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Key Trends and Perspectives of Realization Sector In Georgia

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Annotation

Batumi

2

Introduction

Topicality of the study. In the conditions of transition economy, most modern companies try to adapt their key strategy to the market demand, while marketing in turn should facilitate the implementation of the realization strategy - the formation and stimulation of demand. The realization(sales) strategy is the foundation of an effective business in any field. Therefore, companies need to be properly aware of what, for what target audience and how the product will be focused - because without all this, it is conceivable to achieve long-term success in any sector.

Given the fact that marketing is a complex process of forming a company's value added, it is obvious that marketing is a difficult task that involves maintaining a dynamic balance between the company's internal resources and external needs. The functioning of marketing, among other problems, is hindered by ideological conflict in the company, which is why it is important to identify which is the most important - marketing or sales strategical tasks. Establishing an effective relationship between marketing and sales functions is one of the most pressing issues today. 2009 The Chartered Institute of Marketing, a UK-based privileged marketing institute, has named the alignment between these two functions as one of the 6 most important factors in a company's growth. Unfortunately, most of the companies in the Georgian market do not form separate strategies for individual market participants, and maintaining a balance between marketing and sales functions is more characteristic of large companies. Accordingly, the study of problems and trends in this area is relevant to the market insofar as it will help operating companies to take into account the existing problems in the formation of their strategies and to stimulate the realization with properly defined actions. In the process of carrying out economic activity, companies are faced with the problem of making a profit and its further correct distribution. Consequently, the main task of companies is to maximize profits based on the sale of goods or services, which requires constant improvement of a number of processes, including the delivery of

products to end users through distribution channels. This task, from a marketing standpoint, is the process of perfecting marketing distribution channels - perfecting end-user terms and transactions.

Nowadays, this problem is actual in Georgia for both wholesale and retail companies, because at this stage of development, the process of redistribution of functions and responsibilities between the various entities of the distribution channels.

The role of retail in the modern socio-economic environment has increased much compared to previous years, which is mainly due to the development of new marketing technologies. At this stage of development, the realization process for both retail and wholesale goods is no longer simply the transportation and direct sale of products, given the modern trends in market development, the retailer must solve not only problems with physical distribution of goods, but also fight fiercely for the consumer. Each key sector representative must gain and strengthen its place in the target market segment. Most modern companies try to adapt their sale strategy to the market demand, while marketing in turn should facilitate the realization of the sale retail strategy - the formation and stimulation of demand.

Predicting consumer behavior is also important for the successful operation of the company. Habits have a great influence on consumer behavior. Some customers prefer large supermarkets, others small shops near the house, a third - exhibition / sales. Each of them relies on their experience in purchasing products, which includes all aspects of the customer-seller relationship, starting with what the customer enters the company and ends with leaving it. A number of moments - the number of sellers, the display, prices and signs of the goods - depend on the managers of the company, while other aspects, such as parking location, time of receipt of goods, can not be constantly controlled and if any factor irritates the customer, it can permanently negatively affect the object.

Most retail companies offer customers a similar range of goods for a specific segment. A competitive advantage can be gained by the one who first offers the customer-oriented strategy to the clients. Consequently, defining the behavior of consumers and the trading strategies of trading companies is very relevant today.

As for wholesale process - this is the sale of goods for further resale. Therefore, in wholesale there is virtually no unit purchasing and it is unacceptable to force, the main thought of the bitcoin trader is not only how much he will sell himself, but also how much his buyer will be able to sell. The wholesaler must be an expert on his clients' businesses in order to increase the volume of his trade. The best case scenario is when the wholesale company itself has retail outlets and can understand what kind of communication it has with the end buyer, what interests it has and how the trade process can be better organized.

For wholesalers, the main target of interest is the client's business, not their business. Once a business is started, a wholesale trading company should forget about its goals and focus on the buyers' business: how to expand their realization market, what types of goods are most in demand, how to increase profitability. If the sales volume of their customers increases, the sales volume of wholesalers will also increase.

Some of the marketing experts use the term B2B when talking about wholesale trade. Accordingly, in this paper, we have placed particular emphasis on B2B as a wholesale marketing perspective, and have therefore considered B2B as one of the largest components of modern commerce. In business markets, unlike the retail segment, where emotions are paramount in the buying process, decisions have a more rational basis. Through different key channels, manufacturers are able to connect with different types of users. A large portion of the business marketing budget comes from stimulating the sales process, as personal contacts are extremely important for success in the business market, leading to the development and maintenance of customer relationships.

Based on all of the above, research of problems for both retail and wholesale trade, including B2B sales, is relevant to market participants insofar as it will help existing organizations to take into account the problems identified in the research and take appropriate action in formulating their strategies. In general, many different factors influence the choice and attitude of consumers: therefore, the more a company wants to achieve, the more attention should be paid to details. In addition, the actuality of the issue discussed in this paper is also the organizational issues of modern retail and wholesale trading companies, which in fact are constantly changing in the conditions of the modern market economy.

The Goal of the study. One of the main goals of this study is to visualize the role of marketing in the company's market and sales strategy, to identify similar and distinctive characteristics between different functions, to identify the specifics of the use of marketing and sales strategies. Overview of trade and sales types in international and Georgian markets, revealing development trends in the realization sector. The aim of the research is to determine the priority directions of retail and wholesale trade development, taking into account the world and Georgian practice, and to develop recommendations for companies to implement them.

Objectives of the study. Based on the above goals, the following objectives were set:

- ✓ Substantiate the role of marketing and key in the business of the company based on the study and analysis of the works of scientists working in the field of marketing;
- ✓ Identify problems in the field of wholesale and retail trade and develop appropriate proposals to solve these problems;
- ✓ Demonstrate key trends and transformations in the realization sector in the modern business world;
- ✓ Structural analysis of the modern consumer market;
- ✓ Determination the main directions of formation of wholesale and retail trade directions;
- ✓ Study the different forms and types of wholesale and retail companies and determine their priority directions in the stage of modern economy;
- ✓ Establish recommendations for the development of the strategy needed to achieve a competitive advantage in the market for both wholesale and retail companies;
- ✓ Identify factors that determine long-term and loyal relationships between customers and suppliers;
- ✓ Analysis of B2B as a solution for wholesale marketing and justification of its prospects in the conditions of modern economics.

The subject and the object of the study. The subject of research is retail and wholesale trading companies and, consequently, their customers, including the emerging organizational-economic relations. The object of research is economic and civil-legal relations in wholesale and retail companies between different structural subdivisions,

especially between marketing and sales departments, which carry out their activities to achieve a common end goal.

Theoretical and methodological basis of the research. The theoretical basis of the research are papers of Georgian and foreign scientists, journals, statistical data of official bodies of different countries, research results of international organizations. Basic Provisions and Internet Resources in Georgian Scientific Literature.

The methodological bases of the research are the results of influential Georgian and foreign organizations, as well as my own research. In addition, a large-scale survey type survey was used as a quantitative research method, which was conducted through a questionnaire distributed in social space. The survey obtained mainly quantitative data. The obtained data were grouped and analyzed using various statistical methods (including ANOVA and Chi Square) which involved dispersive analysis and correlation between two independent variables.

Scientific novelty. The scientific novelty of the study is as follows:

- ✓ Theoretical aspects of marketing and sales areas are discussed, similar and distinctive aspects are identified, and the need to use common features in different types of companies is assessed.

- ✓ The ongoing changes in the retail process at the conceptual level are analyzed; The importance of a high level of awareness in the process of making effective practical decisions and applying them in practice are highlighted.

- ✓ Incentives for key impacts on retail customers are statistically analyzed and substantiated. Based on the customers' priorities, it is substantiated which type of key incentive campaign is most relevant for which type of business entity.

- ✓ The importance of the involvement of information technology solutions for both wholesale and retail entities in the process of selling goods has been established, a direct connection between the types of retail facilities and modern technologies used in them has been identified.

- ✓ The existence of feedback during the primary communication between the B2B customer and the provider is substantiated.

✓ The connection between the source used for communication and the size of the company in B2B markets is justified.

✓ The main reasons for the change of partner and the determinants of loyalty for companies operating in B2B markets are revealed.

✓ Based on the processing of theoretical materials and practical data, the problems related to the formation of a realization strategy for retail and wholesale companies operating in Georgia have been identified and relevant recommendations have been developed to eliminate them.

Theoretical and practical importance. This work, taking into account the approaches and theoretical aspects used in it, will be useful for entities operating in the Georgian market - companies and their sales managers, as well as for individuals and legal entities interested in the Georgian market: investors, shareholders, researchers and students of this field.

Approbation of the dissertation. The dissertation was approved at the extended session of the Department of Business Administration, Management and Marketing of the Shota Rustaveli State University, Faculty of Economics and Business on July 14, 2020 (Protocol № 5). The main provisions, recommendations, individual results of the dissertation are reflected in the scientific articles published by the author. Issues related to the dissertation were presented in the materials of international scientific conferences and international peer-reviewed journals.

Structure of the study. The dissertation consists of 208 printed pages. It consists of an introduction, three chapters, six subsections, conclusions and recommendations and a list of references.

Structure

Introduction

Chapter 1. Theoretical-methodological foundations of the distribution channels

1.1 The role of marketing in the market relations system

1.2 Features of marketing and sales in the process of forming a company's market strategy

1.3 Key Aspects of the Distribution Channel Organizational Structure in Retail and Wholesale

Chapter 2. Trends and Prospects in the Field of Retail Sales in Georgia

2.1 The role of strategic planning for retail companies

2.2 Marketing solutions in retail and specifications of their formation

2.3 Retail Development Trends in Modern Conditions

Chapter 3. Trends and Prospects in the Field of Wholesale and B2B Sales in Georgia

3.1 Socio-economic importance of wholesale trade in modern conditions

3.2 Basic Marketing Approaches and Mechanisms in the Field of Wholesale

3.3 B2B as a modern trend in the development of wholesale trade

Conclusions and suggestions

References

II The brief content of the work

In the introduction of the paper, the topicality of the research topic is substantiated, goals and objectives are set, the subject and object of the research are analyzed, the theoretical-methodological bases of the research are presented, the scientific novelty of the paper, theoretical and practical significance are established.

The first part of the paper - **Theoretical-methodological foundations of the distribution channels** discusses the role of marketing in the system of market relations; The importance and role of marketing is established not only for individual companies, but also for the consumer market for goods and services. Marketing offers the public to shift the focus from production to the customer and its core problems. Focusing on customer needs is not only the study of structural and technological problems, but also the conceptual organizational, structural and psychological transformation and adaptation of any enterprise to the customer. The role of marketing as the main tool for success is analyzed - it is the process of

creating added value for the enterprise, investing in existing resources to make additional profits.

In modern conditions, effective marketing is considered to be customer-oriented activities, and customer-oriented enterprises can be based on the study of their desires, views, attitudes towards goods.

The same part of the paper focuses on the features of marketing and sales in the process of forming a company's market strategy. Establishing effective interaction between marketing and key is considered to be one of the most pressing issues in the development of both of them. The Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) named alignment among the top 6 growth and development problems in 2009. What this event means and how relevant it is for enterprises has been discussed at numerous conferences and summits. What is its essence? This term is less popular in Georgian scientific literature and practice. This problem has been known for a long time, its essence lies in the interoperability barriers. In management science, a popular approach today is one in which the culprits are not people but processes. Which means that it is not worthwhile to redistribute personal and emotional affairs between neighboring departments, it is much more important to find the problem of the current process, what the problem is and how it is organized. No less important is negotiating between processes and setting common goals, making precise internal decisions and meeting customer demand. This redistribution of functions and work for a common goal is the main essence of equalization. The marketing and sales department faces a similar problem: they work in related business processes, these functions have a number of disagreements, especially in the case of sales and promotion. Let's temporarily step aside from the strategic role of marketing (such as strategy, innovation, creating a long-term competitive advantage, etc.) and consider its operational role, such as marketing mix and first of all marketing the company's products, and see where marketing and key clash occur and how Calculate the efficiency of both functions.

Both of these functions have a common and well-processed process model called the sales funnel, or sales pipeline, where the KPI can be viewed and evaluated / analyzed. The term was coined by Elijah St. Louis. In 1989, he coined the concept - the consumer pipeline, the way in which the average statistical user moves from attention to acquisition: acquaintance, interest, desire and action.

In the English literature, the sales funnel is defined as a marketing model that theoretically describes the key process at all stages. This model helps companies to increase the sales volume many times over, whether it is the Internet or physical sales process, the model works in all cases. In the modern situation, when the supply of goods and services exceeds the demand, it becomes more and more difficult to directly attract customers, so the analysis of this pipeline allows companies to seamlessly adapt to their needs without irritating potential customers.

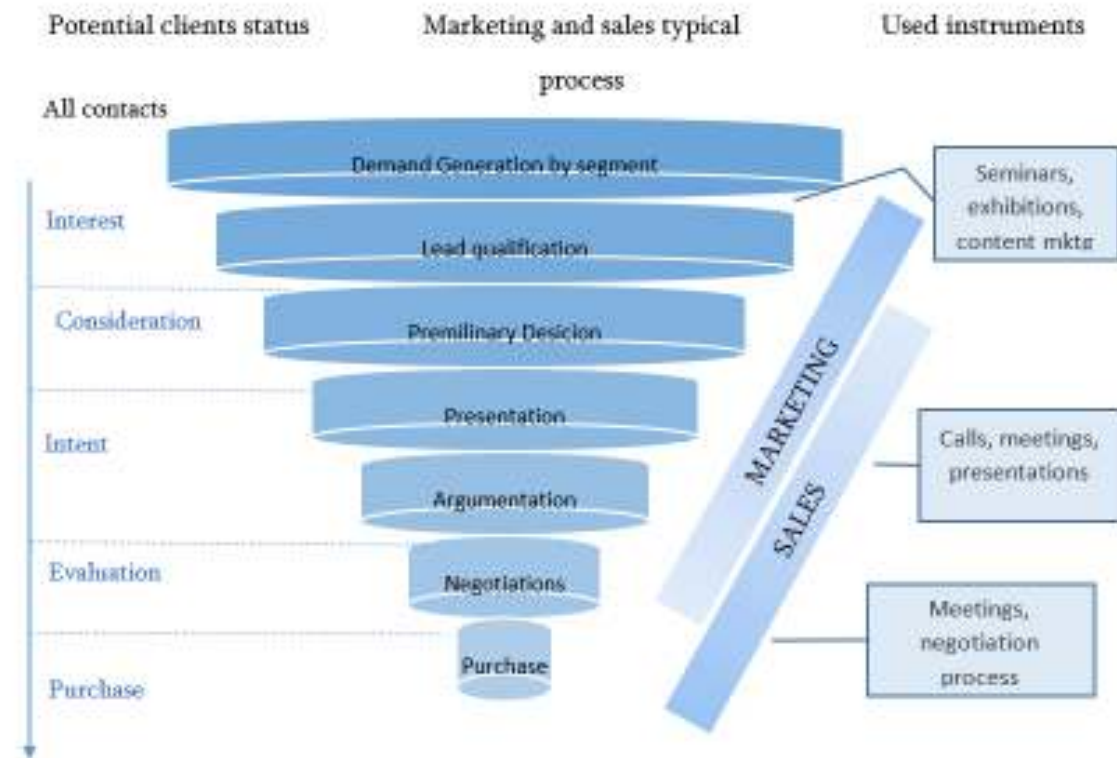
From 1989, this model was successfully combined with other well-known concepts, this concept is AIDA- Attention, Interest, Desire, Action., After which, the model became one of the basics for marketing. Consider each stage:

- ✓ First of all, attention is drawn to the use of advertising tools;
- ✓ Then arousing interest (with the content of the advertising appeal);
- ✓ The potential customer is willing to use the offer;
- ✓ Finally, the customer acts, enters the store or the website. This is an already interested client, there remains the slightest push before the deal. The task of the sales representative is to transform the customer's attention into a real interest.

The same section of the paper reviews the alignment between marketing and sales as potentially the biggest opportunity for a business to improve its operations. When sales and marketing teams unite around a common goal of making a profit, they increase ROI, realization productivity, and overall growth trend of the company (see Chart 1). In this regard, Marshall Ledger says that no matter how the customer relationship system develops, the main organizational goal should be a synergy of marketing and sales. Any success comes from their collaboration and free exchange of ideas as it is impossible to serve a client well when you serve blindly. Despite a common goal, both groups have different expectations of each other. If they unite to achieve a common goal, they will surely achieve success in today's rapidly changing and evolving business world.

Chart 1

Sales and Marketing Alignment



Source: Chart is adapted by the author

The same part of the study presents alignment as part of the life cycle of any company. Of course, it is necessary for everyone to follow the initiatives, progress and implement continuous improvement of business processes. In fact, by shifting functions and accountability, both teams are given the right motivation to progress. A concerted effort must be made, especially the service level transaction used, how well the set goals have been achieved, how many new clients have been transferred to the key marketing department, and how long this process has taken. Properly accentuated may result in continuous improvement of the annual result.

Based on all the above, based on various studies and practical examples, we can conclude that a lot of details are involved in the alignment process, such as common goals, matrices, business processes, investments in business technologies. But first and foremost - communication. If the sales and marketing representatives can not learn to work as a team, speak one language, free exchange of information, even all the technologies in the world will not be able to change anything.

One of the main issues of the first chapter, parallel to others is Key Aspects of the Distribution Channel Organizational Structure in Retail and Wholesale. Distribution

channels, complex and multi-threaded system with active elements operating in dynamically evolving market conditions. The complexity of this structure is caused not by the abundance of elements but by its entanglement. Forming distribution channels is one of the most difficult tasks in marketing and accordingly differs according to the organizational forms of trade.

It is noted that in order to ensure the available delivery of existing products and services, it is necessary to create comfortable conditions and environment for the transfer, both for the customer and the supplier. If we consider this task in terms of marketing, we get the problem of marketing distribution channels. Key marketing channels are a combination of independent legal entities and individuals that act independently or collectively to transfer ownership of a particular product from the manufacturer to the end user.

The definition of marketing distribution channels implies the targeted activities of the organization, which performs one or more of the functions necessary to deliver the goods to the end user in a form acceptable to him and to the place of receipt. It is necessary to emphasize the importance of direction, because in any system there are two parties - the supplier and the end user, and the delivery of goods and services takes place from the supplier to the end user.

Distribution Channel Formation - Placement is a classic element of the marketing mix that helps a company generate maximum profits. B2B and B2C companies can generate sales using one or more channels, which may include:

- ✓ Distributors;
- ✓ Direct / Internet;
- ✓ Direct / Catalogs;
- ✓ Direct / Sales Group;
- ✓ Value Added Reseller (VAR);
- ✓ Consultants;
- ✓ Dealers;
- ✓ Sales agents.

The sales process can be preformed in three different ways - directly affecting the end customer, selling through a network of dealers and selling through value-added resellers.

Today, the growth of the role of both wholesale and retail is due to such reasons as the increase in the demand for goods and services (security, appearance, packaging, etc.) for both final and intermediate customers, the expansion of production of goods for supply; The above request for the moment; Significant territorial distance of the producer from the buyer, an increase in the number of operations to convert the primary raw material into the final product. The main issues that bitumen and retailers have to make a number of marketing decisions are as follows:

- ✓ Decision about target market;
- ✓ Decision about product range and service complex;
- ✓ Decision about prices;
- ✓ Decision to stimulate;
- ✓ Decision about placement.

The second chapter of the paper **Trends and Prospects in the Field of Retail Sales in Georgia** discusses retail trade as an economic category; The role of strategic planning for retail companies is discussed. One of the main reasons for the intensified competition is considered to be the very large number of retailers, such as small companies, large network markets, shopping malls, etc. Each of them occupies its own niche, which must be maintained by its own forces. Thus, the retailer must take into account numerous factors and make appropriate strategic and tactical decisions in the process of developing his business. In the conditions of accelerated globalization, there is a transition to new models of management of commercial establishments, which are based on the improvement of internal organizational and marketing decisions and the rationalization of market behavior. In market relations, both theoretically and practically, the term "strategy" is often used to describe retail. To attract and retain buyers, retailers are always looking for new marketing strategies. For example, sellers often talk about merchandising, advertising, location, brand strategies. It is used so often that we can assume that any decision in retail is a strategic decision.

When operating in the market, the importance of the strategic planning process is noteworthy. The strategic planning process is characterized by several important advantages at the retail sales level, namely:

- ✓ It involves a thorough analysis of the demand for different retailers;
- ✓ The strategic planning process allows the retailer to plan short-term goals;

- ✓ Through it, the retailer will study the economic and legal environment, as well as its competitors;
- ✓ The company receives information and is formed on how to differentiate itself from competitors and chooses an offer that is targeted at a specific group of customers;
- ✓ Through strategic planning, the company's activities are fully coordinated;
- ✓ It becomes realistic to predict crises and rarely prevent them.

In the same part of the dissertation, Marketing solutions in retail and specifications of their formation are analyzed. The success or failure of a retail company is largely determined by the attitude of its customers towards it. Customer loyalty to companies is mainly formed by subjective evaluation, which is formed in the subconscious of the same customers. In this regard, any trading company should be considered not only in terms of functionality, but also in terms of basic psychological aspects. Consequently, great importance is attached to the product range, service complex and store atmosphere. Determining the product range is part of the merchandising strategy. At this time a decision is made on the groups and subgroups included in the product range. The selection of the appropriate range of target market demand is of great importance for the efficiency of the company, because the company competes with competitors, primarily in the range of goods.

It is also important to make the right decision about the complex of services offered to the customer, in particular, the packaging of goods, staging-installation, remodeling, home delivery, etc. The selection of service types depends on the nature of the goods. The quality of service and the image of the trading company largely depends on the competence and professional training of the service staff. First of all, the seller must have comprehensive information about the consumer goods, because the consumer considers him an expert in this field.

The same section of the paper reviews important decisions made in the management of a retail company, including how the company will be perceived by consumers. According to the image of the trade object, the consumer sees it as different from others, sees its advantage, which is not what its competitors have, and chooses it as a permanent point of purchase. In each segment of the market, consumers shape the image of the company for themselves, guided by what makes them appear to be subjectively more important than others.

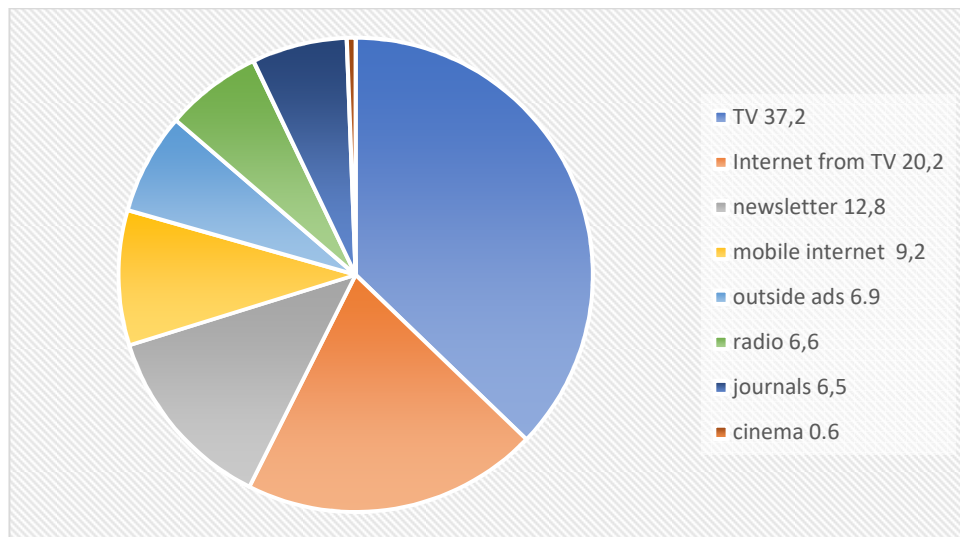
Thus, the more consistent the customer's perception with the real picture of the company, the greater the psychological willingness to make a purchase in that particular company. In determining the strategy of the retail facility, special importance is attached to determining the priority of the company. In the process of retail sales an important decision is made. The priority of a trading company for the customer is determined by many factors. According to J.J. Lambin, the concept of a store as a set of features is influenced by the following factors: proximity, assortment, price level, time, atmosphere.

In any type of trade, incentives play a big role. It is especially important to consider its scale of incentives in retail. The key to retail in the broadest sense is all the communication that a retailer uses to inform, persuade or remind a number of aspects of his or her target market. Advertising, public relations, personal sales, sales promotion- these are the main elements of incentives.

Advertising is a form of paid non-personal communication addressed to the customer through the media. Advertising is paid, which distinguishes it from PR, in the case of PR the retail company does not pay for the time and place it uses to deliver the message. The advertisement has a non-personal form - in its implementation the standard message is sent to the whole audience and not to specific clients. The ad has a known customer - that is, it is specifically defined as the customer. A lot of money is spent on advertising as one of the main elements of incentives. Accordingly, we reviewed a study conducted in 2016 by the agency ZenithOptimedia, according to the percentage distribution of funds allocated to advertising in the world:

Diagram 1

Distribution of funds spent on advertising worldwide (%) 2016.



Source: ZenithOptimedia

Based on the results obtained, if we consider the same on the example of Georgia, 70% of advertising costs in Georgia still come from television. According to the Georgian National Communications Regulatory Commission, in the first quarter of 2019, compared to the same period in 2018, the TV advertising market grew by 8%. In the first quarter of 2019, broadcasters earned GEL 14,288,379, while in 2018 the figure was GEL 13,393,523.

Like advertising, a no less important element of key stimulus is the form of community interaction. In public relations, the same PR includes all means of communication that contribute to the formation of a positive image of the retail company in the community. Public relations activities can benefit not only large retail chains but also small companies.

An important, growing element of key stimulus is personal sales. Personal sales is the process of verbal communication with one or more potential buyers to convince them of the need for a purchase. The extent to which a retailer uses personal sales depends on its image, the nature of the goods for sale, the quality of the self-service system, and the ambition to build long-term relationships with customers.

Unlike advertising, public relations, and personal sales, sales promotion is paid communication that is designed to stimulate sales and increase the retailer's performance. Sales promotion includes merchandise exhibitions, contests, lotteries, coupons, special gifts for regular customers, and other special events that are time-limited and not typical of daily key events.

In the second chapter of the dissertation, Retail development in modern conditions are discussed. With the development of existing forms of modern retail, new forms are being introduced to the market. In the modern era, direct marketing has become the center of the technological revolution, which has resulted in increased sales efficiency. As we have mentioned, along with traditional forms, non-traditional forms of trade are becoming more relevant, including video kiosks and retail at airports. With the evolution of business models, manufacturers and sellers are connecting directly with customers online. Network notifications for news, promotions, digital discount coupons, mobile apps, online stores QR (Quick Response code) codes, bonus apps - these are just a small list of sales promotion methods that technological advances have added to the retail key field.

In this regard, we review the research of the well-known modern research institution, Ericson ConsumerLab, entitled "Technologies and the future of retail sales." Specialists in the field have comprehensively studied the industry and identified the main trends that will take the retail sector to a new level in the future:

- ✓ Transforming the role of traditional shops;
- ✓ Modernization of delivery methods;
- ✓ Digital analysis of user behavior;
- ✓ Mobile Commerce Dawn;
- ✓ Social networks, recommendations and Big Data.

To show the attitude of consumers towards the situation in the field of retail sales, what the different segments like, what irritates them and what are the main incentives for their purchasing decision (except for the price, we know that the price demand is constantly elastic) and the purpose of the dissertation research object; In order to compare the world reality with the reality of Georgia, an Internet audience survey was conducted through a questionnaire distributed in the electronic space. The purpose of this study was to provide recommendations to retailers and provide reasoned conclusions by analyzing the results obtained and generalizing accordingly. 356 users were interviewed, due to incomplete information we ignored the responses received by 26 users and reviewed the responses received from 330 respondents. In parallel, based on the principle of randomness, we interviewed a representative of 100 retail outlets. As already mentioned, habits have a great influence on consumer behavior. Each of them relies on their experience in purchasing

products, which covers the entire cycle of procurement implementation. According to the survey, the majority of consumers (46.7%) prefer online supermarkets as the object of purchase.

Both rational and emotional factors influence a purchasing decision. According to the data obtained by processing the statistical program of the research results in SPSS by factor analysis, we can conclude that mainly three indicators affect the purchasing process, namely, the quality of products, assortment and additional services (see Table 1). Which also confirms the concept of a rational buyer, according to which the main stimulating factor for the consumer should be these three components.

Table 1

Analysis of factors affecting the purchasing process

	Component		
	1	2	3
Image effect on purchase	.209	.711	-.093
Atmosphere in the facility	.802	.081	-.043
Service quality	.662	.004	.348
Additional Services	.228	.276	.465
Advertising	.241	.682	.079
Placement	.538	.294	.140
Quality of Products	-.039	.068	.799
Assortment	.348	-.015	.574
Additional Incentives	.460	.363	.144
Brand	-.149	.729	.348

Source: Table is worked out by the author

Like the customer, when asked by us what factors influence a purchasing decision, according to descriptive statistics from factor analysis, retailers' responses revealed several leading factors, namely: advertising, product quality, assortment, and service quality. (See Table 2)

This indicator is statistically reliable, as indicated by the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy, its statistical value $P = 0.005$, which allows us to generalize the results of the survey to 55%

Table 2

Analysis of factors affecting the purchasing process			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N
Image effect on purchase	3,82	,941	99
Atmosphere in the facility	3,86	,892	99
Service quality	4,08	,922	99
Additional Services	3,84	,976	99
Advertising	4,11	,968	99
Placement	3,90	,898	99
Quality of Products	4,30	,826	99
Assortment	4,18	,861	99
Additional Incentives	4,02	,857	99
Brand	3,59	1,079	99

Source: Table is worked out by the author

It should be noted that if consumers do not highlight the importance of advertising in the relevant factors, suppliers believe that advertising is one of the most influential factors in the purchasing process, therefore they devote a lot of time and energy to planning, implementing and controlling advertising campaigns when applying the same amount and time. It can improve the quality of service, which in the opinion of our respondents has a much greater impact on the decision made by them.

Prior to purchase, the customer receives information about the product from many different sources, we have selected 4 groups of information providers: TV, magazines, newspapers, SMS and influencers. It goes without saying that different age groups, from different sources, get the information they need.

The difference between the influence of information sources was found in favor of the social network, $P = 0.001$. In other words, the network is the most influential- even according to post-hoc processing. Therefore, we can conclude that it is justified to invest in the dissemination of information through social networks, which is well suited to modern trends in the development of e-commerce.

Depending on which news channel, which vendor considers more effective, this channel is used by sales representatives to disseminate information. According to the results of our research, we have the following picture: Magazines and newspapers, as a source of information are of great importance for online supermarkets and mini-market sales

representatives, in fact we have the same picture in the case of television. SMS is considered as an important source of information by employees in network supermarkets, while social networks are considered important in markets and again, in network supermarkets, although its importance is high in both mini-supermarkets and hypermarkets.

This result is fully in line with modern trends in market and sales development, according to which advertising, information delivery and communication with consumers in general have in fact largely shifted to social media.

After receiving the information, the customer makes a decision to purchase directly. To date, at the dawn of Internet commerce, we have a rather strange picture. When asked about the definition of a purchasing route, the vast majority of respondents (93.6%) still physically purchase products, 4.8% use online stores, and just 1.5% use the specific web pages of the purchasing object. This fact can be explained by the tendency of consumers to take part in the purchasing process themselves, to compare goods of different models and trademarks, to be emotionally involved in the purchasing process.

Survey respondents had to choose from among the modern technologies used, network groups and pages on social mobile apps, helper bots, QR codes. The majority of consumers (64.7%) prefer mobile apps, which allows us to assume that this is the side that suppliers should turn to when retailing. By itself, just knowing which technology is most likely to be used in the purchasing process does not give us exhaustive information that a supplier can use unless we specifically consider which type of facility users prefer which technology.

For this purpose, in the statistical program SPSS, according to the chi square method, we discussed the relationship between the type of purchasing object and the technology used, resulting in the following image (see Table 3):

Table 3

Application of modern technologies in relation to the type of purchasing object

		Technology used while purchasing			Total
		Mob Apps	QR	Soc. network	
Small Shops	Amount	20	4	10	34
	% type of purchasing process	58.8%	11.8%	29.4%	100.0%
	Technology used while purchasing	12.4%	16.7%	15.6%	13.7%
Mini markets	Amount	18	4	6	28
	% type of purchasing process	64.3%	14.3%	21.4%	100.0%

Supermarkets	Technology used while purchasing	11.2%	16.7%	9.4%	11.2%
	Amount	78	10	28	116
	% type of purchasing process	67.2%	8.6%	24.1%	100.0%
	Technology used while purchasing	48.4%	41.7%	43.8%	46.6%
Hypermarkets	Amount	39	6	13	58
	% type of purchasing process	67.2%	10.3%	22.4%	100.0%
	Technology used while purchasing	24.2%	25.0%	20.3%	23.3%
	Amount	3	0	7	10
Fairs	% type of purchasing process	30.0%	0.0%	70.0%	100.0%
	Technology used while purchasing	1.9%	0.0%	10.9%	4.0%
	Amount	161	24	64	249
	% type of purchasing process	64.7%	9.6%	25.7%	100.0%
Total	Technology used while purchasing	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Table is worked out by the author

The special importance of using modern technologies in the purchasing process is also noted by the retail entities. According to general surveyors, 58% of users use a mobile app, 27% social networks, 14% QR codes and 1% auxiliary bots. Which basically coincides with the responses of consumers, therefore we can conclude that retailers correctly perceive which technology is of particular importance to consumers and hope that accordingly they are spending material and intangible resources in the right direction.

We tried to analyze the relationship between the type of purchasing object and the technology used in the purchasing process according to the chi square method, resulting in the following image (see Table 4)

Table 4

The relationship between the type of purchasing object and the technology used in the purchasing process

		Technology used in the purchasing process				Total
		Mob. Apps	QR	Bots	Network groups	
Type of purchasing object	Small shops	7	0	0	2	9
	Mini-markets	15	0	0	8	23
	Supermarkets	31	6	0	11	48
	Hypermarket	4	8	0	0	12
	Fairs	1	0	1	6	8
Total		58	14	1	27	100

Source: Table is worked out by the author

As can be seen from the table, mobile apps and soc. Networks (probably at the stage of receiving information), we have a similar picture in the mini-markets, in the networked supermarkets the percentage of users of QR codes is already added, who can and have the opportunity to pay the terms and atmosphere tailored to them. As for the fairs, like the small shops in the district, social networks are the leader here as a source of information.

Therefore, based on a comparison of these indicators with consumer surveys, we can conclude that most suppliers have a correct view of the activity of using mobile applications, although more modern technologies should be developed as well. Given the development trends of the market, the possibility of self-service in retail outlets will gradually increase, which must be accompanied by tools that simplify the process, such as QR codes, auxiliary bots and other technological advances.

The third chapter of the study discusses the trends and prospects in the field of wholesale and B2B sales in Georgia, as well as emphasizes the socio-economic importance of wholesale trade in the modern economy. The wholesaler must be an expert on his clients' businesses in order to increase the volume of his trade. The best case is when the wholesale company itself has retail outlets and can understand what kind of communication it has with the final buyer, what interests it has and how the trade process can be better organized. In recent years, the trading industry has undergone profound structural changes. Institutional transformations in trade were largely due to the expansion of the range of goods and services, the improvement of the material and technical potential of organizations, the growth of economic performance.

The increase in customer demand (from retailers and other organizations) who expect high quality services from wholesale traders in addition to optimal prices, quality products and a wide range of products, necessitates an individual approach to each of them. Which can be achieved through personal sales. Thus, personal sales are a competitive advantage in the realization process and at the same time an effective marketing tool, which necessitates changes in the functioning of the marketing system in the bitcoin trading process. Management is faced with the task of developing an effective strategy where personal sales will be at the forefront in terms of gaining competitive advantage, key volume and increasing market share in the long run. This task is hindered by the lack of long-term experience in the field of personal sales management.

The impact of wholesale trade on production is directed towards the growth of production volume, the expansion of the range, the improvement of quality, the rhythm of sales of goods and services. The main forms of impact on wholesale trade are: pre-orders, long-term contracts, wholesale exhibitions, supply contracts, mass media sources.

The same section of the paper reviews the major marketing approaches and mechanisms in the field of wholesale trade. Having an effective wholesale marketing strategy is very important for business success. When it is not possible to establish direct communication with the end user, the means of influencing and marketing it is also limited in itself. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a set of specific tools to attract new customers, increase the satisfaction of existing ones, which will ensure the long-term success of the business. All possible options should be tested before determining the right marketing strategy, but as soon as the most effective one is selected, its effectiveness should be strengthened.

Before considering a strategy to attract new customers, the wholesale company must take into account that every business is different, and the analysis of the data obtained must also take into account this assumption. The main mechanisms characteristic of the analysis method are:

Cold Calls - An experienced and unmistakable method of guerrilla sales, involves talking to people who are on the list of potential customers as soon as you pick up the phone.

Direct Mail - Even though it is 2020, direct mail remains a powerful marketing tool if it is sent correctly. In fact, by its mechanism of action it looks very much like a cold bell. The audience is pre-selected, an email is sent to them and a response is expected. Due to its simple nature, it is possible to send a direct template email to a large number of respondents at once. While this approach still works today, personalization is still a major advantage in today's demanding market. Personalization is the best tool for increasing the response rate. In addition to the standard text, even a personalized greeting makes the potential user feel that time and energy have been spent on it.

Cold mails - Cold mails are a relatively new technology, the principle of its operation is about the same as other cold methods, except for other priorities. The priority of using cold mail is largely determined by the ability to use different automated systems.

Sending samples - The standard technique of manufacturers is to send samples worldwide. A similar method can be used by bitumen traders, sending samples directly to the e-mail gives the best way to separate them from other e-mails. (Zedginidze, 2009)

It is vital for wholesale trade to develop the right meetings and trading spaces. While exhibitions do not suit many industries, there are numerous, smaller, niche versions of them. In addition, there are hundreds of small meetings where potential customers can be introduced. The role of exhibitors is to define the company and its products.

This section analyzes the importance of investing financial resources in creating a good website for a company. Potential users can not imagine the views of others, so complete information for judgment should be provided electronically. Many companies are already turning the standard website into a catalog, thus making it more multifunctional.

Given the current trends in business development, it is no less important for a website to register as a business on the social network LinkedIn. This is for social networking businesses, and the scope for using it is much wider than uploading work history and resumes. LinkedIn can be used freely to increase sales.

Among the wholesale approaches, marketing tactics (approaches) are highlighted in this paper:

- ✓ Paying a large dose of attention to the customer by the wholesaler;
- ✓ Reduction or cancellation of the minimum order volume by the wholesaler;
- ✓ Cancellation of transportation cost during the first order;
- ✓ Free delivery of the trial package by the wholesaler to the customers;
- ✓ Distribution of discount coupons by the wholesaler;
- ✓ Maintain constant contact with customers;
- ✓ Adjusting the prices of products sold by the wholesaler in relation to the volume;
- ✓ Providing a simple ordering system;
- ✓ Distribution of samples of new products;

The perfect wholesale marketing strategy involves incorporating all of the above tactics over time. The distribution of any section should be done in stages, of course, not all marketing ideas can work as planned as each group of customers is different and reacts

differently to incentives and offers, the wholesaler must determine for himself what will affect their customers.

The concluding section of the research discusses B2B as a modern trend in the development of wholesale trade, an approach of business to business, and analyzes its growing popularity in the modern economy. In business markets, unlike the retail segment, where emotions are paramount in the buying process, decisions have a more rational basis. In the case of business markets, there is less personal meetings, more communication by e-mail, computer programs. If the segmentation of consumers in the retail segment is possible under different signs, such as demographic, psychological, etc. Business markets are segmented by industry code classification, product types, price sensitivity, layout, and customer size.

B2B markets are smaller than retail markets. Marketing communication can be similar and different for both cases. The key to sale strategy is to reach the potential customer with their message, change the behavior of the target segment, increase knowledge about this or that product, force the customer to buy the desired product. The importance of personal sales is much more prioritized in business markets, mainly due to the large purchase cost and fewer buyers, leading to long-term relationships in the business environment.

In a B2B relationship, the role of personal sales is very important. Sales representatives have high salaries, administrative assistants, representation expenses, etc., due to the formation of personal relationships. They meet buyers, discuss relationships, problems, prospects, and seek creative solutions. Business sales, in fact, are a dialogue, and despite the age of social media and the Internet, they still remain unchanged. The sales representative should not lie, talk quickly about the company's products, their functions instead should include:

- ✓ Identification of potential customers;
- ✓ Identify existing or potential problems;
- ✓ Start a dialogue with a potential customer;
- ✓ Find a solution based on the company's capabilities and explain this problem to the customer;
- ✓ Delivering customer visions to the company;

- ✓ Solve any follow-up problem.

Marketers believe that personal sales is a part of sales promotion, similar to the PR example, but in reality it is completely different because it is two-way communication, unlike other elements. This is why personal sales are a powerful tool, as they can clarify issues, answer questions and focus on issues of interest to the customer, making the right maneuvers according to the topics that arise during the negotiation process. However, they should follow the company's main message, even though they themselves create the company brand as its tangible representatives.

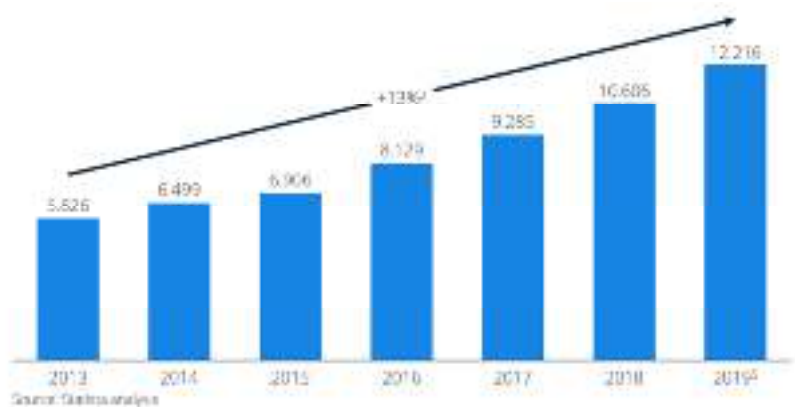
The sales process sequence begins with the generation of leads, also called intelligence, each process is individual and involves finding people who are willing to meet, want information about the product, and are willing to pay for it - or make initial contact. Leads are generated through advertising, cold calls, attendance at exhibitions, mailing and personal communication. A good salesperson anticipates the needs of the intelligence subject in order to prepare for the meeting, to have the right material, presentation and to have an idea about the customer's business. The preparation process is complex because the sales representative can call dozens of companies a day and must remember the data about each of them, their needs. Scheduling a meeting means starting to communicate with the right people in the company. Often, sales managers are advised to have all decision makers in attendance at the meeting, although with modern approaches this is less possible. Presentation is the process when information is delivered directly to a potential customer when a need is identified and the supplier has his or her offer ready. Closing sales means that negotiations have either taken place or not. The purpose of the presentation is to make a purchase decision. In case of a positive response, after concluding the contract, the sales managers carry out after-sales activities, e.g., calling the customer to make sure the delivery is correct. Often, sales managers want to avoid follow-up to avoid reprimands, but it is always better to be informed about the customer problem and inform the management as well. The results and recommendations for further activities can be considered and generalized for future meetings.

This section analyzes the 2018 Statistical Portal Statistics Survey (see Chart 2), according to which 48% of companies make 50-74% of their corporate purchases online,

23% - 75% or more online. When shopping online, companies can have different functionality for B2B and B2C buyers and provide services to both segments. As industry experts believe, online trading is a cold deal, however today auxiliary bots, online chats, messengers are able to involve the human factor in these deals.

Chart 2

Global B2B e-commerce income



Source: www.statista.com

In both retail and B2B marketing, marketing and sales teams need to work in concert. According to various studies, inequality in sales and marketing departments leads to a decrease in profits of 10% or more. At the same time, 56% of companies where they are aligned achieve goals and 19% exceed them. Other positive aspects are increased brand awareness, increased company revenue, increased order volume, etc. (See Diagram 3)

Diagram 3

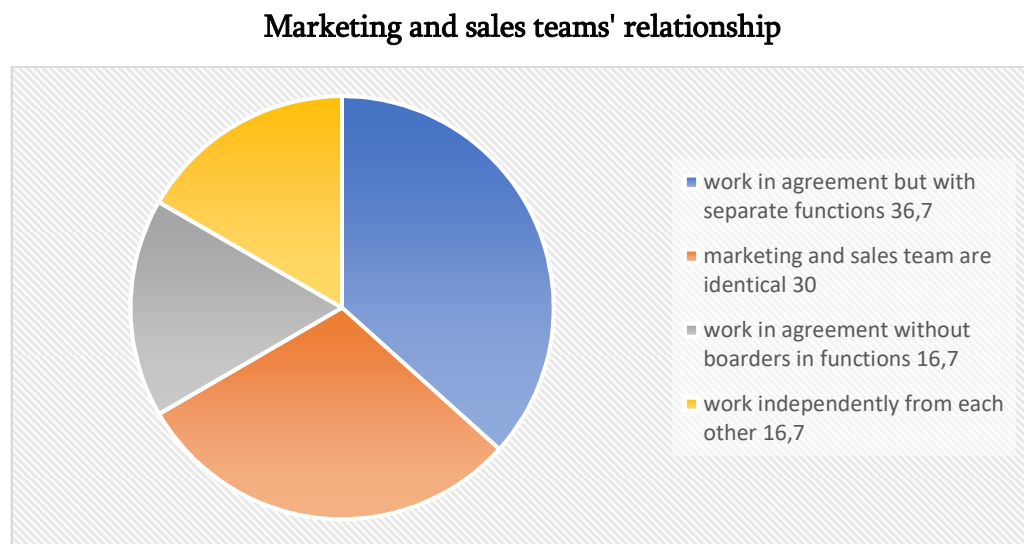
Sales and marketing relationship optimization



Source: (Mcdonald, 2020)

To prove the practical importance of wholesale sales, in particular the growing relevance of B2B, 30 B2B product and service providers and 26 B2B consumer companies were surveyed. The opinion of the representatives of the 30 companies we interviewed, which was in fact equally divided. 36.7% of the results believe that their marketing and sales teams work in agreement but with separate functions, 30% think marketing and sales teams are identical, hence the problem of alignment, in our opinion is very relevant in our reality where any kind of integration between these teams can be found (see .Diagram 4).

Diagram 4



Source: Diagram is worked out by the author

If these trends are justified, the B2B world will become less competitive and more cooperative, less transactional and more interactive. The B2B field needs to be proactive, and find a way to deliver the right content to the right customers, which is definitely what happens with the marketing department. Accordingly, long-term, trust-based relationships with customers will be established, which is a prerequisite for modern B2B success.

When establishing a B2B relationship it is very important what type of first communication the customer responds to, the redistribution of the surveyed respondents is as follows: 50% answer the call of the sales representative, 38.5% direct mail, and the remaining 11.5% cold calls and samples.

As the results of the research showed, half of the customers prefer to have a personal sales representative, which is completely in line with the development trends of the B2B field, according to which the personal sales representative is of great importance as one of the guarantors of a successful relationship. 38.5% of consumers respond to cold mail as one of the most active forms of electronic communication.

The present study analyzes the relationship between communication source and company size (see Table 5):

Table 5

Relationship between communication source and company size

		Communication Source				Total
		Sales Representative	Direct Mail	Cold Call	Sending Samples	
Company size	From 0 to 20	6	3	1	0	10
	From 21 to 40	1	3	0	0	4
	From 41 to 60	2	1	0	2	5
	61 and more	4	3	0	0	7
Total		13	10	1	2	26

Source: Table is worked out by the author

From the given table, we can conclude that small and large companies prefer to communicate directly with the sales personal representative, while for medium-sized companies it is a priority to establish direct, email communication. However, in fact, the popularity of e-mail in large companies lags behind the role of personal sales representative, which can be attributed to the timeliness, digitalization of the purchasing process. However, the majority of our customers, 46.2%, consider the intensity of the use of modern technologies by suppliers as satisfactory.

Proper purchasing process, customer satisfaction and lots of details determine the customer's loyalty to the supplier. The corporate customer, as the most pretentious and accustomed to a long-term relationship, attaches great importance to comfort. When ordering, all the details, technical, human, material, are in fact of equal importance in the presence of business customers. However, barriers alone are not enough to make the decision to change suppliers. In fact the following factors force users to opt out of partners.

According to the answers of our respondents, the main thing for them is the right communication, through the channels of communication (26.9%), offering products and

services tailored to them. In addition, a significant percentage of the suspension of partnerships is occupied by a bad corporate image, (19.2%) and only this so-called. The global causes are followed by arguments such as delivery delays (15.4%) and poor after-sales service (11.5%). Which should be a really thought-provoking picture for any B2B sales representative to get a thorough understanding of the partners business, their needs and to have constant communication.

Consequently, understanding the positions of the other party - B2B sellers, on various issues is no less important for the purposes of the study. 83.3% of sales representatives surveyed by us are confident that customers are gathering information in advance before the acquisition process begins.

The majority of respondents (63.3%) use social media as a source of information collection, which is built into various types of browsers and search engines. Consequently, if a potential customer collects information about this or that type of product, he / she will automatically receive an advertising type message through the given type of communication channel. In second place are the company websites that lead on the customer side, therefore, we can conclude that suppliers should pay even more attention to the existence of a well-organized website. In addition to online communication channels, providers use TV commercials, exhibitions and magazines - in fact a full range of relationships, however, in the Georgian reality, less attention is paid to LinkedIn as a business-specific platform for both consumers and sales representatives.

We have obtained a very important result regarding the problem of identifying the primary means of communication. If our business customers prefer a personal call to a sales representative, suppliers are more likely to send direct cold emails (43.3%) than to a personal representative (36.7%).

Consequently, the more obvious the problem becomes, the less personalized the call leads to less feedback when communicating with the supplier. However, in identifying the determinants of loyalty, the majority of respondents (36.7%) name constant communication as the main factor that determines customer attitude, followed by timely responses (26.7%) and detailed knowledge of products and technical issues (26.7%).

No less important is the fact that sales representatives are aware of the importance of further service in communicating with the customer. Because B2B relationships are based on

long-term, loyal collaboration, good service in itself plays a very important role. Of course, no less important is the fundamental knowledge of the products for sale and the timely response to customer questions or problems.

Thus, the paper discusses the theoretical-methodological issues of distribution channels, analyzes the role of marketing in the market relationship system. In addition, the need to identify commonalities between marketing and sales functions is emphasized. Theoretically, the current trends and prospects in the field of retail and wholesale trade are reviewed. Based on 4 studies, the problems and perspectives characteristic of these areas have been identified. B2B is considered as a modern, growing direction of wholesale trade. The conclusions and proposals of the paper present the author's position based on theoretical and practical research on a number of problems and ways to solve them.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The success or failure of a retail and wholesale company is determined by the attitude of the customers towards them. Customer loyalty is formed mainly by the subjective, emotional evaluation of the company. It should be noted that in the light of the changes taking place in public and economic life, retail and wholesale companies are forced to take into account the micro and macroeconomic circumstances, development trends and peculiarities of the consumer market in order to maintain their competitiveness.

Based on a thorough study and analysis of these issues, we can formulate some theoretical and practical proposals and recommendations:

1. At the present stage of development, the growing interest in the role of marketing in the economy and other social sectors is due to the fact that as a microeconomic category, marketing should be used in every field and field with varying intensity and quality.

2. By reconciling the existing views on marketing as a scientific discipline, we can conclude that there is still no common view on marketing. In the modern stage of development, marketing includes not only the areas and activities such as advertising and sales with which it has always been most often identified, but also the process of developing and preparing goods, giving direction to production and serving to ensure that the created

product will be in demand in the market. 21st Century Marketing's need for consistent and long-term customer orientation and a systematic approach to the use of marketing tools.

3. In the market economy, while performing sales process, special program must be defined by careful analysis and forecasting of market situations to meet the company's ultimate goals, which largely rely on pricing, effective advertising and promotion, and the best distribution of products and services to consumers. At the modern stage, management of realization has acquired special importance in increasingly competitive conditions, where the importance of improving sales methods and reducing costs is higher. Sales management should be considered as the main function of any commercial and business company today.

4. Identifying the similarities and differences between marketing and sales functions is part of the life cycle of any company. Which also considers the approach used by all business entities - to pursue initiatives, progress and implement continuous improvement of business processes. Defining the alignment between marketing and sales is potentially the biggest opportunity for a business to improve its operations. When sales and marketing teams unite around a profit circle around a common goal, they increase ROI (Return on Investment), key productivity, and generally improve the growth trend.

5. Forming distribution channels is an integral part of the classic marketing mix (Placement) to help a company maximize profit. To ensure the available delivery of existing products and services, it is necessary to create comfortable conditions and environment for the delivery of products and services, both for the customer and the supplier. As its economically proved, strategically important decision regarding distribution channels will further strengthen and secure the company's position in the long run.

6. Wholesale and retail companies are an intermediate stage in the process of delivering products and services from the manufacturer to the end user. Based on the example of Georgia, we can conclude that these two forms of trade have a great impact on the overall economic results of the country, including the employment process. Although the retail and wholesale sectors are characterized by similar growth trends, in our opinion, it is more appropriate to analyze these forms independently of each other.

7. For a modern market economy, intensified competition is typical. Therefore, in order to maintain a stable position in the market, retailers must carefully select the target market and position themselves correctly by determining the exact competitive advantage

and selecting the type of trade object. As with the development of existing forms of modern retail, new forms are being introduced in the market and taking into account this trend can be vital for retail companies.

8. Based on the analysis of the research conducted by us, it can be said that the quality of products, assortment and service quality have a special importance to consumers. However, suppliers believe that advertising along with quality and assortment is one of the most influential factors in the purchasing process. Consequently, retailers devote a lot of time and energy to advertising campaigns. Therefore, we can conclude that it is desirable for the company to apply the same amount of finance and time to improve the quality of service instead of advertising, which in the opinion of our respondents has a much greater impact on their decision. This strategy will be very profitable for business entities.

9. The rapid growth in the number of smartphones and other devices connected to them, along with widespread international access, has recently become a prerequisite for the revival of mobile commerce in Georgia. Consequently, with greater involvement of information technology solutions, wholesale and retail companies will be able to establish more tailored and diversified contacts with end users, as well as it will be possible to optimize the supply chain and better explore new markets.

10. With the increase in the share of Internet sales in both international and Georgian reality, Georgian Internet companies should try to gain trust, offer discounts, prices should be very attractive, so that consumers feel the benefits that are offered to them during Internet sales. Consumers only see the product virtually and there is a great chance that the purchase will not turn out to be the one he perceived, so improving the perception of the product through the website should be one of the most important issues for the company. All industry leaders and employees need to have access to online sales methods and techniques, as it is currently unthinkable to conduct successful market operations without the involvement of modern technology.

11. Based on the theoretical and practical results of the research, the wholesaler must be an expert on his clients' businesses in order to increase his sales volume. From the beginning of wholesale trade, one should forget about one's goals and focus on the buyers' business: how their key market can be expanded, what types of goods are most in demand,

how profitability can be increased. If the sales volume of their customers increases, the sales volume of wholesaler will also increase.

12. Through different distribution channels, manufacturers communicate with different types of users. Nowadays, a large part of the marketing budget in business goes for stimulating the sales process, as personal contacts are extremely important for success in the business market, leading to the development and maintenance of customer relationships. Therefore, we can conclude that instead of a sales representative simply observing the volume of transactions, they should develop a long-term, trust-based relationship with the customer, which is a prerequisite for successful collaboration.

13. Depending on the size of the company, their attitude towards selecting a source of communication varies. In B2B commerce, with the development of relationship marketing, small and large companies prefer to communicate directly with the sales representative, while for medium-sized companies, establishing direct, email communication is a priority. However, this figure, in fact, slightly lags behind the popularity of e-mail in large companies as the role of personal sales representative, which should be due to the timeliness, digitalization of the purchasing process, which allows us to conclude that B2B e-commerce is becoming more and more entrenched in business.

14. At the present stage, the role of sales representatives in the wholesale and B2B trade has significantly increased. Therefore, sales representatives need to realize the importance of after-sales service in communicating with customers, as business relationships are based on long-term, loyal collaboration. Therefore, it must be taken into account that good service plays a very important role in both wholesale and retail trade. No less important is the fundamental knowledge of the products for sale and the timely response to customer questions or problems.

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