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## APPLICATION AND IMPROVEMENT OF NEXT-GENERATION MARKETING STRATEGIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MARKET FOR INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS IN THE LIGHT INDUSTRY

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**Summary.** *In the 21st century, the intensification of market relations, increasing competition, and the transformation of innovation into a leading economic driver have led to fundamental changes in the nature of marketing strategies. A key characteristic of modern marketing activity is the ability to adapt flexibly to rapidly changing consumer demands, digital technologies, and evolving market trends. In this context, marketing strategies are no longer static documents but function as continuously evolving and customer-oriented mechanisms.*

*The development of digital marketing has significantly surpassed traditional marketing approaches, with social media, e-commerce, mobile, and omnichannel strategies enhancing the overall effectiveness of marketing activities. Artificial intelligence, big data analytics, CRM systems, and personalized marketing tools enable a deeper understanding of consumer behavior and the development of strategies tailored to target audiences. At the same time, pricing, positioning, and product life cycle strategies play a crucial role in the market introduction of innovative products.*

*In the light industry sector, the development of marketing strategies for innovative products is closely associated with personalized approaches, alignment of design and functionality with consumer expectations, environmental responsibility, and the application of sustainable production principles. Modern tools such as virtual reality, augmented reality, video marketing, and influencer marketing play a significant role in enriching customer experience.*

*Although positive developments have been observed in the field of marketing in Azerbaijan in recent years, the limited level of practical implementation and the predominant reliance on traditional marketing tools slow down the pace of digital transformation. In this regard, the adaptation of international best practices to local market conditions and the transition to innovative and digitally oriented marketing strategies should be considered a strategic necessity for enhancing the competitiveness of light industry enterprises and ensuring export-oriented, sustainable economic development.*

**Keywords:** *marketing strategies, digital marketing, innovative products, light industry, competitiveness*

**Introduction.** *In the 21st century, the dynamics of market relations and intensifying competition have significantly transformed the essence of marketing strategies. Innovation has emerged as a key economic factor globally, compelling firms to adopt new approaches to enhance their competitiveness. In this context, organizational restructuring, cost optimization, flexible hierarchical structures, and strategic partnerships contribute to creating sustainable competitive advantages in the market.*

*Modern marketing is characterized by its ability to adapt to rapid changes in the digital environment and evolving consumer demands. The effectiveness of marketing activities today depends not only on reaching a wide audience but also on establishing long-term and meaningful relationships with customers. Customer-centric approaches, brand identification, value creation, and loyalty management form the foundation of contemporary marketing strategies.*

*Digital marketing has surpassed traditional marketing methods in terms of reach, efficiency, and real-time measurability. Social media, e-commerce platforms, and digital advertising tools allow firms*

to interact directly with consumers, offer personalized proposals, and optimize customer experiences. The collection and analysis of data enable a deeper understanding of consumer behavior, facilitating the design of strategies tailored to market needs.

In Azerbaijan, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have received increased investment in recent years, laying the groundwork for marketing development. However, a lack of practical marketing experience remains a challenge. Therefore, attracting foreign specialists, organizing seminars and conferences, and adopting proven international marketing models can enhance the knowledge and capabilities of local firms.

This paper explores modern and innovative marketing strategies for the light industry in Azerbaijan, emphasizing the role of digital marketing, customer-oriented approaches, and innovation-driven practices. The study highlights the need for transitioning from traditional marketing methods to agile and digitally oriented strategies that not only strengthen domestic sales but also support export-oriented economic growth.

### **1. The Role of Innovation and Digital Strategies in 21st Century Marketing**

In the 21st century, the intensification of market relations and the sharpening of competition have led to significant changes in the essence of marketing strategies. The transformation of innovation into one of the key global economic drivers has forced enterprises and firms to seek new approaches to enhance their competitiveness. In this context, organizational restructuring, cost optimization, the flexibilization of hierarchical structures, as well as the establishment of strategic partnerships contribute to the formation of sustainable competitive advantages in the market.

Although there is no universal and precise definition of modern marketing, its fundamental characteristic lies in the ability to adapt to rapid changes occurring in the digital environment and to the dynamic transformation of consumer demands. Under conditions of information overload and intensive advertising exposure, the effectiveness of marketing activities can only be ensured through the establishment of accurate and sustainable relationships with customers. From this perspective, modern marketing strategies are based on customer-oriented approaches, brand identity formation, value creation, and the provision of long-term customer loyalty.

At present, digital marketing has significantly surpassed traditional marketing forms. The globalization of the Internet has enabled marketing strategies to reach wider audiences with lower costs and reduced time expenditure. Online marketing strategies are characterized by high efficiency due to their flexibility, measurability, and real-time performance analysis, making them more appropriate under contemporary market conditions [2].

The development of digital technologies and social media plays a particularly important role in the market introduction of light industry products. Through an omnichannel marketing approach, it becomes possible to establish direct communication with consumers, offer personalized proposals, and optimize customer experience. The collection and analysis of data allow for a deeper understanding of consumer behavior and facilitate the adaptation of marketing strategies to these behavioral patterns.

In the light industry sector, personalized approaches and the accurate identification of customer needs constitute one of the main sources of competitive advantage in the marketing of innovative products. This approach ensures the alignment of product design, functionality, and service levels with consumer expectations, thereby increasing customer satisfaction and brand loyalty [3]. At the same time, environmental responsibility and sustainable production principles have become integral components of modern marketing strategies. The use of recyclable materials and socially responsible production models supports long-term business development [2].

Innovation functions as one of the key strategic factors in 21st century marketing. The introduction of innovative products with new and unique characteristics not only increases consumer interest but also enables the formation of differentiated value propositions [7]. In this process, artificial intelligence and data analytics play a particularly significant role. Artificial intelligence technologies enable the forecasting of market trends, the analysis of consumer behavior, and the adoption of targeted marketing decisions [7].

In the contemporary era, marketing strategies are no longer long-term and static documents; rather, they are flexible mechanisms that are continuously updated in accordance with consumer demands. Social media, mobile advertising, programmatic advertising, and hyperlocal targeting expand marketers' capabilities by enabling access to more precisely defined target audiences [7].

The development of marketing strategies for innovative products is characterized by a higher level of complexity. In particular, the formulation of pricing strategies for such products requires consideration of all stages of the product life cycle. The selection of high-price or low-price strategies is closely associated with research and development expenditures incurred from the initial stages of market entry [6].

#### **1. Key Features and Principles of Modern Marketing**

In the contemporary era, the essence of marketing activities is determined by the rapid changes in market needs and the transformation of consumer behavior. Marketing approaches of the 21st century are characterized by the following key features:

- **Adaptation to dynamic market needs**—One of the main tasks of modern marketing is to accurately identify consumer needs and develop value propositions that correspond to them. A primary reason for many companies' failures in the market is their inability to offer products or services that meet actual market demand. The variability of consumer needs requires marketers to understand their customers closely and to continuously analyze their behavior through surveys, social media monitoring, and digital analytics.

- **Establishing continuous relationships with the customer base**—Although technological advancements facilitate access to potential audiences, identifying actual customers and establishing effective communication with them remains a complex process. In modern marketing, retaining existing customers is often of greater strategic importance than acquiring new ones. Since higher customer retention directly influences business revenue, companies prioritize strategies that strengthen customer loyalty [2].

- **Proper formulation of product and service offerings**—In contemporary markets, the presentation of products and services is as important as their content. Effective marketing requires that value propositions are delivered clearly, consistently, and in accordance with customer expectations. In an environment with abundant product options and advertising messages, capturing consumer attention becomes increasingly challenging, making offer strategy one of the main issues in modern marketing.

- **Excessive focus on design elements**—While the development of digital technologies has expanded possibilities for design and visual presentation, design's primary purpose should be to reinforce the essence of the marketing message. Focusing solely on aesthetics without effectively conveying the main idea can reduce the overall effectiveness of marketing efforts.

- **Agility in responding to changes and market trends**—The rapid evolution of digital platforms, social media algorithms, and advertising mechanisms has made marketing activities more complex. The widespread use of mobile technologies and the application of artificial intelligence-based algorithms require marketers to continuously update their knowledge and adapt to innovations [5].

- **Online presence and brand image management**—Consumers in the digital environment are more informed and attentive in their decision-making processes. It is therefore essential for organizations to monitor consumer behavior and correctly guide potential customers toward purchasing decisions. The implementation of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems is considered one of the key tools in modern marketing to facilitate effective management of customer relationships [3].

#### **4. Trends and Technological Approaches in Modern Marketing**

Modern marketing activities are characterized by a highly competitive environment and an abundance of information. To stand out in a crowded market, it is essential to continuously improve marketing strategies. Many strategies that were once considered effective gradually lose their impact over time, while consumers become more informed and demanding, requiring marketers to adopt agile and innovative approaches. In this context, the customer must be at the center of any marketing strategy, as a failure to correctly understand their needs and expectations can pose a significant risk to company revenues.

Effective communication, grounded in modern marketing methodology, is one of the key conditions for success. Coordinated interaction within the marketing team and with other functional departments, particularly design and creative teams, enhances the efficiency of marketing activities [4]. At the same time, the rapidly changing market and technological environment highlights the necessity of continuous training and professional development within organizations. Investments in human capital not only increase employees' competitiveness but also contribute to the long-term development of the organization.

To adapt to changes in the business environment, companies are compelled to introduce new products and services, while directing existing offerings to different audiences. This approach creates opportunities for growth but also presents new challenges from a marketing perspective [5]. In particular, focusing marketing activities solely on desktop computers is no longer sufficient in the digital environment. Since the majority of consumers use mobile devices, mobile-oriented and adaptive design must be prioritized in marketing strategies.

With the development of marketing technologies, innovative tools such as augmented reality, virtual reality, and blockchain allow marketers to create more interactive and immersive experiences for consumers. The rise of voice search necessitates changes in keyword strategies, and diversification of marketing channels is crucial for risk reduction. The rapid spread of artificial intelligence technologies in the market provides marketers with the ability to analyze consumer behavior more accurately and design personalized campaigns [7].

One of the main trends in modern marketing is the application of virtual reality technologies. These technologies facilitate product visualization, enabling consumers to make purchasing decisions more easily. At the same time, some researchers note that the widespread adoption of virtual reality may pose certain social and behavioral risks. Reduced physical activity and detachment from the real environment are considered potential negative effects of these technologies.

The application of artificial intelligence in marketing has become an integral part of modern strategies. The experience of leading global brands shows that AI is highly effective in analyzing large volumes of data, predicting consumer behavior, and generating content tailored to target audiences. This approach not only increases customer satisfaction but also enhances the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. Reports indicate that brands using artificial intelligence are preferred more by consumers [1].

### **5. Modern Marketing with Innovative Tools and Positioning Strategies**

In the modern era, the traditional functions of market research analysts—data collection, trend identification, and supporting marketing decisions—are increasingly being performed using artificial intelligence (AI) technologies. AI plays a crucial role in developing marketing strategies and optimizing advertising placement decisions by enabling rapid analysis of large volumes of data.

One of the key applications of AI in marketing is chatbot technology. Chatbots are software programs that simulate human behavior through written and verbal communication with customers. These tools can provide uninterrupted customer service, support the sales process, send reminders, and facilitate purchasing decisions. Chatbots' ability to interact flawlessly with multiple customers simultaneously, their data collection potential, and their emotional neutrality make them more efficient compared to traditional human resources. [1]

The development of mobile technologies and the 5G network has created new opportunities for modern marketing. High speed and low latency features allow the expansion of interactive and real-time applications in digital marketing. At the same time, issues such as data security, privacy, and technological integration present additional challenges for marketers. Nevertheless, the transformative impact of 5G technology on marketing activities is undeniable.

In the 21st century, positioning strategy serves as one of the main pillars of marketing. The goal of this strategy is to ensure that a product occupies a distinct and sustainable position in the consumer's mind compared to competitors. For innovative products, positioning strategy is particularly closely linked to pricing policy. In this regard, there are two main approaches: the high-price or "skimming" strategy and the low-price or "market entry" (penetration) strategy.

The “skimming” strategy involves introducing a product at a high price during the initial market phase, primarily targeting innovation-sensitive consumers with high income levels. This approach allows the firm to achieve high early-stage profits and quickly recover investment costs. The “market entry” strategy, on the other hand, aims for rapid mass-market adoption and wide market share through a low-price policy. However, this strategy carries high financial risks and limits the possibility of raising prices later.

The dynamics of modern marketing demonstrate that it is impossible to develop competitive marketing strategies without innovation. The increasing level of consumer awareness through the Internet and digital platforms forces companies to adopt more creative and differentiating approaches [2].

One of the key areas of digital marketing is video marketing. Since 2020, video content has had a significant impact on consumer behavior and has become an effective tool for stimulating online sales. At the same time, influencer marketing holds a special place among modern marketing trends, particularly given the widespread use of social media platforms.

Messaging platforms, email marketing, and interactive web technologies are widely used to strengthen customer relationships and enhance service quality. The integration of mobile devices into daily life necessitates the prioritization of mobile-oriented marketing strategies. Delivering personalized experiences through mobile applications enables increased customer loyalty and provides a competitive advantage.

The analysis above shows that marketing strategies form the foundation of modern marketing activities. From the initial market research stage to sales and post-sales services, all processes are an integral part of the marketing strategy. Proper planning and execution of each stage facilitate the development of effective marketing strategies, which ultimately contribute to strengthening the position of enterprises in the market.

In recent years, investments targeted at small and medium-sized enterprises in Azerbaijan have created an important basis for the development of this sector. However, the limited practical experience in marketing leads to certain challenges. In this regard, attracting foreign specialists as well as organizing seminars and conferences in marketing can significantly contribute to enhancing contemporary knowledge and skills. The application of internationally proven marketing models adapted to the local context allows for the formation of strategies that meet modern economic requirements.

Marketing activities are not only of economic nature but also have a social character, being closely linked to society and national values. Therefore, the direct implementation of foreign marketing models is not always appropriate. The characteristics of the local market, consumer preferences, interests, and behavior patterns must be thoroughly studied, and strategies should be developed considering these factors. This approach increases the effectiveness and sustainability of marketing activities.

Currently, one of the most widespread marketing strategies in Azerbaijan is advertising strategy. Advertisements broadcasted in metro stations, city centers, television, and radio channels aim to promote products and stimulate sales. High-visibility advertising tools increase consumer awareness and influence their purchasing decisions.

Marketing strategies selected for innovative products should take into account factors such as the level of product novelty, lack of market recognition, uncertainty in consumer behavior, and the intensity of competitive environment. While traditional marketing tools—such as television advertisements, participation in exhibitions, and distribution models—predominate in Azerbaijan’s light industry enterprises, the acceleration of digital transformation necessitates the adoption of new approaches in this field.

Traditional marketing strategies can be grouped according to the following directions:

- Conventional advertising and sales promotion – campaigns carried out through television and print media;

- Distribution and wholesale model – products are primarily brought to the market through commercial intermediaries;
- Promotion of the “Made in Azerbaijan” brand – strengthening consumer patriotism by emphasizing national production [9].

At the same time, in line with the requirements of the 21st century, it is important to implement modern marketing strategies in Azerbaijan whose effectiveness has been proven in international practice. These strategies include:

- Digital marketing approaches – ensuring access to target markets through social media platforms, e-commerce channels, and digital advertising tools. Research indicates that the return on investment in digital marketing channels is higher compared to traditional means [9];
- Differentiation and unique brand positioning – distinguishing products by leveraging national motifs and quality indicators, particularly applying traditional designs from carpet weaving, silk production, and cotton processing;
- Export-oriented marketing strategies – developing advertising, packaging, and logo policies adapted to international markets, as well as active participation in international exhibitions [8];
- Personalized marketing and CRM systems – preparing individual offers and enhancing customer loyalty based on the analysis of customer data [8];
- Experience-based marketing – strengthening emotional connections with consumers through showrooms, virtual presentations, and interactive sales environments;
- Innovation-driven approaches – gaining competitive advantage through the use of antibacterial fabrics, technological textile products, and sustainable production principles [8].

In conclusion, the transition to innovative and digitally-oriented marketing strategies for Azerbaijan’s light industry enterprises should be regarded as a strategic necessity. These strategies serve not only to increase sales in the domestic market but also to promote export-oriented activities and ensure sustainable economic development.

**Conclusion.** In the modern era, marketing activities are characterized by globalization, a rapidly changing market environment, intensified information flows, and technological advancement. In Azerbaijan, 21st-century marketing approaches are marked by a shift from traditional sales-oriented models to customer-centric, digital technology-based, and innovation-driven strategies. In the light industry sector in particular, fluctuating market demand, dependence on imports, and intensifying competition compel enterprises to adopt new marketing tools.

Although the integration of artificial intelligence, big data, and digital platforms into marketing activities in Azerbaijan is still in its formative stage, the application of these technologies offers significant potential for light industry enterprises. AI-based analytical tools make it possible to analyze consumer behavior, forecast sales, and optimize product assortments. At the same time, chatbot technologies enable local apparel and textile brands to establish real-time communication with customers, improve the quality of after-sales services, and gain a competitive advantage in the online retail environment. The adoption of 5G technology not only enhances the effectiveness of digital marketing campaigns but also expands the technical capabilities of online sales platforms.

The proper selection of positioning strategies in launching innovative products is of particular importance for Azerbaijan’s light industry enterprises. A high-price (skimming) strategy can be applied in the initial introduction of clothing products made from eco-friendly materials and differentiated by design. Conversely, a low-price (penetration) strategy is more appropriate for mass-market products intended to expand local production and strengthen competition with imported goods. The phased and combined application of these strategies facilitates the consolidation of innovative products in the market.

Modern marketing communications, including video marketing, influencer marketing, mobile marketing, and messaging platforms, are becoming key tools for light industry enterprises in Azerbaijan. Showcasing the production process on social networks and presenting product stories based on national ornaments and local cultural values play an important role in building consumer

trust. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and local online sales channels are particularly effective for small and medium-sized enterprises due to their low cost and high impact.

In conclusion, the development of modern marketing strategies in Azerbaijan should not be limited to the implementation of technological tools; it must also consider the characteristics of the local market, consumer behavior, and national production potential. The adoption of innovation-driven, digital-based, and customer-centric marketing strategies in the light industry sector can significantly enhance enterprise competitiveness, strengthen the position of local brands, and contribute to the sustainable development of the non-oil sector. Without innovation and technological adaptation, the formulation of long-term and competitive marketing strategies in Azerbaijan's light industry is not feasible.

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