Using social media to boost sales of organic food

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Abstract. Modern high-performance agricultural technologies have a negative impact on the biochemical state of soils and on the environment as a whole. Excessive and uncontrolled use of pesticides and mineral fertilizers causes contamination of groundwater and soil. Consumers have a need to purchase environmentally friendly food products that have been produced using environmentally friendly technologies. The use of social networks in the promotion of goods and services of agricultural enterprises allows, in our opinion, to increase the competitiveness of an agricultural enterprise producing environmentally friendly food products and attract an additional number of potential consumers. For effective promotion of goods and services through the use of social networks, it is necessary to create high-quality virtual content with the use of qualified specialists. It is the high-quality content of the virtual space of the social network that will provide potential consumers with information about the services and goods offered by the enterprise and their advantage in relation to the services and goods of other manufacturers.

1. Introduction

Modern agricultural enterprises operate in a market environment characterized by a high degree of competition. In this regard, there is a need to find an increase in sales of manufactured products. Currently, there are four main concepts of marketing activities. According to the first concept [1] consumers prefer to purchase the most common products at the most optimal prices. In accordance with the first concept, the company should strive to improve its production process, as well as methods and forms of marketing of finished products.

According to the second concept [2] the consumer will always strive to acquire new products of better quality, while he will give them preferences for products purchased earlier. The second concept requires the company to make every effort to bring new products with improved consumer qualities to the market.

According to the third concept [3] the consumer buys primarily those products that are actively advertised. The third concept involves focusing the company’s marketing on active or even aggressive sales.

According to the fourth concept [4] the main thing is to study the needs of certain target groups of consumers, for effective marketing of manufactured products, it is necessary to create direct contacts
with specific consumers. The logic of this concept is that the production of a large range of products with similar consumer properties makes it difficult for buyers to make a choice when making purchases. According to this concept, the manufacturer should strive for direct communication with customers, taking into account their individual needs.

In recent decades, Internet technologies have become widespread in all spheres of human activity. The number of Internet users is increasing every year. The emergence and rapid growth of e-commerce contributed to the emergence of the concept of Internet marketing. Which allowed Internet users to carry out advertising, as well as the sale and purchase of information and various goods and services.

In the opinion of [5] the use of Internet technologies is possible in most areas of marketing activities. Thanks to these technologies, traditionally used marketing tools increase their level of efficiency due to the new opportunities provided by the Internet.

According to [3] the use of the Internet has some distinctive features in comparison with traditional marketing technologies, which consist in the globalization of the field of activity, the transition to personal interaction between the seller and the end user, the transition to consumers from the manufacturer's dominant position in the market.

The shift of the dominant position from the producer to the consumer, in our opinion, cannot be unambiguously estimated. On the one hand, buyers can buy more goods and services and on the other hand, if the supply of goods is made from abroad, this leads to a deterioration in the country's balance of payments and negatively affects the activities of domestic producers. Among the companies that provide Internet marketing services, you can select MSN, Google, Facebook, Yandex, Yahoo.

In the opinion of [6] the effectiveness of an online market book is the ability to maintain contact with consumers and quickly analyze statistical data. In addition, Internet marketing allows you to achieve greater audience coverage compared to traditional marketing methods.

According to [7] the number of social media users has exceeded 3 billion people, most of whom spend more than 4 hours a day on social networks. Through the mediation of social networks, about half of all sales are made.

Consequently, people largely use the Internet to use social networks.

According to [8] internet marketing through the use of social networks (Social Marketing Media) has the following advantages:

1) The advertiser can more effectively address their content about the service and product to potential buyers.

2) Developed applications and content about products and services, users of social networks can distribute independently among their environment.

3) The use of social networks allows you to segment consumers due to the fact that they themselves report their data: age, gender, profession, education, region of residence

Recently, advertising has become widespread through offers to users of social networks of banners or links. The advertiser pays for each click on such a link or banner.

According to [9] the most popular social networks among users allow customers to make payments quickly and with almost no risk, share news with friends, and view reviews.

In the opinion of [10] advertising in social networks is very effective if you connect well-known artists and bloggers to it. Their comments and comments on the products or services offered can have an authoritative meaning for their fans and this can also ensure that the ad reaches a large audience.

In the opinion of [11] seeing that some social networks are users of a particular product can trigger an imitation effect for other users of the social network. Information transmitted through social networks in most cases causes more confidence in many potential consumers of services or goods.

According to [12] Facebook and Instagram are currently among the most popular platforms for online advertising in social networks.

In the opinion of [13] effective advertising on social networks requires competent SEO specialists, targetologists, copywriters, and PR managers.
In the opinion of [14] social networks allow you to post comments from other users. The repetition of messages contributes to an increase in traffic to products and services that are commented on.

According to [15] the use of social networks allows you to form groups of consumers with similar desires and needs.

Based on our analysis, we came to the conclusion that for effective promotion of goods and services through the use of social networks, it is necessary to create high-quality virtual content with the use of qualified specialists. It is the high-quality content of the virtual space of the social network that will provide potential consumers with information about the services and goods offered by the enterprise and their advantage in relation to the services and goods of other manufacturers.

2. Methods
Within the framework of this study, an analytical method was used, the use of which made it possible to study the problems studied in it in their unity and development. Taking into account the goals and objectives of this scientific work, the functional-structural method of scientific research was applied. This made it possible to study some of the problems associated with the use of the social media tool to increase the sales of organic food by an agricultural enterprise.

3. Results
Modern agricultural production uses high-performance agricultural machinery, mineral and organic fertilizers, as well as a variety of plant protection products in its technological process. This makes it possible to obtain high yields and achieve large volumes of agricultural production. However, along with this, modern high-performance agricultural technologies have a negative impact on the biochemical state of soils and on the environment as a whole. Excessive and uncontrolled use of pesticides and mineral fertilizers causes contamination of groundwater and soil. Nitrates and other toxic chemical compounds get into agricultural products. Consumption of such products by the population can lead to adverse consequences for the human body. In this regard, consumers have a need to purchase food products that have been produced using environmentally friendly technologies.

The reason for this study was the appeal to us in 2019 of one of the farmers of the Kharkiv region, who specializes in growing cucumbers. He decided to grow organic cucumbers. However, he had problems with the sale of products. Restaurants did not buy many cucumbers from him, and local retail chains did not offer him favorable purchase prices. At the same time, the same retail chains sold similar products from other manufacturers.

The farmer asked us to help him sell cucumbers.

At the beginning of our research, we studied how competitors sell similar products. Based on the analysis, we found out that the main manufacturers of such products use the social network Instagram as a platform. After analyzing the data obtained from Instagram, we found that the main consumers of environmental products are people over 45 years of age with incomes above the average level. They can afford to buy food 3-4 times more expensive than usual, which means that they will not be a problem buying organic cucumbers with delivery by courier mail.

We advised our farmer to create a group on the social network Instagram to promote their products. After some time, the farmer was able to increase the volume of sales of his products by 22% customers began to contact him not only from Kharkiv and the Kharkiv region, but from other regions.

4. Discussion
The emergence and widespread use of Internet technologies has led to significant changes in various spheres of human activity. The use of Internet technologies in the field of marketing increases the level of sales and has a positive impact on the results of financial and economic activities of enterprises. In our opinion, when selling organic food products, you can effectively use the tools of Internet marketing. At the first stage, you need to determine the target audience that may be interested in this type of product. At the same time, it should be taken into account that the structure of consumers can be heterogeneous and the expectations of potential customers can change dynamically.
The consumer preferences of buyers of environmentally friendly products are influenced by many factors of the internal and external environment. The use of establishing direct contacts with potential consumers through social networks allows you to analyze the involvement of the target consumer audience, but to increase this indicator by increasing the interest of the potential buyer in the resource with the relevant information posted on it. If you successfully choose the content to post it on a social network, you can quickly spread the information among a large number of potential buyers, which means it will increase sales.

It should be noted that Internet marketing has not only advantages, but also a number of disadvantages.

In our opinion, the advantages of Internet marketing include:

- High speed of information dissemination
- The possibility of a flexible approach to conducting an advertising campaign
- Reducing the cost of conducting an advertising campaign compared to traditional methods
- Expanding the geography of product sales
- The possibility of conducting an advertising campaign for a specific thematic segment of the market
- The possibility of interactive communication with potential buyers of the company’s products
- The possibility of changing the trend of consumer preferences.

![Figure 1. The advantages of Internet marketing](image)

In our opinion, the disadvantages of Internet marketing include (Figure 2):

- The need for potential consumers to use social networks
- Buyers cannot check the quality of the product until it is received
- The trust of potential buyers will be lower compared to the possibility of real, rather than virtual communication with the seller
- The presence of fraudulent sites in the network that deceive potential buyers
- Customers distrust of online payments

![Figure 2. The disadvantages of Internet marketing](image)

In this regard, we believe that for a successful marketing campaign, it is advisable to combine online advertising with traditional types of advertising, for example, advertising in the media.

5. Conclusion
The use of social networks in the promotion of goods and services of agricultural enterprises allows, in our opinion, to increase the competitiveness of an agricultural enterprise producing environmentally friendly food products and attract an additional number of potential consumers. But at the same time, the successful organization and implementation of this process, in our opinion, requires the use of specialists with appropriate qualifications and experience in the promotion of goods and services in social networks.

When using Social Marketing Media, in our opinion, we should not expect a quick positive effect. However, systematic work in this direction can attract a large number of potential buyers.

The use of social networks as a tool for promoting services and products has recently shown its effectiveness.

Social Media Marketing also allows you to monitor the accounting activities of their competitors.

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