal integration:** Involves bringing together different departments and ensuring alignment of actions between marketing communications and other business functions. The free flow of information and communication between relevant departments promotes the necessary synergy to build the most effective marketing strategy.

**Vertical integration:** Requires compliance of the developed product with the company's corporate policy and structure. This implies that the product should correspond to the company's mission and goals, as well as be consistent with its structural organization [42].

These types of integration are determined by how companies integrate and coordinate their marketing communications, both internally and externally, to achieve maximum efficiency and successful implementation of marketing strategies.

Although integrated marketing is not something new, it is only becoming more relevant in today's environment. There are many more marketing channels than ever before, and different channels can be shaped and managed by different people.

Integrated marketing strategies play an extremely important role in today's business environment. They help bring all messages together to ensure that information

is not disjointed and confusing. This is especially relevant in today's environment, when consumers constantly receive countless informational messages from various communication channels. Today's consumers have limited time and attention spans, and are highly selective about the information they perceive. Integrated marketing strategies allow companies to present one clear and unified message that attracts attention and facilitates easy absorption.

Thanks to integrated strategies, companies can direct their message through different channels, such as advertising, social media, PR, etc. This provides maximum audience coverage and increases the impact of advertising efforts. Integrated strategies allow you to optimize the use of resources, as companies can coordinate their efforts and resources to achieve a common goal. This helps reduce costs and increases the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. Integrated strategies contribute to the maintenance and strengthening of the brand, as all communications express a single concept and image of the company. This creates consistency and awareness among consumers.

Integrated communications reduce the risk of misunderstandings and conflicts because messages are consistent and unambiguous. This helps to improve relations with consumers and partners.

In conclusion, integrated marketing strategies play a key role in modern marketing, contributing to the creation of a clear, unambiguous and reliable message that attracts and retains the attention of the audience in conditions of information overload.

In this way, a qualitatively formed complex of marketing communications contributes to increasing the efficiency of the activity of an innovatively oriented enterprise. An integrated approach to the formation of a complex of marketing communications ensures the synergy of the interaction of its individual tools.

## **Conclusions on Section 1**

On the basis of the conducted theoretical research, the concept of marketing communications was defined and the relationship between the complex of marketing communications of the enterprise was determined.

It was found that the goals of marketing communications are not only to inform about the product and support target sales, but also to form the image and brand of the employer; increasing consumer loyalty, finding new customers and effective communication with regular customers. Among the main tools of marketing communications are: advertising, personal sales, automatic marketing, Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, Internet of Things, direct marketing.

An important aspect of marketing communications is their influence on the formation and maintenance of the company's brand. Effective communication strategies can help increase brand awareness, consumer perception, and support a positive image. Open and effective feedback to consumers is an important component of marketing communications. Consumer feedback and their contribution to innovation can be used to improve products and services.

Retaining regular customers is an important task for many businesses. Marketing communications can help create loyalty programs that attract and retain customers. It is clear that innovation in the field of marketing itself becomes a key factor for achieving competitive advantages. Thanks to new approaches and tools, businesses can communicate effectively with consumers and adapt their strategies to market needs.

The decrease in efficiency from the traditional approach to the formation of the marketing communication complex led to the emergence of integrated marketing communications as a strategy that moves the marketing department from separate functions to a single interconnected approach. The integration of marketing communications provides a synergistic effect of the application of its tools. Integrated marketing communications arose from the need to adapt strategies to changing market conditions. They allow businesses to direct their communication efforts to target specific customers and maximize the effectiveness of their efforts.

## SECTION 2

### THE ROLE OF MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS IN IMPROVING THE EFFICIENCY OF ACTIVITIES « SYMPHONY SOLUTIONS »

#### 2.1 General characteristics of economic activity of “Symphony Solutions”

IT is deeply integrated into various branches of the economy, which indicates its importance and universality. This means that information technology is becoming necessary for many sectors. IT technologies contribute to increasing the efficiency of enterprises and can influence economic and social indicators. This can include increasing productivity, reducing costs and improving customer communication. Ukraine is actively developing the IT sector, and it is of great importance for the country. This creates new jobs, attracts investments, and contributes to the development of Ukrainian economy. The main asset in the IT sphere is the human factor. This refers to the high qualification of IT specialists and their role in the development of the field. Effective marketing communications are important for promoting IT products and services in the market. Undoubtedly, the importance of the IT sphere in the modern world can be traced and its influence on the economy and society is emphasized, as well as the role of Ukraine in this context [15].

The object of research of this work is the company “Symphony Solutions”. “Symphony Solutions” is an IT company headquartered in the Netherlands, working in the field of cloud technology and artificial intelligence. The company is a leading software provider for iGaming, healthcare and airlines. Committed to providing the highest quality of services, the company offers its expertise in full-service software development, cloud, data and analytics, artificial intelligence services, digital marketing orchestration, etc. Since its founding in 2008, “Symphony Solutions” has served over 35 international clients, predominantly in Western Europe and North America. Central to the company’s approach is building strong relationships with clients and employees and creating an atmosphere of intimacy.

In 2008, the company's Dutch Founder and CEO, Theo Schnittfink, had a vision to create a company where he would want to work, emphasizing a professional home for passionate colleagues. This vision drove the company's founding principles. Over the years, "Symphony Solutions" has maintained a culture characterized by flat management, gender balance, and the practice of Agile methods. These elements have remained consistent even as the company has grown. The company's growth has been remarkable. Starting with just 6 people and 1 client in 2008, it expanded to 100 people by 2013, 300 people by 2016, and currently employs 550 individuals across various locations, including Ukraine, Poland, and Skopje, Macedonia. The recent opening of an office in Boston reflects its commitment to better serving North American clients.

Overall, "Symphony Solutions" journey represents a compelling story of growth and adherence to its founding principles, including fostering a culture of collaboration, gender balance, and Agile practices.

The company brings a spirit of freedom, individuality and innovation to the world of technology and creates a virtual community for IT professionals to thrive and work on state-of-the-art solutions that bring real value to our clients [52].

"Symphony Solutions" has a clear set of values and characteristics that resonate with certain types of clients.

Clients who appreciate working with "Symphony Solutions" trust that the company's teams will deliver their work tested, proven, and on time. This suggests that clients value reliability and a track record of successful project completion.

Clients who enjoy collaboration within the uniquely open and spirited "Symphony Solutions" culture likely value a cooperative and innovative working environment. They appreciate a company culture that fosters communication, creativity, and a sense of unity among team members.

Clients who are as committed to Agile as "Symphony Solutions" is indicates that they value Agile methods for project management and development. They likely appreciate the flexibility, adaptability, and iterative approach that Agile offers.

In summary, "Symphony Solutions" seems to attract clients who prioritize trust, collaboration, and a shared commitment to Agile practices in their partnerships. This

aligns with “Symphony Solutions” approach and values in delivering their services.

Every company is guided by a set of ideals, the underpinnings of the company’s practices with each other, with clients, and with the outside world.

Values are an important element of the company’s integrity. The core values of “Symphony Solutions” are:

- Trust – the foundation, earn trust to build trust with colleagues and clients.
- Integrity – do the right thing even if no one is watching.
- Innovation – keep an innovative state of mind no matter what you are doing.
- Initiative – be the change you want to see around you, be bold, go first.
- Inspirational – do it with passion and from the heart. If you can feel it, let it guide you.
- Intimacy – show support with teams and clients, and they will return that support twice as much [52].

The company’s philosophy, as described, is rooted in important values and principles. Let’s explore the key elements:

**Respect and Empathy:** The company’s foundation in respect and empathy underscores the importance of creating a compassionate and considerate work environment. These values contribute to positive relationships and interactions among employees and with customers.

**Gender Balance:** “Symphony Solutions” places significant emphasis on achieving a 50/50 gender split in the workplace, highlighting the importance of gender equality. The company values equal opportunities, equal pay for equal work, and offers special benefits for employees with children, promoting a fair and inclusive work culture.

**Environmentalism:** The company demonstrates a commitment to environmental sustainability by promoting the principles of reuse, reduce, and recycle. Initiatives like Green Week and eco-seminars align with this environmental focus. The introduction of a vegan cafe, OM NOM NOM Cantina, also reflects the company’s dedication to providing sustainable and eco-friendly options.

In summary, “Symphony Solutions” philosophy revolves around respect,

empathy, gender balance, and environmental responsibility, aiming to create an inclusive, equitable, and environmentally conscious workplace.

Main activities of the company:

- Software development (Front-End, Back-End, Database, Web-design, animation, 3D modelling, mobile development).
- Wordpress development.
- Symphony Academy [52].

The company's approach to employee development and onboarding seems comprehensive and engaging. Let's break down the key components:

**Symphony Academy:** This learning center appears to be a valuable resource for professional development. It collaborates with colleagues globally to address development needs and offers various technology centers and communities of practice.

**NEO's New Employee Program:** The program's transition to a collaborative virtual format indicates adaptability to changing work environments. It serves as an orientation for new employees, introducing them to company standards, processes, and culture.

**Immersive onboarding:** The company provides an immersive experience for new employees, offering virtual office tours and interactive games that teach communication standards. This approach makes the onboarding process engaging and enjoyable.

**Building relationships:** The emphasis on forging new relationships during the 5-day program with subject matter experts and the management team is crucial for creating a sense of belonging and integration among newcomers.

Overall, the company's commitment to employee development and onboarding in a fun, interactive, and collaborative manner contributes to a positive work culture and employee experience.

Teams of developers and designers, created according to client needs, work remotely with the client for a long time. The client retains control of the development process and "Symphony Solutions" ensures that the team remains efficient, meets team expectations and supports the client with all operational tasks related to team

management.

Currently, 11 employees are serving in the ranks of the Armed Forces. According to specialists in the ranks of the Armed Forces, jobs and salaries are kept in full. Compensation policies may change, but so far the company has not discussed a pay cut.

The company also provides each employee who protects the country with a security package, which, depending on the needs of the person, may contain: a helmet; safety vest; ceramic or metal vest shield; tactical belt; IFAK (first aid kit) – basic or advanced; a set of special bags.

At “Symphony Solutions”, the model of working with clients is different from the classic one. In a traditional structure, communication occurs gradually from the client to managers before reaching the actual developers working on the product. When management works as a middle link between the client and the developer, it creates a distance that hinders communication. Compared to this, the existing organizational model in the company allows to eliminate the distance between customers and developers. In this way, the management system performs an auxiliary, supporting role, gives more responsibility to developers, and makes the organizational structure generally more holistically oriented. This model provides a high level of freedom and autonomy. This gives employees a sufficient level of trust and freedom in their daily work.

One of the reasons for the success of the hierarchy system of “Symphony Solutions” is the influence of two cultures: in the Netherlands, they often talk about a “flat hierarchy”, which implies equal conditions in the organization. Such an organizational structure indicates that the company is approaching turquoise organizations. The key in such companies is the understanding of the employee as a person, and not work at the workplace. This leads to an increase in labor efficiency. Thanks to flexible schedules and the ability to work remotely, employees demonstrate much better results. This approach is especially appreciated in the IT industry.

The organizational structure of the company is characterized by the absence of a middle management level, employees are responsible, autonomous and flexible.

There is no hierarchy in the company, employees work in departments that constantly interact with each other. When developing projects, a project-target structure is created, project teams are formed. The organizational structure of “Symphony Solutions” is presented in fig. 2.1.

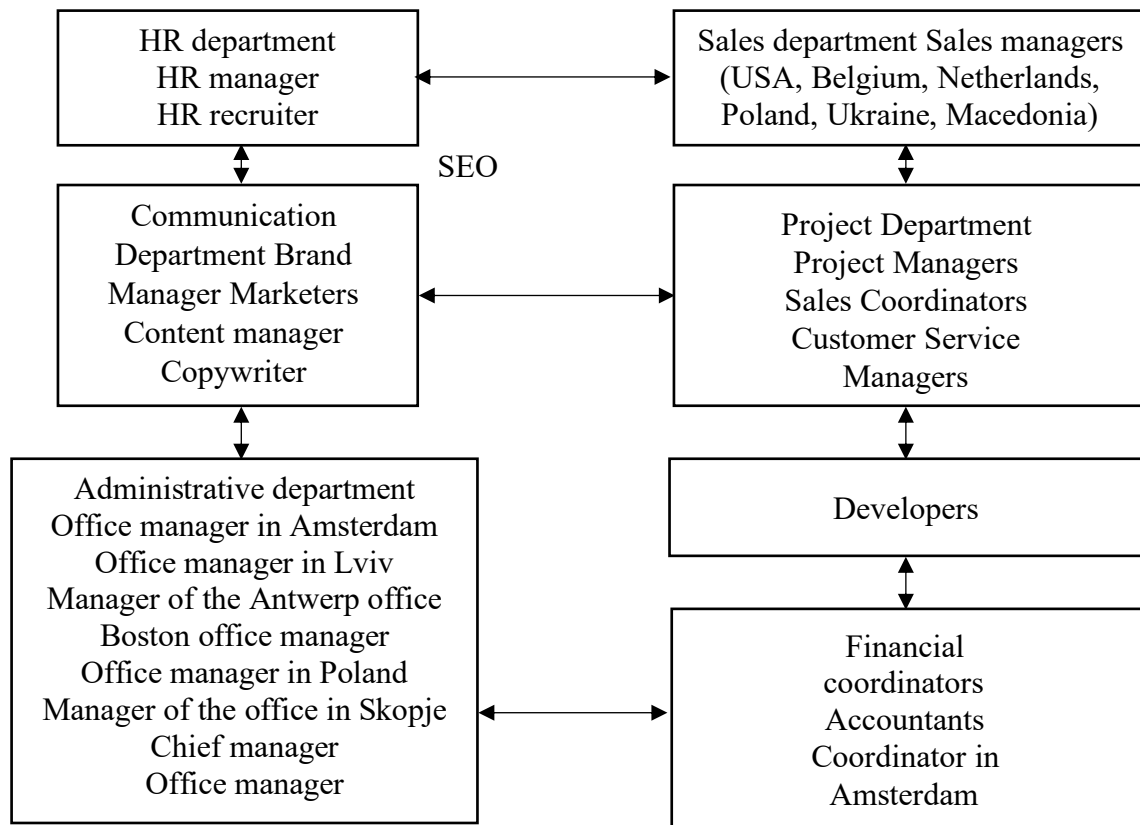


Figure 2.1 – Organizational structure of “Symphony Solutions”

The main capital of IT companies is highly qualified specialists. Personnel is the basis of the company’s effective activity and the main driver of its innovative activity. As of 2022, the Lviv office of “Symphony Solutions” employs 93 people. The company is characterized by low staff turnover and a high level of employee loyalty. In the first weeks of the war, the Stand by Ukraine Foundation was established to raise funds and provide humanitarian and emergency aid to Ukraine. Theo Schnitfink, founder and CEO of Symphony Solutions, decided to donate all profits made in Ukraine to the Ukrainians. Along with constant fundraising and charity auctions within the company, almost 1 million euros were donated to support Ukraine’s struggle for peace [73].

The company creates the most comfortable conditions for work: flexible

schedule, comfortable office, active social life of the company, individual social package, home atmosphere both in the office and in the team. The organizational culture and values at “Symphony Solutions” are not just a component of the company’s image, but the main principles of the company’s functioning. That is why when hiring employees, not only professional qualities are important, but understanding of the company’s values.

The characteristics of the movement of the company’s personnel are presented in table 2.1.

Table 2.1 – Characteristics of the staff movement of “Symphony Solutions” for 2020–2021 (compiled on the basis of “Symphony Solutions” data)

Indicators	2020	2021	2022	+/-		%	
				21/20	22/21	21/20	22/21
Employees accepted, persons	28	31	5	3	-26	11%	-84%
Employees left, persons	4	6	30	2	24	50%	400%
The total number of personnel, persons	501	525	550	24	25	5%	5%

Table 2.1 shows that the number of employees of “Symphony Solutions” is increasing every year, which is related to the growth and development of the company. But in 2022, many employees left the company, most of those fired were from the Lviv office.

One of the key aspects of the organization of activities in the field of IT outsourcing is the choice of a model of financial interaction with clients. “Symphony Solutions” uses the Dedicated Team system. This is the “outstaff model”, according to which a separate team of the Contractor is allocated for the Customer’s project, taking into account his personal requirements and needs, which concentrates only on the customer’s project. The peculiarity of this approach is that the Customer pays a fixed amount every month and is personally responsible not only for the load, but also for the work of the team members. Thus, the Client receives full management control over the project and the team, and the Contractor performs the function of personnel recruiter and administrative support. Like any other model, it has its

advantages and disadvantages [79].

The advantages of such a system include:

- a loyal team of external personnel, with whom the client can establish the same working relations and rules as with the main staff (the team shares the corporate culture, management style and method of the Customer);
- specialists not only fulfill all conditions of the Customer's technical task, but are also familiar with the entire cycle of product construction and are able to support it throughout its existence.

The main disadvantages are:

- high costs when using the model;
- the potential for delaying the start of the project due to spending time on team selection.

We will use the PEST analysis to analyze the company's external environment. PEST analysis is an analysis of political, economic, social and technological factors of the organization's external environment that can affect its activity and productivity. It is a simple and effective tool used to identify key external forces (at a macro level) that may affect an organization.

To determine the factors of the macro environment that have the main influence on the activities of the company "Symphony Solutions", we build a table (3 points – strong influence; 2 – moderate; 1 – weak; 0 – no influence). You can familiarize yourself with the table in detail in Appendix A.

In general, most of the factors of the PEST analysis have a negative impact on the company's activities. The war in Ukraine and the unfavorable economic situation pose a threat to the stable development and efficient operation of the company. Bureaucracy in Ukraine significantly slows down decision-making, and the lack of state support in the IT sphere causes the absence of legislation that would regulate relations in the IT sphere. The departure of qualified specialists abroad and the negative demographic dynamics in Ukraine, which is connected with the war in Ukraine, may in the near future provoke the fact that the demand for IT specialists will significantly exceed the supply.

Taking into account the conducted PEST analysis, we note that the most significant factors of the positive impact of the macro environment for the company are: the attractiveness of Ukraine in the field of outsourcing, the stable development of the IT sphere in Ukraine, the ease of doing business. This is explained by the fact that in Ukraine, despite the considerable number of larger competitors, it is quite easy to do business, there is a sufficient number of IT specialists and, in general, the Ukrainian IT market is characterized by stable, rapid development and high potential (although there is a negative forecast for 2023 market).

Along with this, we note that the investment climate, the transition to the digital economy and society, the level of IT use in Ukraine, and insufficiently high-quality personnel training have a moderate impact on the company. Although these factors are not decisive, they can influence the company's activities. The unfavorable investment climate in Ukraine, caused by the country's unstable economic and political situation, creates difficulties for the company in finding partners and attracting foreign investors. However, stable connections in other countries and permanent partners allow this problem to be solved. Insufficient quality practical training of personnel at universities is compensated by personal experience, constant practice and self-education of developers. Therefore, this factor does not have a significant impact on the company's activities.

To research the opportunities and threats of the macro environment of "Symphony Solutions" based on the conducted PEST analysis, we will create table A2 of appendix A "List of opportunities and threats of the macro environment for the enterprise", where, according to each factor, possible solutions (reactions) are displayed, the degree of impact of which is estimated in points ( from 1 to 3).

The conducted PEST analysis showed that in Ukraine, despite the stable development of the IT sphere until February 2022, a significant number of political and economic factors inhibit the development of the industry. Under these conditions, the priority for "Symphony Solutions" is to focus on foreign markets, search for new customers, cooperate with foreign partners and provide the company with qualified labor resources.

Financial analysis is also important when analyzing the company's activities. Let's analyze the main indicators of the company's investment attractiveness, namely:

- indicators of financial stability;
- indicators of business activity;
- profitability indicators.

The results of the financial analysis are presented in table 2.2.

Table 2.2 – Analysis of financial indicators of “Symphony Solutions” (compiled on the basis of “Symphony Solutions” data)

Indicator	Normative value	2020	2021	2022	Absolute deviation		Relative deviation	
					21/20	22/21	21/20	22/21
<b>Indicators of financial stability</b>								
Solvency ratio	> 0.5	0.80	0.85	0.68	0.05	-0.17	6.58	-19.8
Funding ratio	<1, reduction	0.33	0.24	0.53	-0.08	0.28	-25.81	117.4
Coefficient of provision by own means	>0,1	0.91	1.04	2.05	0.13	1.01	13.79	97.0
Equity maneuverability coefficient	>0, magnification	1.37	1.26	1.58	-0.11	0.32	-7.69	25.0
<b>Indicators of business activity</b>								
Asset turnover ratio	>1, magnification	8.82	11.24	11.13	2.42	-0.10	27.38	-0.9
Accounts Payable Turnover Ratio	>1, magnification	6.55	7.12	8.06	0.57	0.94	8.65	13.3
Accounts receivable turnover ratio	>1, magnification	4.54	6.60	7.52	2.07	0.91	45.60	13.8
The term of repayment of receivables	reduction	87.47	60.06	52.78	-27.41	-7.28	-31.33	-12.1
Payable debt repayment period	reduction	60.48	55.65	49.14	-4.83	-6.51	-7.99	-11.7
Inventory turnover ratio	>1, magnification	0.84	0.74	6.09	-0.11	5.36	-12.50	728.6
The turnover ratio of fixed assets	>1, magnification	0.28	0.20	0.19	-0.08	-0.01	-29.63	-5.3
Equity turnover ratio	>1, magnification	0.12	0.13	0.14	0.01	0.01	9.09	8.3
<b>Profitability indicators</b>								
Rate of return on assets	>1	0.66	0.87	1.22	0.21	0.35	31.75	39.8
Return on equity ratio	> 0.6	0.50	0.56	0.80	0.05	0.24	10.42	43.4

Indicator	Normative value	2020	2021	2022	Absolute deviation		Relative deviation	
					21/20	22/21	21/20	22/21
The coefficient of profitability of the activity	< 0.2	1.89	1.96	1.84	0.07	-0.13	3.89	-6.4
Rate of return on assets	>1	0.66	0.87	1.22	0.21	0.35	31.75	39.8

We will analyze the obtained values of indicators and their dynamics. The value of the solvency ratio fluctuates within the norm ( $> 0.5$ ), which indicates the financial independence of the company from external sources of financing. The value of the financing ratio is less than one, but tends to increase, which is negative. The ratio of provision of own funds is greater than one and has a rapid upward trend, which indicates the presence of own working capital in the enterprise, necessary for its financial sustainability. The coefficient of maneuverability of own capital has a positive value and an upward trend, which indicates the sufficiency of own financial resources to finance non-current assets and a part of current assets.

Indicators of the company's business activity demonstrate the speed of use of the resources involved. Let's analyze the obtained values of indicators. The asset turnover ratio is within the normative value and has positive dynamics. The turnover ratio of accounts payable has a tendency to increase, which indicates an increase in the speed of payment of the company's debts. The turnover ratio of receivables has positive dynamics over the analyzed period. The turnover ratio of material stocks tends to increase, which indicates that the company does not have excess illiquid stocks that require additional financing. In general, the values of indicators of business activity testify to the stability of the financial position of the enterprise.

Profitability indicators are the most important characteristics of the actual environment for the formation of profits and income of the enterprise. The coefficient of profitability of assets characterizes the level of profit generated by all assets of the enterprise and has a tendency to increase. This shows the growing demand for the company's products. The coefficient of return on equity (financial return) has an upward trend for 2020–2022, which indicates the effective use of the company's equity capital. The profitability ratio shows a slight decrease in 2021, but is within

the normal range. The coefficient of profitability of products shows a gradual growth over the studied period and indicates the efficiency of the enterprise.

Based on the conducted financial analysis, it can be concluded that the financial indicators of the company are positive. Most of the values are within the normal range, the company is characterized by economic development and a stable position on the market. To ensure financial stability, it is necessary to improve the company's activities based on promising areas of activity.

Increasing the efficiency of the company's activity and ensuring its development is not possible without adequate provision of labor resources. In the conditions of constant development of the IT sphere in Ukraine, the relevance of the issue of providing qualified personnel is increasing. The main competitors of the company on the Ukrainian market have many strategic advantages.

The biggest competitors of "Symphony Solutions" are the companies "EPAM", "SoftServe", "GlobalLogic". According to the profile resource dou.ua, these companies are leading in the ranking of IT employers in Ukraine. Their number of employees is more than 1500. Among medium-sized companies (number of employees from 200 to 800), which includes the main competitors are "Trionika", "Govitall" and "Symphony Solutions".

All listed competitors conduct fairly active marketing communication activities. Mainly, the marketing communications of Ukrainian IT companies are focused on interaction with clients and the formation of the employer's brand. The main tools of marketing communications that competitors use in their activities are the website, social networks, and event marketing. The average monthly number of visitors to the websites of the competitor company "Symphony Solutions" is shown in table 2.3.

A larger number of visitors is characteristic of companies that have been operating on the market for a long time and have a larger number of employees, however, in companies of similar size, traffic indicators can differ by a factor of 2, which indicates a different level of activity and effectiveness of marketing communications.

Table 2.3 – Indicators of average monthly traffic of websites of IT companies of Ukraine, July 2023 (compiled by the author according to [74])

Company	Number of employees	Monthly traffic
EPAM	10230	878750
SoftServe	8326	98959
GlobalLogic	6560	166250
Luxoft	3700	433834
airSlate	679	35625
Gameloft	625	10291
AMC Bridge	617	24541

One of the main threats from competitors for “Symphony Solutions” is the struggle for qualified personnel in conditions of constant growth in the demand for labor resources. For stable development and staffing in the conditions of a high level of competition, “Symphony Solutions” needs to qualitatively form a complex of marketing communications, integrate the work of the marketing and HR departments. At the same time, it is advisable to use innovative approaches to increase efficiency and save costs.

Having analyzed the activity of “Symphony Solutions”, we can conclude that the company is characterized by stable growth. This is evidenced by financial indicators, indicators of personnel movement and the growing influence on the IT market of Ukraine. In this regard, the relevance of the constant search for qualified personnel to ensure the efficient functioning of the company is increasing. An effective set of marketing communications in this context is capable of increasing loyalty to the company’s HR brand.

## **2.2 Evaluation of the state of marketing communications “Symphony Solutions”**

The commercial success of an IT company in the global information technology market largely depends on its ability to create and implement innovations. The constant

emergence of new innovative products and services creates demand among users, organizations and customers, which can significantly increase the commercial success of IT companies. The company's ability to create and implement innovations is determined by its readiness to implement innovative projects and programs. This readiness can be critical to successful innovation. The ability to innovate can include various aspects such as technical competence, creativity, management skills, ability to adapt to change, and many others. IT companies that actively work on the development of innovations have a great chance to achieve commercial success in the global information technology market [34].

In order to determine the key strengths and weaknesses of the company, as well as opportunities and threats affecting its activities, we will conduct a SWOT analysis. Based on the SWOT analysis, we will determine the main strategic priorities for the development of "Symphony Solutions". A SWOT analysis helps create a long-term strategy that takes advantage of a company's strengths and opportunities. The SWOT matrix for "Symphony Solutions" is presented in table 2.4.

Using the SWOT analysis matrix, we will analyze strategic problems and strategic alternatives in each of the fields – where strengths and weaknesses meet with opportunities and threats (table 2.5).

Thus, on the basis of the SWOT analysis, the main threats to "Symphony Solutions" can be determined. One of the main threats is the activity of competitors, such as the largest giants of the Ukrainian IT market ("EPAM", "SoftServe", "GlobalLogic", "Luxoft"), which have been on the market for more than 10 years and in which the number of employees reaches more than 1500, so and small companies such as airSlate, Gameloft, AMC Bridge that can offer similar services. Also, a potential threat is the lack of qualified personnel on the labor market. In the conditions of unstable economic and political environment in the country, there is a threat of losing foreign clients. The main internal problems are the ineffectiveness of the marketing communications complex and the constantly growing need for highly qualified personnel.

In order to solve these problems and ensure the effective operation

of the enterprise, we will determine strategic alternatives for the development of the enterprise.

Table 2.4 – SWOT analysis matrix for “Symphony Solutions” (compiled by the author)

External environment Internal environment	Opportunities	Threats
	1. Increase in the enterprise’s demand for services	1. War in Ukraine
	2. Growing demand in the global IT market	2. Emergence of new and active growth of already existing competitors
	3. Updating and expanding the range of services provided	3. Growth of inflation rates in Ukraine
	4. Development of the company’s marketing communications	4. Decrease in the solvency of the population
	5. Increasing the level of loyalty to the company’s HR brand	5. Lack of qualified personnel on the Ukrainian labor market
Strengths	Field SO	Field ST
1. Experience in the market and stable growth of the company		
2. A significant number of regular customers in foreign markets		
3. Wide range of provided services		
4. High level of adaptation to changing environmental conditions	Field WO	Field WT
Weaknesses		
1. Lack of integration in the complex of marketing communications		
2. Insufficient influence of the company on the IT market of Ukraine		
3. Low speed of organizational decision-making		

It is expedient for the company to increase the number of customers and maintain effective interaction with them. To support the growth and development of the company, it is necessary to constantly expand the personnel of the company with qualified developers. For this purpose, it is advisable to ensure efficiency and

improve marketing communications in the field of HR. As you know, most specialists in the company are constantly developing, learning new technologies. However, on the other hand, there are risks of losing such specialists, as they are becoming more and more in demand. The existing and fairly common practice of signing fixed-term contracts has not proven itself well. First: the company's reputation may decline; and secondly: a specialist who works only under the compulsion of a "valuable document" will not always provide a high-quality service. Building an HR brand in this context becomes one of the competitive advantages. So, starting from the very process of selection and recruitment, it is worth paying a lot of attention to communications with potential employees. Marketing communications at this stage are designed to ensure familiarization with the company's philosophy, its mission, working conditions, etc. – on the one hand; and determining the characteristics of the impact on increasing loyalty to the company of future employees – on the other hand. One of the ways to achieve this goal is to ensure the effectiveness of the marketing communications complex. It will be appropriate to use an integrated approach.

Table 2.5 – Strategic problems of development (compiled by the author)

SWOT matrix field	Strategic problems
SO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Loss of foreign clients due to the unstable political and economic environment in Ukraine.</li> <li>– Outflow of qualified labor abroad.</li> </ul>
WO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Low level of activity due to poorly formed set of marketing communications.</li> <li>– The emergence of new competitors due to the stable development of the industry and the growth of demand.</li> </ul>
ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The appearance of new competitors with a similar product at more favorable prices.</li> <li>– Active growth of already existing competitors on the market.</li> </ul>
WT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Giving preference to competitors' products by customers.</li> <li>– Lack of qualified personnel on the market.</li> </ul>

It is also worth paying attention to the construction of internal communications. These communications aim to reveal what worries employees and how they see their prospects within the company. It is important to respond to this information as soon as possible, to anticipate the employee's requests, so as not to put him in a position to ask for something. Along with this, at any time an employee can initiate a performance

review to talk about a problem or to brag about a success to move to the next level in their career.

Table 2.6 – Strategic alternatives for development

SWOT matrix field	Strategic problems
SO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Finding new customers in existing markets.</li> <li>– Company expansion.</li> <li>– Improvement of the product in accordance with technological development.</li> </ul>
WO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Implementation of new marketing technologies.</li> <li>– Cooperation with foreign companies.</li> </ul>
ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Product quality assurance.</li> <li>– Finding ways to minimize costs.</li> <li>– Brand development.</li> </ul>
WT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Improving the work of the HR department to provide the company with qualified personnel.</li> <li>– Application of an integrated approach to the formation of a complex of marketing communications.</li> </ul>

The global information technology market is characterized by a high level of competition, which prompts IT companies operating in this market to use all available marketing tools in order to face the ever-increasing competition [31]. In the context of activities on the global market of information technologies, effective marketing communication activity is of key importance, which is the key to ensuring the competitiveness of an IT company for successful functioning in this highly competitive market.

The marketing policy of “Symphony Solutions” is based on the principle of using Internet technologies, which facilitates interaction with the target audience in online and offline modes. The company’s marketing activities are aimed at forming the company’s image both for the company’s potential customers and for the IT labor market of Ukraine. Fierce competition in the IT labor market of Ukraine determines the orientation of the company’s marketing communication tools to the formation of the HR brand.

Mainly, marketing communications of “Symphony Solutions” are divided into external and internal. External marketing communications are aimed at supporting and attracting customers for the company. Internal marketing communications are aimed at attracting and retaining employees.

Fig. 2.2 shows a general diagram of the process of forming marketing communications.

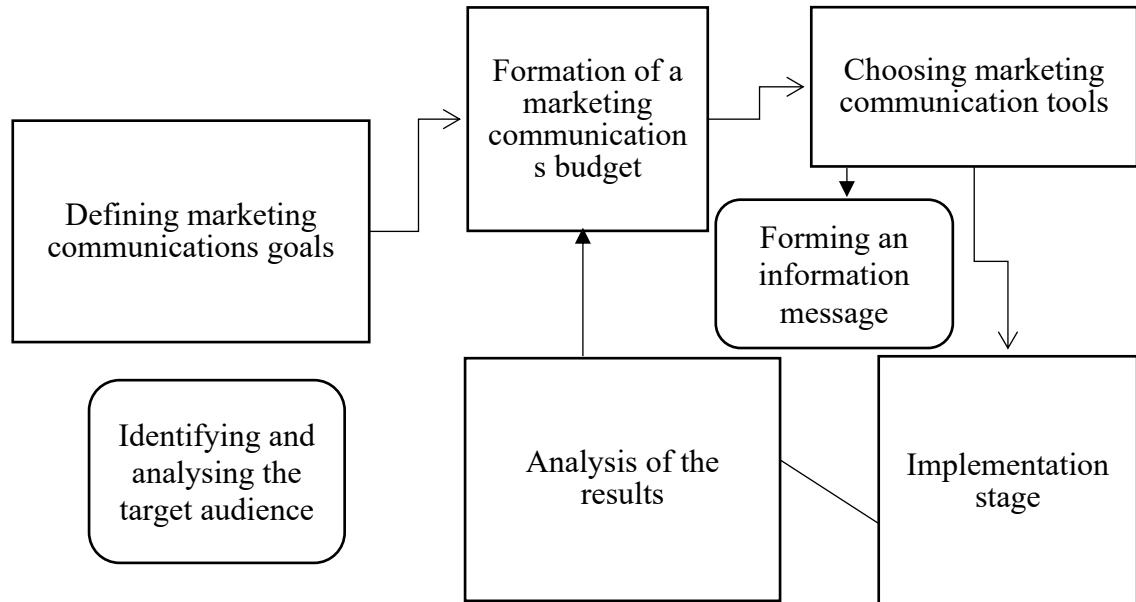


Figure 2.2 – The process of forming marketing communications “Symphony Solutions” (compiled by the author)

The main goals of the company’s marketing communication activities are:

- formation of the company’s image;
- formation of the HR brand;
- finding partners and maintaining relations with them;
- interaction with existing and potential customers.

Human capital is important for business development and building successful products and services. The presence of highly qualified employees is important for the development of innovative products and services. The HR department plays an important role in the search, hiring and development of such specialists. Choosing the right communication tools to promote a product in the market is a key task. HR teams can contribute to the development and implementation of communication strategies, as well as the selection of communication professionals. A successful HR

strategy can positively affect the company's reputation by attracting and retaining talented employees. The reputation of the company, in turn, affects the capitalization and investment interest in it. With this in mind, investing in HR and developing human resources can be strategic steps to achieve commercial success, increase reputation and capitalization of the company.

“Symphony Solutions” uses content marketing in its marketing activities. This approach allows you to form the image of the company in the Internet space and correctly position the mission and vision of the company. The main principles of such marketing are:

Creation and distribution of interesting and useful content for the target audience.

1. Active use of SEO marketing and SMM methods.
2. Blogging to interest the target audience.
3. Use of various e-commerce tools (Google Analytics, Content Experiments).

The use of new marketing communication technologies in the online environment, which would attract not only new customers, but also future talented project developers, is becoming more and more important, since the speed and quality of IT project implementation depends on how creative and intellectually developed the company's staff is. And due to the quick execution of projects and the high level of quality of the developers' work, it is possible to develop and increase the level of loyalty to the company. Online promotion tools can be used in this context. Thus, according to research by Accenture Digital, about 71% of management decisions related to the purchase of IT products are made thanks to the online environment. At the same time, the primary sources in the decision-making process are: organized search engine (73%); company website (51%); online reviews (45%); professional sites (42%) [74].

At the same time, the top management is getting younger, has a sufficiently high level of online activity, which leads to the formation of a new type of communication environment of IT companies.

Let's consider the features of using the main tools of marketing communications

in “Symphony Solutions”. Like other IT companies, “Symphony Solutions” actively uses Internet advertising. At the same time, it should be noted that traditional outdoor advertising, advertising on TV and radio is not used.

In the field of PR, the main role is played by the organization of events, in particular event marketing. The company actively participates in various specialized events, including exhibitions, seminars and conferences. Recently, “Symphony Solutions” pays considerable attention to the organization of events, both in the field of information technologies and in the field of personal and professional development. In addition, as a socially responsible company, “Symphony Solutions” supports educational initiatives, championships and student organizations related to information technologies. The company gradually began to use such a tool as publication in specialized mass media, which contributes to the formation of the company’s brand and attracts potential employees. In order to build an HR brand and present opportunities for future employees, the company participates in leading job fairs.

There is also active work with the press. This especially applies to the top management of the company, who often gives interviews and talks about the peculiarities of the organizational culture of “Symphony Solutions”, the social responsibility of the company.

To work with existing and potential customers, “Symphony Solutions” uses a typical B2B market tool – direct sales. In the context of interaction with corporate clients, it is this tool that is key, while others are more auxiliary. It is the personal interaction with the customer, the skills of presentation and reasoned logic in combination with a client-oriented approach that ensure the effectiveness of cooperation.

Let’s consider in more detail the tools of the marketing communications complex, which are used in the activities of the company “Symphony Solutions”, aimed at forming the HR brand. Figure 2.3 shows that the largest share of activity is occupied by social networks, the website and event marketing.

“Symphony Solutions” actively uses social networks to shape the image of the company. The company maintains pages in the following social networks:

Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn. Content material in the company’s social networks contains information about the company’s corporate culture, working conditions, and social activities. Contextual and targeted advertising is also used. The greatest activity and return on marketing investments is characteristic of pages on Facebook and LinkedIn, which is associated with greater activity of the target audience in these social networks (table 2.7).

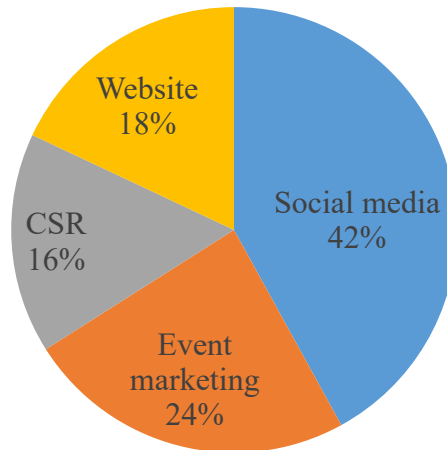


Figure 2.3 – The general structure of the tools of marketing communication of “Symphony Solutions” (compiled on the basis of “Symphony Solutions” data)

Table 2.7 – Evaluation of the activity of “Symphony Solutions” in social networks (per month) (compiled on the basis of “Symphony Solutions” data)

Social network	Number of subscribers	The average number of views per post	The number of visits to the site
Facebook	5634	6000	460
Instagram	2708	4600	300
LinkedIn	3170	6000	400
Twitter	220	400	20

One of the main tools of marketing communications at “Symphony Solutions” is the company website. On the site, you can find information about the company’s activities, the history of its establishment, and offices in Ukraine. Feedback allows you to create contact with a potential customer. In addition, a blog is actively maintained on the site, which contains articles from “Symphony Solutions” experts under

the following headings: case study, business, life, web development, teams and organizational culture. You can also find a portfolio of projects on the website.

In the career section you can find complete information about open vacancies in the company. To analyze the effectiveness of the company's website, we will determine conversion rates in the context of HR. The conversion rate is the ratio of the number of visitors who filled out the job application form to the total number of site visitors for a certain period.

The number of site visitors per month is 16000.

The number of left applications is 128.

Conversion of abandoned applications 0.80%.

The number of hired employees is 5.

Conversion of hired employees – 1.5%.

Conversion of visitors into engaged employees – 0.024%.

According to the results of the site's conversion indicators, it can be seen that 0.8% of the total number of visitors fill out the form of an open vacancy in the Career section. And only 0.024% successfully pass all stages of recruiting. Although the conversion rates are quite low, it should be taken into account that the site is aimed not only at finding potential employees, but also at communicating with partners. At the same time, the company's vacancies are also posted on targeted resources such as rabota.ua (a job search site) and Dou.ua (a profile resource in the field of information technologies).

Let's analyze the company's expenses for marketing communication activities over the past three years (table 2.8).

The company's expenses for marketing communication activities have increased, which is associated with the expansion of the range of used tools, the increase in the salaries of the employees of the marketing department and the increase in advertising expenses.

Based on the analysis of costs for marketing communications, we will analyze the performance indicators (table 2.9).

Table 2.8 – Marketing communications expenses of “Symphony Solutions”  
(compiled on the basis of “Symphony Solutions” data)

Indicator	2020	2021	2022	Absolute deviation		Relative deviation	
				21/20	22/21	21/20	22/21
The number of employees of the marketing department	3	4	5	1.0	1,0	33	25
Average salary of an employee of the marketing department, thousand UAH	28.9	35.7	40.8	6.8	5.1	24	14
Salary fund of the marketing department, thousand UAH for a year	1387.2	2570.4	3427.2	1183.2	856.8	85	33
Advertising expenses, thousand UAH.	2992	4080	6120	1088.0	2040.0	36	50
Other expenses, thousand UAH for a year	391	459	501.5	68.0	42.5	17	9
Total costs for marketing communications, thousand UAH for a year	4770.2	7109.4	10048.7	2339.2	2939.3	49	41

Table 2.9 – Indicators of the effectiveness of marketing communication activity of “Symphony Solutions” (compiled on the basis of “Symphony Solutions” data)

Indicator	2020	2021	2022	Absolute deviation	
				21/20	22/21
Share of marketing personnel, %	7.5	8.9	8.7	1.5	-0.2
The share of costs for marketing personnel, %	2.7	4.6	6.0	1.8	1.4
The coefficient of profitability of marketing expenses	3.6	3.7	3.0	0.0	-0.6

The return on marketing spend indicator indicates how much profit a company receives from each dollar spent on marketing. In general, this indicator showed stable positive dynamics, but in the last year it has decreased slightly, despite the increase in marketing communication costs. Thus, the activity of the marketing department needs improvement and implementation of new strategies.

As for the general trend in the market of Ukraine, although the same tasks remain before marketing – the promotion, attraction and retention of company users, there is a tendency to change the evaluation of the work of marketing teams, the CRI has changed [76]:

- requirements for quantitative indicators decreased, some companies began

to focus on qualitative indicators;

- part began to focus not on the growth of the company, but on maintaining the current number of clients and increasing the profit from each client.

Challenges facing the marketing teams of Ukrainian enterprises in 2023: recovery of indicators, work within the framework of budget reduction, building the best business model and communication platform, building the company's reputation and improving the customer experience, developing new tools, finding new solutions, attracting investments, keeping the team, managing the emotional background of the staff.

Starting in 2022, the following changes will take place at Ukrainian enterprises, which are a reaction to the challenges:

Change of communication strategy: change of communication channels, focus on digital, launch of new communication, change and adaptation of existing communication (messages, tone, etc.), prioritization of brands and products for communication, focus on PR activities.

Focus on analytics and timely response: more frequent analytics and monitoring of performance indicators, short-term planning, target audience research, media monitoring, engagement of consultants, additional expertise. Changing the product portfolio: launch of new products and services, release of patriotic products, rebranding. Access to new markets: focus on new sales markets, increasing exports, focus on the Western market; diversification, repurposing to other categories; focus on new/different market segments. Change in price positioning. Reorientation of marketing budgets. New approaches in working with contractors.

In order to comprehensively evaluate marketing communications in “Symphony Solutions”, it will also be appropriate to consider the degree of their integration. An integrated approach ensures the formation of a single positioning within the target audience and the creation of a synergy effect between marketing communication tools. At the same time, it should be noted that quantifying the degree of integration of marketing communications is quite difficult due to the presence and interaction of communicative, economic and social effects.

When analyzing the marketing communication activity of “Symphony Solutions” in the context of the main integration criteria, it can be seen that:

Marketing goals are in line with the company’s overall goals. At every stage, from creating information messages to interacting with employees and customers, the company’s values and goals are the main priorities.

Marketing communications interact with other business functions, focused both on working with customers, and on finding and cooperating with potential partners, as well as on creating the company’s HR brand.

The marketing system is adaptive and quickly responds to changes in the reactions and behavior of the target audience.

In general, the marketing communication strategy of “Symphony Solutions” is integrated with the general goals of the company and interacts with other aspects of the business, taking into account the dynamics of changes in consumers.

However, it can be assumed that the integrated approach has not yet produced effective results. Analyzing the costs of marketing communications and their profitability, it can be noted that the marketing budget is not always efficiently distributed. The activities of the key tools of marketing communications in “Symphony Solutions” are not always coordinated.

### **2.3 Analysis of relationships between marketing communications and company performance**

Marketing communications in the company “Symphony Solutions”, in all its directions, have a decisive influence on the effectiveness of the company’s activities. Formation of effective communication with clients helps to increase the number of orders and projects. The active use of marketing communication tools in the Ukrainian IT labor market contributes to the creation of the company’s HR brand and allows attracting qualified employees. This strategy helps “Symphony Solutions” maintain stable growth for several years and contributes to the improvement

of innovative activity, the introduction of innovations both in organizational activities, and in the expansion of the range of provided services.

To determine how marketing communications affect the effectiveness of the company's activities, we will use the correlation-regression analysis method. It is appropriate to consider the influence of marketing communications in the context of the development of the HR brand. Therefore, let's examine the relationship between the number of developers, as well as the costs of marketing communications. As a resulting feature, we will choose the profitability ratio of the activity, which demonstrates and characterizes the sustainability of technological growth and testifies to the company's experience in project management. As the first factor, let's take the number of developers, because as already mentioned, it is human resources that are the main resource of the company and are able to shape its potential. As a second factor, let's take the total costs of marketing communications, because they contribute to the involvement of both employees and customers. As the third factor characteristic, we will choose the coefficient of profitability of marketing expenses to show that the effective planning and use of a complex of marketing communications affects the potential.

To analyze the relationship between marketing communications and the efficiency of the company "Symphony Solutions", we will use the method of correlation-regression analysis and perform calculations using the Excel program.

The relationship between the resulting and factor characteristics is described by the regression equation:

$$y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3, \quad (2.1);$$

where  $y$  – profitability ratio;

$x_1$  – number of developers;

$x_2$  – total costs of marketing communications;

$x_3$  – coefficient of profitability of marketing expenses;

$\beta_0$  – the free term of the regression equation;

$\beta_i$  – coefficients of the regression equation characterizing the quantitative influence on the resulting indicator of the change in the value of the corresponding factor indicator.

The initial data for the correlation-regression analysis are presented in table 2.10.

Table 2.10 – Output data for correlation-regression analysis (compiled by the author according to [52])

Indicator	Year				
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
The coefficient of profitability of the activity	1.73	1.79	1.89	1.96	1.84
The number of developers, persons	204	252	300	360	420
Total costs for marketing communications, thousand UAH	4681.8	5946.6	4770.2	7109.4	10048.7
The coefficient of profitability of marketing expenses	1.5	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.0

With the help of a function in MS Excel, we will conduct a correlation analysis of individual indicators of the company's activity.

Table 2.11 – Results of correlation analysis (compiled by the author according to [52])

Indicator	The coefficient of profitability of the activity	The number of developers, persons	Total costs for marketing communications, thousand UAH	The coefficient of profitability of marketing expenses
The coefficient of profitability of the activity	1	-	-	-
The number of developers, persons	0.674	1	-	-
Total costs for marketing communications, thousand UAH	0.646	0.874	1	-
The coefficient of profitability of marketing expenses	0.495	0.661	0.412	1

The assessment of the closeness of the connection between the studied features

was carried out using the Chedok scale, the results are presented in table 2.12.

Table 2.12 – Characteristics of the closeness of the relationship between the profitability ratio and factor characteristics (compiled by the author according to [52])

Indicator	The number of developers, persons	Total costs for marketing communications, thousand UAH	The coefficient of profitability of marketing expenses
The coefficient of profitability of the activity	A noticeable connection	A noticeable connection	A noticeable connection

The results of the correlation analysis indicate that multicollinearity is present, but moderate.

To establish the form of the relationship between the studied features, we will conduct a regression analysis. It was carried out using the “Data Analysis – Regression” function in MS Excel. So the multiple R is 0.8904, the R-squared is 0.7851575, the normalized R-squared is 0.447893751, and the standard error is 0.02255631.

Adjusted coefficient of determination  $R^2 \approx 0.89$ , i.e. 89% of the change in the resulting characteristic is caused by the change in factor characteristics.

Table 2.13 – Results of variance analysis (compiled by the author according to [52])

Indicator	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	3	0.003204	0.001068	2.298371828	0.317527855
Remainder	2	0.000929	0.000465		
In total	5	0.004133			

The results of variance analysis indicate the reliability of the obtained model: according to Fisher’s criterion:  $f = 2.29837 > f_{table} = 0.31752$ .

According to the results of the regression analysis (Appendix B), since for all indicators  $P$  – the value is less than 0.5, the coefficients can be considered zero, therefore, the factor characteristics affect the result.

The statistical significance of the regression parameters is assessed using the t-criterion, with values of the t-statistic,

The multiple regression equation looks like this:

$$y = 0.1799 + 0.000847 x_1 + 0.000019x_2 + 0.0185x_3 \quad (2.2)$$

The coefficient of multiple determination is 0.78, so the effective indicator depends on the factors by 78%. The coefficient of multiple correlation is 0.89 and indicates a close relationship between the indicators and thus demonstrates the relationship between marketing communication activities and the effectiveness of the enterprise.

On the basis of the conducted correlation-regression analysis, the relationship between the efficiency of the company's activities, the number of developers in the staff, the costs of marketing communications and the profitability of these costs was established.

As mentioned in point 2.2, one of the main directions of marketing communications of "Symphony Solutions" is the formation of the company's HR brand. In the context of the company's constant expansion, the importance of human resources as a determining factor in the development of an IT company becomes especially relevant. That is why we consider it expedient to develop marketing communications in the context of supporting the development of the HR brand and increasing the loyalty of potential employees. To develop this direction, we suggest increasing the efficiency of the marketing department. Since the units in the company do not work separately, it is also necessary to improve the work of the HR department. Coordinated actions of these units aimed at staffing the company with human resources will ensure effective operation and development of the company in a competitive environment. To improve the organization of the work of divisions, we suggest implementing Agile approaches to the organization of work. Agile implementation method at "Symphony Solutions", main proposals and recommendations will be formed and presented in chapter 3.

## **Conclusions on Section 2**

In the research and analysis section, the activity of the IT company “Symphony Solutions” was evaluated. It is highlighted that the company is distinguished by an innovative approach to cooperation with clients, a high level of organizational culture and dedication to its employees. In addition, the company has financial stability, high profitability, constant development, innovations in technology and management.

Among the strategic alternatives for the development of “Symphony Solutions”, the opportunity to expand the business by attracting more customers and expanding the range of services stands out. A key resource for achieving these goals is properly trained personnel. To gain competitive advantages in the Ukrainian IT market, it is important to improve and effectively improve marketing communications in the field of human resources.

In the second chapter, an analysis of the marketing communication activity of “Symphony Solutions” was carried out. It was determined that the main goal of the company’s marketing communications is to increase loyalty to the HR brand, to form a positive image of the company, taking into account its values, mission and vision, as well as to establish effective communication with potential customers and partners.

The main marketing communication tools used by the company to increase loyalty to its HR brand include social networks, corporate social responsibility, website and event marketing activities.

It is noted that an increase in marketing communication costs in the company is not always accompanied by an increase in profitability, and marketing communication tools are not always optimally integrated. This indicates the need for further improvement of the activities of the marketing department.

During the research, the influence of marketing communication activity on the efficiency of the company’s activity was substantiated and the relationships between the main indicators were determined.

## SECTION 3

### DIRECTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE COMPANY'S MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS MANAGEMENT

#### **3.1 Justification of the importance of marketing communications in IT companies**

Marketing strategies in the IT sphere should facilitate effective interaction with customers and partners. This includes creating convenient communication channels, providing quality advice and support, as well as developing products and services that meet the needs of customers and partners.

Brand and reputation are very important in the IT industry. Effective marketing strategies help to build a strong brand and maintain a positive reputation of the enterprise among customers, partners and the market in general. This helps attract new customers and partners, as well as retain existing ones.

Marketing strategies should be aimed at attracting new customers. They should help show the competitive advantages of the enterprise and attract new customers through a quality offer.

In the IT field, attracting and retaining talented employees is a particularly important task. Marketing strategies can also be used to attract and retain talented professionals by showing the benefits of working for a particular IT company.

Adaptation to the competitive market: The competition in the IT services market is very high. Marketing strategies must be agile and flexible, allowing businesses to quickly adapt to changes in the competitive environment.

All these aspects help enterprises in the IT sphere to maintain a competitive advantage and achieve success in the conditions of the modern market. Correctly used marketing strategies can be a key factor in achieving these goals.

In the field of IT, information can be complex and technical. Marketing communications help translate complex technical concepts into understandable

language for customers and partners, helping them better understand the benefits a product or service can bring.

Marketing communications allow IT companies to attract new customers. By effectively promoting their services and solutions, companies can increase their appeal to new customers and create opportunities for growth. Marketing communications are not limited to attracting new customers, but also help to maintain and develop the existing customer base. This is important because retaining customers usually costs less than acquiring new ones.

Effective marketing communications can greatly facilitate the sales process in IT companies. They provide salespeople and business representatives with the tools and materials to be confident and effective in their discussions with customers.

B2B marketing is the same B2C market. The difference in direction is that the company has several types of customers with different motivations at the same time within the framework of cooperation. Like several target audiences, where the company director, and the owner, and the lower-level executor/manager, and the developers from the client side are involved in decision-making. That is, a whole group of people significantly influences decision-making. And you need to talk to each of them differently, give different motives. This is the first problem of B2B marketing.

And the second problem is much more complicated. Its essence is that the company needs not only to find a potential client and target the target audience, the client who has a demand for the company's IT services. The company needs to reach the customer at the right time.

On average, in the IT industry, one client receives a request for IT development once every 9 months. Once every 9 months there is a period lasting from 2–3 weeks to 1.5 months when the customer comes with the project. He has a real budget, but no executive team. And he is looking for a solution for his business. After solving the problem, the client leaves.

Accordingly, the task of the marketing team is to get the offer to the customer at the right time, and this targeting problem is much more difficult than the first. It is not so difficult to take, for example, the state of Texas, some city in it, find all the

companies in a certain industry on LinkedIn, select 2–3 dozen people from each company (who can make decisions) and start communicating with them. The difficulty is that you need to start communicating with these people at the moment when they have a project, otherwise they will simply forget about you.

Also, the question is urgent: How many times do you need to contact a person so that he remembers your company? First, the company needs to start collecting contacts and data: systematize former clients, employees, existing clients, employees of companies with whom the company worked, but they left for other companies, and their recommendations, participants of events, conferences, and events.

You can search for people simply by industry, region, position, selecting those with whom you need to get to know and communicate. These can be those who place orders on various tender platforms. As well as participants of all kinds of tops, ratings and those who write articles, and even companies that recruit personnel to their staff.

After getting acquainted, the stage of reminders about yourself and your company begins with the help of three main tools. First of all, business communications are carried out – personal, individual acquaintance. Next, social networking comes into effect – when the company often appears in the client’s social networks, in the place where people read content that is interesting to them. If you generate this content, you will constantly catch the eyes of the client – you will be remembered.

Of course, content marketing. Among all these tools, remarketing takes first place – repeated communication when a person saw your contact, came to the site to read your case study, your blog. After that, you have to remind her about yourself and repeatedly. This is a simple and understandable way to save the budget and at the same time be visible all the time.

In today’s world of marketing, business automation has become the most sought-after process. But you can automate only what already works well. For example, if you have already learned how to keep in touch with your potential customers and do it well, then yes, you can automate this process. You can’t do automation when you haven’t debugged the toolkit manually.

So, the summary of the work is quite simple: it is not so difficult to find a client

as it is to keep him; Lead Nurturing is a key tool for lead generation in B2B; high-quality content marketing and accurate audience segmentation is the way to success; content marketing is a tool for forming public expertise; you can automate only what works.

The IT industry is rapidly evolving, and marketing communications help companies adapt to changes in the market environment and new technologies. They allow companies to stay relevant and competitive.

Marketing communications help IT companies in the following aspects:

- allow companies to learn what needs and expectations prevail among consumers in connection with new technologies. This helps create products that meet market demand;
- allow companies to project an image of the image of an innovative leader in the industry, which is adapted to rapid technological growth. This helps to maintain a position in the industry and attract investors;
- is an important tool for promoting new products and services to the market. They help determine which new features can be useful for customers;
- help position the company in comparison with competitors and emphasize its advantages. This allows you to remain competitive even in a changing environment;
- help to establish and maintain partnership relations, which is important for joint projects and the development of new technologies.

Therefore, marketing communications is a necessary component for the successful functioning of IT companies in the modern, fast-changing world. They help maintain competitiveness and adapt to unforeseen changes in the industry.

### **3.2 Measures to improve the company's marketing communication activities**

In order to improve marketing communication activities in the context of forming the company's HR brand, it is advisable to consider the integration of marketing and HR departments.

As mentioned earlier, there is no hierarchy in "Symphony Solutions", all departments interact with each other and direct their activities to achieve common goals. That is why we propose to improve the work of not only the marketing department at "Symphony Solutions", but also the HR department, because it is the interaction and coordination of the activities of these departments that provides the company with human resources.

To increase the effectiveness of the HR department and the marketing department, we suggest implementing Agile approaches.

Agile method was created as an approach to software development to eliminate redundant operations, increase process transparency, and gain the ability to quickly meet changing customer needs. Agile is significantly different from the traditional cascade method and involves working in short cycles. Thanks to this method, the efficiency of teamwork and the speed of innovation implementation increase.

The main values of the Agile approach:

- people and their interactions are more important than processes and tools;
- adaptability, readiness for changes is more important than following the plan;
- the service or product is more important than the documentation;
- cooperation is more important than a contract [33].

The traditional Agile approach to project management includes two methods: scrum and kanban. Scrum (skirmish) involves interactions with a fixed duration, and kanban (from the Japanese "kanban" – a sign) – continuous releases. After finishing one, the team immediately moves on to the next.

Agile has long been more than just a specialized approach to organizing the work of development teams. In today's constantly changing environment, in the conditions

of competition for both consumers and qualified personnel, flexible methods are introduced into the work of marketing, changing approaches to the selection and development of personnel.

At “Symphony Solutions”, project teams use Agile to organize software development processes. We suggest implementing a simplified version of Agile in the work of marketing and HR departments, using the main principles, but not trying to implement all the tools.

The readiness of “Symphony Solutions” to implement Agile in the work of departments, and not only project teams, is evidenced by the following facts:

The small size of the company and the number of personnel in the HR and marketing departments will ensure the effectiveness of the proposed approach, because the communication process is easier in smaller teams.

The lack of hierarchy in the company, a high level of corporate culture and the company’s approach to the model of turquoise organizations correspond to the basic principles of Agile work.

The result of the completed task at “Symphony Solutions” is more important than documentation and bureaucratic procedures.

“Symphony Solutions” is ready for changes and successfully adapts to negative changes in the external environment. Thus, after the crisis events in Ukraine in 2014, the company did not stop its activities on the Ukrainian market, but saw the potential in the development of social entrepreneurship. This is how the training school for IT specialists “Symphony Solutions Academy” appeared, which has been successfully operating for more than a year.

Let’s consider in detail the features of implementing Agile in the marketing department and in the HR department of “Symphony Solutions”.

To implement Agile in the work of the company’s HR department, we will use Scrum tools:

Work in sprints – short-term periods of 2–4 weeks. The gradual implementation of tasks and the constant formation of new ones will ensure the logical construction of the company’s brand.

Holding daily 5–10 minute meetings where progress and existing problems are discussed.

A scrum board is used to visualize the work being done and can be effectively applied during the recruiting process. Recruiting is a rather complicated, long-term process, when the final result is unknown, a lot of mistakes and attempts are expected. You can never say for sure whether the recruiting process will end successfully. Therefore, the HR team needs to be flexible and efficient. The Scrum board provides for the posting and demonstration of the work carried out by each employee of the department. A scrum board is used to visualize processes that are presented in stages, such as “Do”, “In progress”, “Done”. In this way, all team members understand at what stage of recruiting a certain candidate is and which vacancies require special attention.

We will use the following approaches in personnel management:

Proactive talent search. Active participation in the life of IT society of Ukraine opens opportunities for HR to interact with potential candidates.

It is suggested to use online modules for personnel training and development. The HR department offers an employee development program depending on the position and career growth.

To speed up staff recruitment, the team focuses on vacancies for which it has no questions. If the requirements for the candidate are not clearly defined, the vacancy is postponed. In general, vacancies should be ranked by priority. The team works on several candidates at once, exchanging information and using a Scrum board for control.

The implementation of Agile involves abandoning the traditional annual evaluation of employees. The work process of each team member is open, the control of the performed work takes place in short meetings. Employees are open to comments and changes.

Thus, the implementation of Agile tools in the HR department will ensure interchangeability in the team. Team members will be able to “pick up” a problematic task if colleagues are unable to pay attention to it. Decisions will be made collectively,

the opinion of all team members is important, while everyone has enough authority to propose their own initiatives. Agile methods will allow Symphony Solutions employees to develop through solving more complex tasks, close interaction, feedback and self-improvement.

Implementation of Agile in marketing also has its own specifics. Let's consider the specifics of Agile implementation in the organization of the work of the "Symphony Solutions" marketing department.

It is worth noting that in general, Agile marketing is a continuous search for new solutions and opportunities in real time based on data and analytics. Such marketing is built on the principles of operational testing, evaluation of the obtained results and appropriate reaction.

The main conditions for the effective work of the marketing department according to Agile are the team's understanding of the goals to be achieved and the abandonment of long-term marketing strategies and content plans in favor of short-term planning and quick response to changes.

To implement Agile in the work of the "Symphony Solutions" marketing department, we suggest using the same tools as in the HR department, but in the context of marketing tasks.

The main goal of an IT marketer is to motivate the customer to take a targeted action, such as signing up or buying a product. The next goal is to turn such a client (lead) into a brand-loyal user and bring profit to the business.

For this, marketing teams combine the efforts of various specialists, including user engagement managers, e-mail marketers, SMM managers, SEO specialists, content specialists, and others. Focusing on individual directions, they collect all "threads" into a single whole.

In the conditions of constant improvement of marketing communication tools and increased contacts with the audience, approaches to the formation of a complex of marketing communications also need improvement. As already noted in the analysis of the marketing communications of "Symphony Solutions", the company's marketing communications tools are not sufficiently integrated. In order to ensure

the effectiveness of the “Symphony Solutions” MC complex based on Agile principles, we suggest forming sprints according to the HIDA approach (“Hypothesis” – hypotheses, “Action” – actions, “Data” – data, “Insights” – conclusions):

- hypotheses – the team generates ideas for improving advertising activities, new tools that can be implemented;
- actions – application of proposed hypotheses, testing;
- data – collection of statistical data on the appropriate reaction of the target audience;
- conclusions – verification of the obtained results by the team, comparing them with the expected ones [40].

This process at “Symphony Solutions” should be continuous. This will increase the efficiency of the marketing communication complex and increase the level of integration of tools. At the same time, it should be noted that the length of one cycle should be one to two weeks. It is advisable to form hypotheses using the SMART approach (“Specific” – Concreteness, “Measurable” – Measurability, “Attainable” – Reachability, “Relevant” – Actuality, “Time-bound” – Limited time) [39].

The Scrum board in the activities of the marketing department can be used as a tool for forming a short-term content plan. This will allow you to quickly add new ideas to the list of already assigned tasks and monitor the implementation process.

To ensure the maximum effectiveness of Agile in marketing, it is necessary to:

Research the target audience in detail. When forming the image of “Symphony Solutions”, align the requirements and preferences of the target audience with the mission and vision of the company.

Be ready to quickly implement new tools. As a result of the analysis of the activity of “Symphony Solutions” in social networks carried out in the second chapter, it was determined that the reaction of the target audience is weak. To increase interaction with the target audience, alternative options are the creation of chatbots and the implementation of situational marketing in the activity.

Scale successful ideas.

The implementation of Agile in the activities of the “Symphony Solutions”

marketing department will allow:

- increase the effectiveness of marketing communication tools without significantly increasing costs;
- form cross-functional groups that will ensure consistency of teamwork and constant exchange of information;
- quickly respond to the reaction of the target audience and changes in the external environment of “Symphony Solutions”.

All of the above will allow you to build effective communication with clients and increase loyalty to the company’s HR brand. That is, Agile approaches to the marketing organization of “Symphony Solutions” will allow equally effective marketing communication activities both in the Ukrainian IT market and in the international environment.

To organize the work of departments according to the Agile method, we suggest implementing specialized software for organizing the work of Agile teams. The program will allow you to use the above Agile tools in web mode, plan and distribute tasks, control the process of their execution.

Today, there are more than a hundred Agile team management tools on the market, each of which has its strengths and weaknesses. To choose a program that should be used in “Symphony Solutions”, consider the three most popular options (Appendix C).

To choose a program, we will analyze the advantages and disadvantages of the considered options and compare them with the features of the work of “Symphony Solutions”.

The programs are similar in their functionality – they are all aimed at ensuring the most effective organization of the work of Agile teams. Each of the programs offers a wide range of tools and provides opportunities for both large and small teams. However, “VersionOne” and “RallySoftware” are characterized by a complex interface. The implementation of these programs will lead to an increase in time and financial costs for personnel training. This is not advisable, because the priority is the rapid adaptation of teams and the implementation of Agile approaches. In a set

of similar tools, “Jira” has a number of advantages. One of these is the possibility of supporting the program on mobile devices. Since “Symphony Solutions” has a high level of loyalty to its employees, the company provides them with the most comfortable working conditions and sometimes allows them to work remotely, it also does not have a fixed time of stay in the office. Therefore, it is important for employees to be constantly in touch and understand how work processes are progressing. An important advantage is also the possibility of integration of “Jira” with programs already used by “Symphony Solutions”.

Thus, we suggest choosing “Jira Software” for the implementation of the “Symphony Solutions” divisions.

“Jira Software” is an Agile project management tool that supports Scrum and Kanban methods.

The “Jira Software” package offers a complete set of Agile tools that will help teams easily organize their work according to Agile.

The program is suitable for creating and coordinating sprints. With the help of “Jira Software”, you can configure the type of tasks, automatically update tasks based on the completion of other tasks. The program gives an idea of the general state of work and the degree of completion of tasks by colleagues. With the help of the “Wallboard” tool, you can create information panels, and with the help of filters, you can find tasks assigned to a specific employee and other relevant data.

In this way, each team member can easily navigate the work and easily prepare for discussions at planning meetings.

The program will allow you to create personalized Scrum boards that will correspond to real work processes in teams and will allow you to control the process of completing tasks.

With the help of “Jira Software”, you can also generate reports that show the analysis of completed tasks. In addition, you can use such tools as task burndown charts, team speed charts, and control charts to analyze team work.

A single software for organizing work according to Agile practices in the marketing department and the HR department will allow you to easily coordinate

work between them and coordinate actions in order to achieve common goals.

Thus, the main advantages of using the selected software for organizing the implementation of Agile approaches in the work of marketing and HR departments are:

- ensuring the effective use of Agile tools in the work of divisions;
- ensuring coordination of the work of divisions in order to coordinate actions aimed at forming an effective HR brand;
- constant coordination of the state of execution of works due to the web platform. As mentioned earlier, the organizational environment of “Symphony Solutions” is conducive to the implementation of Agile practices. Therefore, it is expected that the implementation of this approach in the work of the HR department and the marketing department will not take much time and will not require significant resource costs.

However, like any other organizational innovation, this approach requires staff training. Within the framework of project implementation, the following stages of personnel training are offered:

- express course on Scrum (during the course, you will get acquainted with the main tools and principles of the method);
- Agile work planning (it will be considered how teams will plan and perform their tasks using Agile);
- familiarization with the software (how to set up the program, create boards, upload stories will be demonstrated and explained).

### **3.3 Economic justification of the feasibility of implementing the proposed measures**

To determine the investments required by the project, we will calculate the cost components. To implement the “Jira Software” program, which was selected, it is necessary to purchase a license for a period of 3 years. The cost of a license for 10 users

(employees of the marketing and HR departments) is USD 135. For calculations, we will take into account the current dollar exchange rate as of September 2023 (1 USD dollar = 36.6 UAH):  $135 \times 36,6 \times 10 \times 3 = 148\,230$  UAH.

The course on Agile for teams will allow you to quickly introduce approaches to the work of teams, systematizes knowledge. We suggest choosing a course from the Scrum Ukraine organization. The cost of the course is 520 USD.

There is no need to hire additional technical specialists to install the software, as the company already has system administrators who will be able to provide technical support for the implementation of the program.

Therefore, the total amount of expenses will be – 148 230 (Purchase of a program license for a period of 3 years, UAH) + 19 032 (expenses for personnel training, UAH) is 167 262 UAH or 4570 USD. That is, these funds can be considered as initial investments in the project (IS).

Thus, the expected benefits from the implementation of Agile approaches in the work of the marketing department are as follows:

- increasing the efficiency of the marketing department;
- forming the company's HR brand and increasing loyalty to it;
- integration of marketing communication tools;
- increasing the activity of the target audience in social networks and site conversion rates;
- increasing profitability of spending on marketing communications.

Expected benefits from the implementation of Agile approaches in the work of the HR department:

- increasing the efficiency of the department's work;
- acceleration of recruiting and talent search processes;
- increasing the company's staff due to an increase in the number of developers;
- coordinated actions of the marketing department and the HR department in order to increase loyalty to the company's HR brand.

The expected increase in conversion rates is not only due to an increase

in the number of visitors to the site, but due to an increase in the applications left in the career section (table 3.1).

Table 3.1 – Predicted change in site conversion rates after the implemented approach, per month (compiled by the author)

Indicator	Value before implementation	Expected value after implementation	Deviation
Number of site visitors per month	14 000	22 000	8000
Number of applications left	140	146	6
Conversion of applications left, %	0.93	0.74	-0.19
Number of hired employees	5	11	6
Conversion of hired employees, %	1	7.1	6.1
Conversion of visitors into engaged employees, %	0.028	0.06	0.032

Formation of the employer's brand will allow to interest and attract qualified employees. The improvement of the company's marketing communications complex also contributes to the formation of relations with customers, the appearance of new customers and an increase in sales. The application of the proposed approach will allow to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of personnel selection, to increase indicators of profitability of costs for marketing activities and personnel search.

The effectiveness of the implemented measures consists in increasing the profit of "Symphony Solutions" due to the increase in the number of projects, in connection with the expansion of the company's activities, the growth and development of the company's human resources. Availability of a sufficient amount of financial and human resources, in turn, will ensure the growth of the company's innovative activity.

In general, on average, the company hires about 5 developers per month. Let's assume that the implemented measures will allow to increase this indicator to 10 people. About 5–6 people work on one project, depending on the complexity and scope of the planned work. In this way, the hiring of 10 employees will allow 2 new projects to be developed. Developers are paid \$20 per hour. In this way, we can calculate the expected profit.

Income from investments will amount to UAH 1 830 000.

Net cash flow:  $1\,830\,000 - 167\,262 = 1\,662\,738$  UAH.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed project, we will calculate the following indicators:

- profitability index (RI);
- investment payback period (T);
- return on marketing investment (ROMI).

Table 3.2 – Calculation of expected profit (compiled by the author)

Number of developers, persons	10
Number of new projects	2
Approximate duration of work on the project, hours.	250
Estimated cost of one project, UAH	915 000
Expected profit, UAH	1 830 000

The profitability index indicates the amount of income per unit of costs.

$$PI = P / IC = 1\,662\,738 / 167\,262 = 9.94.$$

RI > 1, so the project is accepted.

The investment payback period allows you to determine the period for which the investment will pay off.

$$T = IC / P = 167\,262 / 1\,662\,738 = 0.1 \text{ year.}$$

The obtained indicator shows that the investment in the project will pay off within a month. Therefore, this investment project will have a short payback period.

The rate of return on marketing investments allows you to determine

$$ROMI = (1\,662\,738 - 167\,262) / 167\,262 = 8.94.$$

According to the obtained result, the profitability of the project is very high.

So, based on the calculations, it can be concluded that the project is profitable and will quickly bring profit.

It can be concluded that the proposed measures for the implementation of Agile approaches to the organization of the work of the marketing and HR departments in “Symphony Solutions” do not require significant financial costs, but will contribute to increasing the efficiency of the company’s activities.

### **Conclusions on Section 3**

In this section, the introduction of Agile approaches to the work of marketing and HR departments was considered in order to optimize marketing communication activities and increase the efficiency of “Symphony Solutions” company. This approach will contribute to the improvement of the work of the marketing department and the HR department, which in turn contributes to an increase in the number of developers in the company and an increase in the number of projects. Such actions will help to increase the competitiveness of “Symphony Solutions”.

The conducted activities will also contribute to the formation of the company’s HR brand and increase loyalty among employees. They will make it possible to optimize the costs of marketing communications and improve the integration of the tools of the marketing communications complex.

A coordinated approach to improving the work of the marketing and HR departments will allow the company to act comprehensively and achieve its goals. It will also contribute to increasing the loyalty of the target audience to the company’s HR brand.

The effectiveness of the implemented measures consists in increasing the profit of “Symphony Solutions” company due to the increase in the number of projects and the expansion of the company’s sphere of activity, which, in turn. Availability of a sufficient amount of financial and human resources will ensure the growth of the efficiency of the company’s activities.

Based on the profitability assessment of the project, it was determined that it is profitable and will pay for itself within one month. The expected profit from the proposed measures is 1 830 000 UAH.

## CONCLUSIONS

1. On the basis of the conducted theoretical research, the concept of marketing communications was defined and the relationship between the complex of marketing communications of the enterprise was defined. It was revealed that the goals of marketing communications are not only informing about the product and supporting target sales, but also forming the image and brand of the employer; increasing consumer loyalty, finding new customers and effective communication with regular customers. An important aspect of marketing communications is their influence on the formation and maintenance of the company's brand. Effective communication strategies can help increase brand awareness, consumer perception, and support a positive image. Open and effective feedback to consumers is an important component of marketing communications. Consumer feedback and their contribution to innovation can be used to improve products and services. Retaining regular customers is an important task for many businesses. Marketing communications can help create loyalty programs that attract and retain customers. It is clear that innovation in the field of marketing itself becomes a key factor for achieving competitive advantages. Thanks to new approaches and tools, businesses can communicate more effectively with consumers and adapt their strategies to changing market needs.

2. Among the main tools of marketing communications are identified: advertising, personal sales, automatic marketing, Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, Internet of Things, sales promotion, direct marketing.

3. The decrease in efficiency from the traditional approach to the formation of the marketing communication complex led to the emergence of integrated marketing communications as a strategy that moves the marketing department from separate functions to a single interconnected approach. The integration of marketing communications provides a synergistic effect of the application of marketing communication tools. Integrated marketing communications arose from the need to adapt strategies to changing market conditions. They allow businesses to direct their communication efforts to target specific customers and maximize the effectiveness

of their efforts.

4. In the second section, the activity of the IT company “Symphony Solutions” was assessed. Key advantages of the company are highlighted, such as an innovative approach to cooperation with clients, a high level of organizational culture, and the dedication of employees. The company is also noted for its financial stability, high profitability, constant development, innovations in technology and management. Among the strategic alternatives for the development of “Symphony Solutions”, the opportunity to expand the business through the attraction of new customers and the expansion of the range of services stands out. A key resource for achieving these goals is properly trained personnel. To gain competitive advantages in the Ukrainian IT market, it is important to improve and effectively improve marketing communications in the field of human resources.

5. It was determined that the main goal of the company’s marketing communications is to increase loyalty to the HR brand, to form a positive image of the company, taking into account its values, mission and vision, as well as to establish effective communication with potential customers and partners. The main tools of marketing communications used by the company to increase loyalty to its HR brand are social networks, corporate social responsibility, website and event marketing activities.

6. It is noted that the increase in costs for marketing communications in the company is not always accompanied by an increase in profitability, and marketing communications tools are not always optimally integrated. This indicates the need for further improvement of the activities of the marketing department.

7. The third chapter substantiates the implementation of the Agile approach in the activities of the marketing and HR departments in order to optimize marketing communications and increase the efficiency of “Symphony Solutions” company. This approach will contribute to the improvement of the functioning of the marketing and HR departments, which, in turn, contributes to an increase in the number of developers in the company and an increase in the number of projects. Such actions will contribute to increasing the efficiency and competitiveness of “Symphony Solutions”.

8. The conducted activities also contribute to the formation of the company's HR brand and increase of loyalty among employees. They allow you to optimize the costs of marketing communications and improve the integration of the tools of the marketing communications complex. A coordinated approach to improving the activities of the marketing and HR department allows the company to act comprehensively to achieve its goals and increase the loyalty of the target audience to the company's HR brand.

9. The effectiveness of the implemented measures consists in increasing the profit of "Symphony Solutions" company due to the increase in the number of projects and the expansion of the company's sphere of activity, which, in turn, will ensure an increase in profitability. Based on the profitability assessment of the project, it was determined that it is profitable and will pay for itself within one month. The expected profit from the proposed measures is 1 830 000 UAH.

Therefore, the results of the implementation of the proposed measures to improve the work of the marketing and HR departments will allow: to increase the efficiency of operations and the innovative potential of "Symphony Solutions"; increase the number of developers in the company, which will contribute to an increase in the number of projects; ensure the formation of the company's HR brand and increase loyalty to it; to increase the level of integration of marketing communication tools.

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## **ANNEXES**

Table A1 – PEST-analyses (compiled by the author)

Indicator	Description of the factor	Nature of influence	Assessment of the degree of influence of factors, in points
<i>Political and legal:</i>			
Lack of state support for the IT sector	In Ukraine, there is no legislation that would support the development and regulated relations in the IT sphere	-1	2
High level of corruption in Ukraine	Ukraine received 33 points out of a possible 100 in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) for 2022. The indicator increased by one point, and now Ukraine ranks 116 <sup>th</sup> out of 180 countries. To date, this problem remains the second most important for Ukrainians after the war	-1	1
War in Ukraine	A full-scale invasion of Russia in February 2022 negatively affects the country's investment attractiveness, causes mistrust on the part of foreign companies and creates obstacles to scientific and technical cooperation	-1	3
Digitization or digital transformations of business and economic sectors	Digitization will be the main tool for achieving the strategic goal of Ukraine – increasing the GDP by 8 times, up to 1 trillion dollars in 2030, and ensuring the well-being, comfort and quality of life of Ukrainians at a level higher than the average in Europe	+1	2
Bureaucracy in the country	The high level of bureaucracy causes problems with registration and processing of documents in public services	-1	1
<i>Economical:</i>			
Unstable economic situation in Ukraine	The instability of the economy during the crisis is the main threat to doing business. Insufficient GDP growth rates are observed	-1	2
Attractiveness of Ukraine in the field of outsourcing	The war did not stop the development of Ukraine's leading industries – the IT market grew by 23% and this figure continues to grow. That is, until today the IT market not only survived the war, but also maintains its activity and helps the Armed Forces of Ukraine and Ukraine	+1	3
Growth of export of IT services	IT Ukraine Association notes that pre-war Ukrainian IT accounted for 37% of exports in the provision of computer services, which totaled \$6.8 billion in revenue	-1	2

Indicator	Description of the factor	Nature of influence	Assessment of the degree of influence of factors, in points
Investment climate	The instability of the Ukrainian economy and politics do not contribute to the formation of a positive investment climate. The insecurity of foreign investments in the IT sector and the lack of proper government regulation are among the factors that make foreign companies prefer more stable markets	+1	2
Inflation rate	In recent years, a gradual increase in the inflation rate has been observed. The inflation index in Ukraine for 2022 was 126.6%	-1	2
Ease of doing business	Ukraine improved its position in the rating of ease of doing business by 4 positions over the year, rising from 80 to 76	+1	1
<i>Socio-cultural:</i>			
Insufficient quality training of personnel	Outdated teaching programs in Ukrainian universities and insufficient attention to the practical component.	-1	2
Departure of qualified specialists abroad	According to Sequoia estimates, 16% of IT professionals have left Ukraine since the beginning of the full-scale invasion	-1	2
General demographic situation in the country	A constant decrease in the number of the population, and with the beginning of the war, a large volume of migration	-1	1
<i>Technological:</i>			
Stable development of the IT sphere in Ukraine	The IT sphere has been demonstrating stable development and growth in Ukraine for more than a year now. In 2022, Ukraine took 12 <sup>th</sup> place among 23 countries of Central, Eastern, South-Eastern and North-Eastern Europe in the IT sector competitiveness rating, rising two places in a year	+1	3
The level of IT use in Ukraine	Low level of adaptation to innovations and application of new software by Ukrainian enterprises and state institutions	-1	1

Table A.2 – List of opportunities and threats of the macro environment for “Symphony Solutions” (compiled by the author)

Macroenvironmental factors	Assessment of the degree of influence of the factor on the enterprise, in points	Options for appropriate actions are possible
<p><i>1. Factors of favorable influence (Opportunities)</i></p> <p>1.1. Transition to a digital economy and society</p> <p>1.2. Attractiveness of Ukraine in the field of outsourcing</p> <p>1.3. Growth of export of IT services</p> <p>1.4. Ease of doing business</p> <p>1.5. Stable development of the IT sphere in Ukraine</p>	<p>1.1 – 2</p> <p>1.2 – 3</p> <p>1.3 – 2</p> <p>1.4 – 1</p> <p>1.5 – 3</p>	<p>1.1 Increase in the number of Ukrainian clients</p> <p>1.2 Increasing the number of foreign clients</p> <p>1.3 Increasing the company’s sales volume</p> <p>1.4 Emergence of new companies in the IT sphere</p>
<p><i>2. Adverse impact factors (Threats)</i></p> <p>2.1 Full-scale invasion of Russia on the territory of Ukraine</p> <p>2.2 Lack of state support</p> <p>2.3 High level of corruption</p> <p>2.4 Unstable economic situation</p> <p>2.5 Departure of qualified specialists abroad</p>	<p>2.1 – 3</p> <p>2.2 – 2</p> <p>2.3 – 1</p> <p>2.4 – 2</p> <p>2.5 – 2</p> <p>2.6 – 2</p>	<p>2.1 Threats to business expansion</p> <p>2.2 Orientation to foreign markets</p> <p>2.3 Additional risk for new companies and expansion of existing ones</p> <p>2.4 Orientation to foreign markets</p> <p>2.5 Lack of qualified personnel and, as a result, the need to find them outside of Ukraine</p>

Table B.1 – Results of regression analysis (compiled by the author)

Indicator	Standard error	t – statistics	P – value	Lower 95%	Top 95%
The coefficient of profitability of the activity	0.034255944	5.86548774	0.03211242	0.0439684	0.33875126
The number of developers	0.001599694	-0.92205225	0.49610619	-0.0082877	0.00547815
Total costs for marketing communications	1.14553E-05	1.80054126	0.23994272	-0.2964455	6.8932E-05
The coefficient of profitability of marketing expenses	0.017656929	1.0880562	0.42939764	-0.0576747	0.09426852

Table 3.1 – Comparative characteristics of software for the work of Agile teams  
(compiled by the author according to [45, 58])

Program	«Jira Software»	«VersionOne»	«RallySoftware»
License	License	License, free period	License
Price	\$7 per user if the team is more than 10 people	\$29 per user per month	Free for up to 10 users, \$245 for more
Platform	Web-Based/Installed	Web-Based	Web-Based
Users	Focused on freelancers; large, medium and small business; non-profit organizations	Focused on freelancers; large, medium and small business; non-profit organizations	Focused on freelancers; large, medium and small business
Several projects	Full support	Full support	Full support
View task board	Present	Present	Present
Roadmapping	Missing	Full support	Full support
User roles	Missing	PO, SM, Team Member, Stakeholder, plus custom roles	PO, SM, Team Member
Advantages	A large number of users. Support for many languages. Ability to use on mobile devices	Free trial for teams of up to 10 people. Provides support for the work of cross-functional teams, a wide selection of planning tools	Provides support for the work of cross-functional teams, a wide range of management tools
Disadvantages	An insufficiently wide range of management tools	Complex interface, lack of ability to work from mobile devices. It's hard enough to get the team up and running quickly and use the tool as efficiently as possible	Complex interface, lack of a simple mechanism for working with tasks; lack of possibility of use on mobile devices

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE OF UKRAINE  
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# CERTIFICATE

**ZHAN ZHIMENG**

participated at the International Scientific and Practical  
Internet Conference

**«PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF ENSURING  
SUSTAINABLE SOCIO-ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT OF TERRITORIES»**

The topic of the speech at the conference:

**«Modern tools of marketing communications in  
company management»**

Director of the Educational and  
Research Institute  
«Karazin Business School»

Volodymyr RODCHENKO

October 27, 2023