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THE IMPORTANCE OF POSITIONING IN THE COMPANY'S STRATEGY FOR ENTERING THE MARKET

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The work is devoted to the problem of the need for a clear positioning of the same type of goods offered on the market. The consumer prefers those that have managed to stand out from others and have taken their place in his mind. To do this, it is necessary to develop an appropriate strategy that will ensure the company's entry into the market and will contribute to achieving long-term strategic goals. [1]

Filling the market with goods and services has led to fierce competition. The possibility of meeting the needs has led to the fact that today, even when buying the simplest goods, the consumer is lost in choice. The protective mechanism against such abundance is selective behavior, when the consumer tends to choose a small number of permanent brands of each product, from which he actually makes a choice.

In an effort to survive in direct competition and gain an advantageous position in the market, companies direct their efforts to differentiate offers. The wave of competition brought to the market a completely new idea of the image of the product (brand), which led to the popularity of the positioning concept, understood as the development and creation of the image of the product in such a way that it occupies a worthy place in the mind of the buyer, different from the position of competing products. Consumer consciousness today is becoming a battlefield of competing goods and services.

In many market segments, competition is conducted at the sales level and the process of forming loyal consumer groups that give a steady positive response to efforts in the field of positioning is already taking place. A skillfully developed positioning strategy is a win in the competition, which is achieved by increasing the effectiveness of marketing efforts.

The relevance of the positioning problem is confirmed by the increased interest in both practical examples on this topic and consideration of theoretical and applied aspects, which are given attention in domestic and foreign publications. Nevertheless, despite the growing interest in positioning on the part of researchers, the lack of full-fledged studies and monographs containing an integrated approach to the development of a positioning strategy is characteristic. Most of the stages necessary for the effective construction and implementation of this strategy are considered in the literature separately.

The conceptual foundations of positioning are considered in the works "Differentiale or Die", Positioning — the battle for recognition" and "New positioning". [2] They give a general understanding, but these works are descriptive in nature and are based on the analysis of practical examples.

P. Kotler with his works "Fundamentals of Marketing" and "Marketing Management" was one of the first to apply a scientific approach when considering the concept of positioning. [3] He offers basic positioning strategies and a methodology for constructing perception maps for analyzing competitors' positions. A significant drawback of his work is the lack of an algorithm of actions to develop an effective strategy.

Quantitative methods of choosing a positioning strategy are considered in the work of J.J. Lambin. The methodology given in the paper for assessing the current perception of trademarks based on a multi-attributive product model has practical value when choosing a differentiating attribute that forms the basis of the strategy.

Among the works that comprehensively consider individual stages of the positioning development process, it should be noted "Management: strategy and tactics" by P. Doyle. In this work, the key links of the strategy creation process are consistently presented. P. Doyle is the only author who uses the concept of "positioning strategies", however, of the many strategies he considers only those that relate to the repositioning of goods.

The most valuable in terms of the proposed strategies is the work of P. Temporal: "Effective brand management". [4] But in it, the author does not offer a complete and comprehensive guide to the development and implementation of a competent strategy.

The authors of the remaining numerous monographs mainly present the materials contained in the above-mentioned studies. In periodicals, this issue is not new.

The founders of the positioning concept, on the basis of which marketing specialists build their works, are E. Rice and J. Trout. Currently, there are various approaches to determining positioning that reveal its essence. Some authors focus on one or more aspects of positioning, while others try to generalize all its aspects. There is no generally accepted definition of positioning, which indicates the novelty and variability of ideas about this concept. Let's highlight some approaches to the definition of the concept of "positioning".

- 1. The first group of definitions includes those that consider positioning as a representation of consumers about the goods (services) of the company.
- F. Kotler expresses the opinion that the term "Positioning" reflects the evaluation of the goods by consumers according to its main characteristics, i.e. the consumer's assessment of the place, position that this product occupies in relation to competitor goods. A similar formulation is repeated by E.P. Golubkov. [5] In his opinion, positioning characterizes the place occupied by a particular product in the minds of consumers in relation to the product of competitors.

In later works, F. Kotler, determining the positioning, came as close as possible to E. Rice and J. Trout, considering the positioning process as the actions of a manufacturer or seller that influence the consciousness of consumers.

- 2. The second group includes definitions that approximate the essence of positioning to the concept of product competitiveness.
- V.E. Khrutsky and I.V. Korneeva express the opinion that the term "positioning" is used to denote the activity of correlating the most important parameters of the proposed product or service with the needs and requests of consumers, with similar parameters of competitors' products and changes in the external environment. [6]

According to E.P. Golubkov, product positioning consists in making a choice based on consumer assessments of such parameters of the product (service) and elements of the marketing mix that, from the point of view of target consumers, will provide the product with competitive advantages.

3. The third group of definitions provides the most holistic and universal definition of positioning, which covers all the above aspects of this concept and also takes into account who carries out this activity. This definition is given by E. Rice and J. Trout. Positioning is the development and creation of the image of a product in such a way that it occupies a worthy place in the mind of the buyer, which differs from the position of competing products. The same definition is given by R.A. Fatkhutdinov.

Positioning as the actions of the seller (manufacturer) to manage the consumer's opinion is interpreted by V.N. Domnin. This point of view is joined by V.V. Kevorkov and S.V. Leontiev, who consider the concept of positioning one of the main ones in the planning and organization of marketing.

Product positioning consists in presenting it in such a way that it occupies a certain place in the minds of potential consumers.

Positioning is an operation on the minds of potential buyers, that is, influencing the consumer's way of thinking.

The "place" in the consumer consciousness is limited, so it is necessary to put only the most important things into the mind of the buyer. In order for new information to remain in memory, it is necessary to link the received information with what is important and useful for the consumer. The basic principle of positioning is not to create something new and different from others, but to manipulate what already lives in the minds of consumers, to use existing connections and perceptions.

The purpose of positioning is to create an impression among consumers that they have a unique, one-of-a-kind product or service in front of them and that there is no equivalent replacement for this brand. Positioning is based on how consumers perceive and evaluate the purpose, benefits and benefits, quality and reliability, advantages and other characteristics of the product. It is aimed at highlighting the advantages of an existing product, at fixing them in the minds of consumers. The product should be perceived by a certain group of target consumers as having a clear image that distinguishes it from competitors' products.

The main task of positioning consists in a complex of efforts aimed at adapting products to the requirements of target market segments, with its detuning from the main competitors. When positioning products, their characteristics are used, which are important for consumers and which they are guided by when

making their choice. The task of positioning is not to facilitate the sale of goods to the manufacturer, but to facilitate the consumer the process of buying a particular product (service, brand). In this sense, positioning serves as "a brief guide for buyers, determining not only their final choice, but even how they evaluate the alternatives leading to this choice."

The final result of product positioning is the successful creation of a market —oriented product value proposition — a simple and clear statement: why consumers from the target segment should buy this product.

It must be remembered that mistakes in the positioning of products on the market can lead to the complete leveling of all other marketing efforts. Therefore, when positioning the company should avoid the following mistakes.

- 1. Under-positioning or surface positioning the loss of a clearly defined position by this company. This is a situation where buyers have a vague idea about the brand. They have no associated associations with it; the brand is considered only as one of many.
- 2. Over-positioning or one-sided positioning creating a too narrow view of the brand or company among customers.
- 3. Vague or ambiguous positioning is a situation where consumers may have a fuzzy brand image. The company makes too many statements about the properties of its product or changes the brand positioning too often.
- 4. Dubious or speculative positioning is aimed at creating an overly exaggerated idea of the company's capabilities or the merits of the brand among consumers. In this case, consumers hardly believe in statements about the high qualities of the product in the light of its real characteristics, price or reputation of the manufacturer.

Its competitiveness largely depends on how well a particular product is positioned in a particular market. In order to avoid mistakes when choosing the position that a product needs to occupy in the market, the company should carefully analyze the market, competitors' offers and consumer preferences.

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