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LOCALIZATION AND TRANSLATION: THE ROLE OF MARKETING COMMUNICATION IN UKRAINIAN BUSINESSES ENTERING FOREIGN MARKETS

In modern conditions Ukrainian entrepreneurs are forced to change their businesses and enter other markets in order to preserve their brands. This is especially true for those entrepreneurs who previously developed businesses in the territories that are now in the front zone. For them the access to foreign markets is one of the opportunities not only to preserve but also to develop an enterprise. Of course, even before the full-scale invasion, major players in the Ukrainian market entered international markets and integrated there. However, previously it was one of the possibilities, one of the ways to developing. But now for many businesses it is the only option that allows them to save businesses.

Starting their integration into the foreign market, Ukrainian entrepreneurs face many challenges complicating their work: mentality, traditions, deductions, public narratives, perception – they are quite different from the Ukrainian consumers. Thus at the stage of identifying these

problems, an entrepreneurs seeks to change the strategy of his business, and, in accordance with this, to change the marketing strategy (to build communication with a new consumer, find new channels for communication with the target audience, change his product or service, create new offers and new advertising campaigns first). All this is based on two important factors: 1) making an in-depth analysis of the new market, detecting of friction and understanding your target audience, 2) making the correct translation, since language is an extremely important element, without which communication will not happen. However, approaching the completion of these two tasks, it is important to remember that they will only work together - just a high-quality translation is not enough in the same way as there is not enough qualitative analysis of the market – either you do not know your client, or you cannot communicate with him.

If you dive deeper into the analysis of the importance of point 1 (in-depth analysis of the new market), you will notice that cultural barriers exist even between countries that are geographically close to Ukraine. Historically, the population of each country has formed a unique culture that influences the perception of information, values, traditions and social norms. That is why companies seeking to enter international markets must deeply analyze the cultural context of each region in which they plan to promote their goods or services.

One of the key aspects of overcoming cultural barriers is the adaptation of the brand's communication strategy. This includes the translation and localization of content, taking into account the peculiarities of perception of visual elements, colors and symbols, as well as understanding the mentality and emotional triggers of the target audience. For example, in Western countries, white is associated with purity and innocence, while in some Asian cultures it symbolizes mourning and death. If the brand does not take into account these nuances, its marketing campaigns may be misunderstood or even cause negative emotions.

In addition, the cultural context of advertising plays an important role. For example, humor that works in the United States can be completely incomprehensible or even offensive to residents of East Asia or the Middle East. In some countries open expression of emotions in advertising campaigns is the norm, while in more conservative societies this approach may seem unacceptable. There are real examples where the wrong approach to localization caused serious marketing errors. For example, Pepsi, when entering the Chinese market, translated its slogan "Come Alive! You're in the Pepsi Generation" as "Pepsi brings your ancestors back to life", which

caused a backlash among Chinese consumers because of cultural beliefs about ancestors [1]. A similar situation happened with KFC, when their slogan "Finger-Lickin ‘Good" in China was translated as "Eat your fingers", which created a comic but undesirable effect in the perception of the brand [2]. Another famous case is the Chevrolet Nova car model, which entered the Latin American market. In the Spanish-speaking environment, the word "Nov" could be interpreted as "no va", which led to low sales and forced the company to change its marketing strategy [3].

Another challenge is trust in the brand. In different countries, the factors affecting consumer confidence can be radically different. For example, in the Scandinavian countries, people tend to trust more the environmental and ethical aspects of business, while in Latin America, family and social recommendations can have a great influence on consumer choice. Therefore, companies should take these features into account when creating their marketing campaigns and brand positioning.

Ukrainian brands demonstrate successful localization in foreign markets, which contributes to the preservation and development of their business. For example, the Bob Snail brand, known for its natural fruit snacks without added sugar, preservatives and colorants, entered the markets of Germany, Great Britain and Sweden in 2024, presenting its products in the supermarket chains Aldi, Tesco and ICA [4]. This success was made possible by several key factors: adapting the product to local pReferences, improving the packaging of the product according to local pReferences and meeting quality standards. Thanks to these measures, Bob Snail was able to win the trust of European consumers and strengthen its presence in international markets. It should be noted that Ukrainian brands understanding the increase in the number of immigrants from Ukraine in the EU, USA and Canada, have the opportunity to enter the market of so-called "national stores," where products are sold. An example of such localization is Veres, a company specializing in pickled vegetables and conservation. It signed contracts with the American supermarket chain Walmart, and its products appeared on the shelves of more than 500 stores in the United States, where consumers appreciated the authentic taste and naturalness of Ukrainian products [5].

Therefore, the entry of Ukrainian brands into foreign markets today is not only a possibility of scaling, but also a vital necessity for maintaining business in war conditions. However, integration into a foreign environment requires not only a quality product, but also an adapted marketing strategy that takes into account the cultural, linguistic and social characteristics of

the target markets. Deep analysis of the new market and well-executed localization of marketing content are key factors. Without taking into account the local mentality, traditions and consumer habits, the company risks not being correctly perceived by a foreign audience. Examples of unsuccessful translations of slogans of world brands prove that insufficient attention to localization can lead to reputational and financial losses. At the same time, Ukrainian companies are already demonstrating successful cases of adapting their products to the international market, which indicates the stability of Ukrainian business and the ability to use the acquired knowledge and experience, adapting to the current realities. Thus, the combination of marketing analytics, a sensitive approach to cultural characteristics and professional translation are important components of the successful integration of Ukrainian brands into world markets. Such integrated approach will not only save businesses, but also create competitive advantages in the international environment.

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