

PECULIARITIES OF THE APPLICATION OF EVENTS IN THE MARKETING TOOLS SYSTEM IN UKRAINE

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Abstract. The article examines the distinctive characteristics of the utilisation of events within the marketing tools system in Ukraine. Furthermore, it analyses the prevailing global trends in the deployment of events within the marketing tools system. In particular, the annual increase in event budgeting is highlighted as a key trend, enabling organisations to plan more significant and better events in order to achieve their marketing goals. The implementation of technology in event marketing, whereby companies invest in events and utilise technology to create memorable experiences for customers and facilitate long-term growth, represents a significant trend. However, there is a shortage of qualified professionals in the field of event marketing, which presents a challenge for organisations seeking to engage with target audiences. Research indicates that 40% of event organisers perceive attracting new participants as their primary marketing challenge. Additionally, the popularity of remote and combined events, alongside the recognition of the effectiveness of live offline events in event marketing, represent noteworthy developments. It has been demonstrated that marketing tools have undergone substantial modifications and adaptations in the context of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. One of the most instrumental tools to emerge in this context is that of events. Notwithstanding the challenging circumstances, event marketing continues to represent a potent instrument for communication and persuasion among target audiences. The organisation of events in the context of armed conflict necessitates a high degree of vigilance and consideration for the safety of all participants. Those responsible for organising such events are compelled to give due consideration to the potential risks and to devise contingency plans in the event of unforeseen circumstances. Concurrently, such occurrences serve as a conduit for bolstering the populace's morale, disseminating crucial intelligence, and fortifying national unity. It is imperative to acknowledge that the war has compelled businesses to reassess their marketing strategies, resulting in the implementation of more adaptable and flexible approaches to event organisation. Online and hybrid formats have become indispensable tools for enabling continuous customer engagement despite physical constraints. Consequently, events in Ukraine's marketing tool system during wartime have been demonstrated to be highly efficient, flexible, and adaptable. Such events play a pivotal role in sustaining business stability, fostering new forms of audience interaction, and strengthening social bonds.

Keywords: events, event marketing, marketing tools, social media.

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1. Introduction

In the contemporary business environment, marketing is a crucial element for any company aiming to achieve success in the market. One of the pivotal trends in this domain is the utilisation of events as an efficacious instrument for communication with the

target audience. Event marketing enables not only the attraction of attention to the brand but also the establishment of an emotional connection with the consumer, which contributes to the enhancement of brand loyalty and recognition.

In the context of intense competition, coupled with the impact of global economic crises and the

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sway of public opinion, businesses are compelled to explore avenues for enhancing the efficacy of their marketing endeavours. This is achieved by identifying novel methods of engagement with existing and prospective clientele, exploring innovative approaches to the structuring of marketing operations, adapting to evolving market conditions within Ukraine and across global markets, enhancing the marketing apparatus and overseeing the implementation of marketing activities, as well as initiating new strategic marketing activities that align with contemporary requirements.

With the growth of the offer and requirements for market participants, changes in the way end consumers search for, obtain and analyse information about goods and services, changes in attitudes towards traditional advertising and communication policy of companies, as well as increasing costs of marketing activities of companies, the most effective marketing tools are becoming universal, multitasking and multisensory marketing tools. These include the creation and organisation of special events aimed at the strategic promotion of companies, their services, products and brands.

Marketers have long noted the growing role of new non-traditional strategic marketing solutions that ensure the leadership and stable position of enterprises in the market (Stahl et al., 2023). Numerous works, including those of the classics of marketing science, confirm this. The growing role of emotional intelligence in the management and marketing activities of organisations, the development and application of value-based marketing principles indicate a better response of consumers to the activities of companies that appeal to their psychology and motivation and maximise their internal "cultural code" (Labunska et al., 2019). In this regard, event marketing and its tools of psychological and informational influence, based on the cultural values of all stakeholders, are becoming a popular tool for communication and market behaviour of companies.

In Ukraine, events have become widespread in recent decades, due to the development of market relations, increased competition and the need to constantly search for new approaches to promoting goods and services. The Ukrainian marketing communications market is demonstrating stable development, which is reflected in the increasing number and quality of events.

The relevance of the research topic is due to the growing demand for unique and interactive forms of interaction with consumers. The article examines the peculiarities of using events in the system of marketing tools in Ukraine, analyses the main trends and prospects for the development of this area, and assesses the effectiveness of various event formats for achieving marketing goals.

2. The Main Global Trends in the Use of Events in the Marketing Toolkit

In the competitive struggle, the success of enterprises in the market largely depends on the organisation and conduct of marketing events that combine messages, time, place and atmosphere into a single event for the effective perception of information by consumers.

Event marketing is a set of techniques used to promote a brand, product or service through lively and memorable events. It originated in Europe in the 1970s and 1980s. The history of event marketing goes back centuries, but only in the last 30 years has it become an independent method of marketing communication, accompanied by an annual increase in the number of marketing events. Today, event marketing is an industry in its own right, which can be explained by its rapid development. The first company to actively use event marketing was McDonald's, mainly through the image of Ronald McDonald the clown, starting in 1963. Modern McDonald's event marketing tools include charity events with celebrities, which help to improve the company's image and expand its target audience.

According to research by American scientist George Johnson, as of 2018, more than 81% of Western companies use event marketing tools to successfully promote their products (Romat & Havrylechko, 2018).

Event marketing has become an integral part of modern marketing strategies, which include promoting brands through various events. One of the main challenges is attracting new attendees, as reported by 40% of event marketers. However, the fact that nearly three-quarters of event marketers will increase their budgets by 2023 suggests that the industry is growing in importance. The popularity of virtual and hybrid events has complicated this process, but the event marketing industry will continue to grow in the coming years (50+ Amazing Event Marketing Statistics You Never Knew, 2024).

The event marketing industry is forecast to invest 36.31 billion USD by 2026. In addition, 73% of event marketers reported an increase in their budget for 2023, which shows that events are recognised as an effective marketing tool.

Figure 1 shows the main global trends in the use of events in the system of marketing tools, their interconnection, problems and prospects.

The majority of event marketers reported an increase in budget for 2023, which will allow them to plan larger and better events to achieve their marketing goals. It also opens up opportunities to invest in better technology, expand their team and create engaging experiences for attendees (Pronoza et al., 2022).

Event marketers are actively adopting technology to keep up with changing industry trends. 86% of

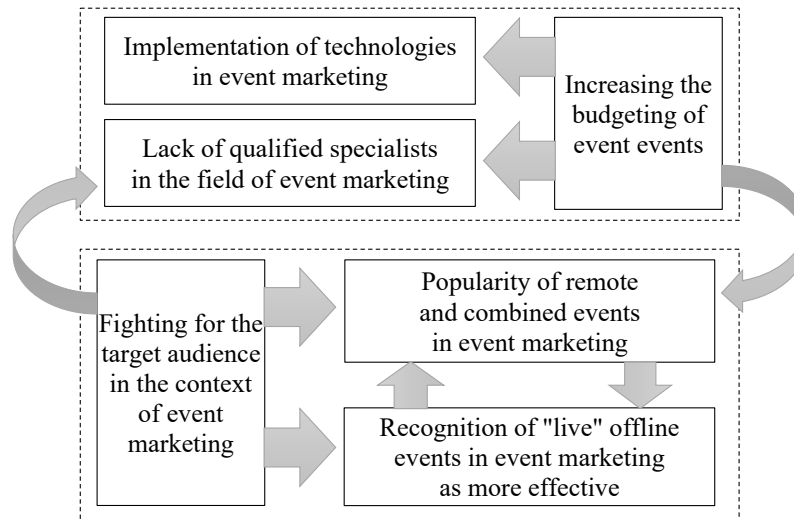


Figure 1. The main global trends in the use of events in the system of marketing tools

professionals say that technology is having a positive impact on events, which is driving the growth of event management software. As the event marketing industry grows, businesses need to keep up with the latest trends and technologies. By investing in events and leveraging technology, companies can create memorable experiences for customers and ensure long-term growth (Global Exhibition Market: Analysis By Revenue Stream, By Mode, By Type, By Region Size and Trends with Impact of COVID-19 and Forecast up to 2026, 2022).

Due to the 2019 pandemic, 78% of event organisers have increased their use of technology, driven by the need to minimise physical contact and reduce the risk of infection. The use of technology allows organisers to hold virtual and blended events, which are becoming increasingly popular. Participants can attend events from the comfort of their homes or offices, saving time and money on travel. Technology also simplifies the organisation of events, from registration to post-event analysis. The use of event management software allows to automate many routine tasks, improving process efficiency and increasing visitor satisfaction (State of Business Events, 2022).

The event management software market continues to grow rapidly. It is expected to reach 6.97 billion USD in 2022 and grow at a 12.5% CAGR between 2023 and 2030. This is due to the growing number of sports, gaming and entertainment events. The market is expected to grow to 16.11 billion USD in 2026 and 28.13 billion USD by 2031. This is predicted to be driven by the growing demand for event management automation, as well as the rapid adoption of virtual events due to the pandemic (Event Management Software Market Size, Share & Trends Analysis Report By Component (Software, Services), By Application (Corporate, Education), By Deployment (On-premise,

Cloud), By Enterprise Size, And Segment Forecasts, 2023-2030).

In recent years, remote and combined events have become increasingly popular. This trend is expected to continue over the next two years, according to the Kaltura survey (The State of Virtual Events 2022. A global survey of 1250+ organizers and attendees. Kaltura, 2021), where 90% of organisers believe that large events will move to these formats. This shift is gaining momentum due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has forced companies to seek alternatives to traditional meetings due to social distance and travel restrictions. Remote and blended events have proven to be an effective alternative to traditional offline events, attracting larger audiences and reducing costs. Using a variety of technologies, organisers can obtain valuable attendee data to analyse the event's performance and improve it in the future. Other benefits of these formats include flexibility and convenience for attendees, who can attend events from anywhere and choose the most convenient way to participate (The State of Virtual Events 2022. A global survey of 1250+ organizers and attendees. Kaltura, 2021).

The global event services market is experiencing significant growth and is attracting the attention of investors as a lucrative industry. The global event management services market was valued at 555 billion USD in 2022 and is expected to grow to 1,073.01 billion USD by 2031, with a CAGR of 7.6% from 2023 to 2031. The growth of this market is driven by the increasing demand for professional event organisers and their efficient solutions for decoration, catering and other services. With the proliferation of technology, event management software has become the norm, enabling the collection and analysis of attendee data. The market is growing dynamically due to the

development of digital platforms, increased demand for analytics, and the need to improve event planning and execution. Demand for event management services is expected to grow as companies and organisations increasingly recognise their importance (Event Management Services Market Outlook).

The main difficulty for marketers is the common and difficult to resolve shortage of skilled event marketing professionals. Understanding strengths and weaknesses is key to overcoming this challenge, as is considering opportunities to bring in external experts or hire additional staff. Investing in training and development can also help improve event outcomes (2023 Events Outlook Report. Splash, 2023).

In the view of 40% of event organisers, the most significant marketing challenge is that of attracting new participants. Although in-person events can be the most effective, the recruitment of new participants can prove to be a significant challenge. These statistics underscore the necessity for the development of novel strategies to facilitate the attraction and retention of new participants. Two potential strategies are the utilisation of social media and the provision of distinctive experiences. Furthermore, data analysis enables organisers to gain a deeper insight into their audience, allowing them to refine their marketing campaigns and ultimately increase participation rates.

As many as 32% of marketers believe that attracting the right audience is crucial for successful event marketing. This requires a deep understanding of the needs, interests and preferences of the target audience. However, creating interesting and valuable content for the event, including speakers, interactive sessions, and networking, also plays a significant role. It is also important to choose indicators to measure the effectiveness of the event and the possibility of making improvements to future programmes, which can be achieved by tracking attendance, engagement and conversions (2023 Events Outlook Report. Splash, 2023).

Almost two-thirds of Generation Z representatives are interested in participating in business events. It is important to note that these participants prefer opportunities for career development and expansion of professional contacts. Therefore, when organising an event for Generation Z, it is worth focusing on creating opportunities for interaction with experts and colleagues in this field. This can be done through networking sessions, career fairs and discussion panels with successful professionals. It's also important to effectively promote the event using social media platforms that are popular among this generation, such as Instagram and TikTok. Clear information about the event should be provided, including the topic, venue and speakers (PCMA CONVENE, 2021).

The majority of Gen Z participants expressed a desire for engaging and inclusive events. To meet the needs of this audience, event organisers should focus on interactivity and diversity. This means creating events with active participants, including a variety of speakers and performers, and increasing communication between organisers and participants. To achieve these goals, organisers should actively use social media and conduct surveys to get feedback from participants.

The majority of marketers concur that offline events, or "live" events, are an indispensable component of marketing strategies for the success of enterprises in a multitude of industries. This illustrates that offline events have become a "nice addition" and a pivotal marketing strategy for the majority of enterprises. Nearly all marketers acknowledge their significance, as this marketing channel presents a distinctive opportunity to attract prospective customers and foster meaningful connections.

Sponsorship of events represents a highly effective instrument for the attraction of consumers to a brand, the stimulation of their loyalty and the reinforcement of their emotional connection to the brand. This approach enables the brand to present itself to a substantial audience, thereby associating it with favourable perceptions of the event. Furthermore, event sponsorship provides an avenue for attracting new audiences and expanding the customer base. Nevertheless, the success of such events hinges on the alignment between the values and message of the brand and the event itself. This ensures that the event is perceived as a genuine and authentic initiative, rather than merely an attempt to capitalise on its popularity.

American companies spend a lot of money on event marketing. Not only does it keep consumers engaged, but it also drives sales. Memorable events help to build brand awareness and strengthen the connection with the audience. It is important to note that event marketing is not only available to large corporations, but also to small and medium-sized businesses. Accurate planning, goal setting and results analysis are critical to a successful marketing strategy. Technology such as event management software can help streamline the process and ensure a better return on investment (Up the "Wow Factor" in Your Next Event. By Stagedge Team).

Events are essential for most marketers because they provide a personal touch with the target audience. Event attendees can interact with the brand, learn about products or services, and communicate with company representatives. This helps to build trust and loyalty, increasing sales and customer satisfaction. Events also allow you to collect valuable audience data that can be used to refine the marketing strategy and improve the products or services available.

Most event marketers consider online events to be less effective than offline events. The main reason for this is the inability of virtual events to replicate face-to-face meetings, which are essential for building strong relationships. To overcome these challenges, event organisers must actively use technology to ensure that they are engaging in a process that closely resembles reality (Optimize Your Technology and Strategy for a Virtual and Hybrid Events-Dominated Future. Forrester opportunity snapshot: a custom study commissioned by bluejeans, 2021).

Keeping attendees engaged is one of the biggest challenges in event technology. With so many distractions, such as smartphones, it takes a lot of work to keep people's attention. To do this, event organisers need to use simple and intuitive technologies that enable interactivity. Another challenge is cost. With limited budgets, many organisers are looking for affordable technology solutions that deliver tangible results. To do this, they carefully analyse cost, functionality and benefits. Finally, technology integration is an important consideration. With the variety of tools and platforms available, seamless interaction can be complex. Choosing technology solutions that integrate easily, or working with a vendor that offers integration services, helps to avoid these problems.

3. Peculiarities of Event Marketing in Ukraine during the War

In 2023, businesses gradually began to adapt and transform after the difficulties of 2022. While companies still maintain short-term planning, they have also started to think about the future. Marketing activity has begun to recover. Given the growing sensitivity of society, marketing teams are expected to act with the utmost care in communicating with consumers, carefully choosing every message, image and emotion.

During the full-scale war, Ukrainian businesses demonstrated considerable flexibility in responding to external circumstances, repeatedly adjusting their strategies. They faced challenges such as migration and reduced purchasing power, destruction of production facilities and loss of infrastructure in the occupied territories, productivity constraints due to infrastructure damage and air strikes, and complications from power outages. In 2022, most businesses planned only for the next six months due to the high level of uncertainty. However, in 2023, the strategic planning horizon was slightly extended, constantly updated according to the situation. The growing need for adaptability has led to the development of several scenarios (optimistic, pessimistic and medium forecast) to respond quickly to events. The autonomy of local decision-making

has also increased, without waiting for approval from above. In 2023, marketing and advertising budgets partially recovered, and some companies chose to focus on critical products.

Despite the fact that the consumption of consumer goods is growing, it cannot be interpreted as an exclusively positive phenomenon, since the problem of the property stratification of society and the growing poverty of some sections of the population has never lost its relevance in Ukraine (Popadynets et al., 2024).

Many companies support the Armed Forces of Ukraine through financial assistance and the launch of social initiatives, with some openly demonstrating their commitment. Others, however, choose not to publicise their actions. Companies are gradually returning to business as usual, with a focus on employee engagement, motivation and support, which is particularly important given the emotional stress caused by full-scale war, fear and shelling. Retaining existing staff is a priority for many companies trying to avoid redundancies and maintain salary and bonus levels. Many companies are moving back to office work, but many are also offering remote working opportunities, with varying conditions depending on the department or position.

Marketers seeking to achieve success and leadership in the market face a number of challenges, among which the following are particularly significant: first, market capacity constraints, in particular, the reduction in the number of consumers and their purchasing power; second, changes in consumer behaviour and increased sensitivity of consumers: it is becoming extremely difficult to predict reactions and reputational risks; the audience is receptive and responsive to any events; representatives of companies that have remained in the Russian market often note negative consumer attitudes; third, the effectiveness of communication: society's demands on marketing teams to be careful and balanced in their communication are constantly growing. This applies not only to the main messages, but also to all other aspects of communication, such as visual design and emotional content. Finding effective communication channels in the context of media fragmentation also remains an important task. Other challenges for marketing teams include the need for more skilled staff, shrinking budgets and difficulty in forecasting.

Despite the third year of full-scale war in Ukraine, companies not only continue their activities, but also actively participate in offline business activities for development. At the beginning of the invasion, many event agencies closed down, temporarily suspended operations or turned to volunteer work. This industry then declined by almost 80%. At first glance, war and business activities seem incompatible. However, the war confirmed the importance of not only

online communication, but also personal interaction, especially in a business environment. The value of face-to-face interaction in business activities is irreplaceable, and the war has only served to underline this fact.

Entrepreneurs have the opportunity to communicate live, make new contacts and expand their network. Speaking at events allows individuals to introduce themselves to a new audience, demonstrate their expertise and strengthen their personal brand. Sponsoring or partnering with a company at an offline event helps to attract targeted leads and potential customers.

According to some industry experts, the Ukrainian events industry lost almost 80% of its capabilities (personnel, institutional, financial) during the war (Kuz'menko, Samahala, 2024). Despite the war, hundreds of entrepreneurs attended offline events such as the IT Arena, iForum and Entrepreneurs' Forum. While the industry will take time to recover, there is a strong demand for social, charitable, educational and technology business events. For example, the annual IT Arena technology conference in Lviv attracts more than 5,000 participants. For three days they take part in discussions, business networking and inspiration in the historic part of the city (Offline activities for business during the war in Ukraine: risks or opportunities, 2023).

4. Conclusions

In the context of the ongoing war in Ukraine, marketing tools have undergone significant changes and adaptations. One of the important tools that has proven to be extremely effective is events. Despite the difficult conditions, event marketing remains a powerful means of communication and influence on the target audience. Holding events in wartime requires special care and attention to the safety of participants. Organisers have to take into account risks and develop contingency plans. At the same time, such events become a platform for maintaining the morale of the population, sharing vital information and strengthening national unity.

The war has forced businesses to rethink their marketing strategies, including more flexible and adaptive approaches to event organisation. Virtual and hybrid formats have become a necessity, allowing for continued communication with customers despite physical restrictions. Thus, events in the system of marketing tools in Ukraine during the war demonstrate high efficiency, flexibility and adaptability. They play an important role in maintaining business stability, developing new formats of interaction with the audience, and most importantly, strengthening social ties and creating a sense of connection in times of turmoil.

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