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SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING AS ONE OF THE PRIMARY METHOD OF MODERN MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

In the modern world, marketing communications are an integral part of information flow of each person. The concept of communication in marketing implies that information about a product, brand and company must reach the target audience through the selected channels of interaction. One of the most popular methods of interaction with a potential consumer is advertising, used to convey the full value of a product / service and its distinctive characteristics.

On the other hand, today the main channel of information for most modern people is social networks. There we can find out the most relevant information, because social networks allow us to be in touch here and now, to learn all the newest, most relevant and interesting things. According to official data, only in Belarus more than 50% of the population are active users of social networks. On a global scale, the statistics are approximately the same – 53% of people all over the planet interact with each other through social platforms. Furthermore, over the past 12 months, the number of online users has increased by 13%, it is 490 million people. Of course, the pandemic has influenced the strengthening of such trends, but even before that, more than half of the world's population communicated via the Internet.

People on social networks communicate and interact, but now not only people do it, but also companies and brands. Thus, a separate segment in marketing was formed, which is called social media marketing or SMM for short. Social media marketing - is a comprehensive work aimed at business promotion in social networks like Instagram, Facebook, Vkontakte, Telegram, etc. [2].

Now almost every self-respecting brand has not only a website, but also an account on social networks. At the same time, it does not matter in which segment this company operates and what its size is. Both small private businesses and large companies can be promoted via social platforms.

Today, 69% of marketers use social media to build brand awareness [1]. This fact means that SMM is the best option for increasing the level of brand recognition. However, such marketing only seems to be simple and understandable. In fact, this channel will be effective only if every information is clearly worked out.

The first component of success is a well-thought-out strategy. It is necessary to analyze your target audience, in order to make information about the product you are going to convey to the consumer catching and interesting for this group of people. You also need to understand what social network will be most suitable for your target audience. It is important to understand that the digital promotion strategy should fit into your integrated marketing strategy and meet the key business objectives. To achieve this, it is not enough just to understand the marketing basics, a specialist must understand the interfaces of social networks in order to see all the features and

possibilities, choose the appropriate way and form of presentation of the brand in a digital space.

During the process of forming a promotion strategy, special attention should be paid to the prospected content. Remember, it's possible to make a consumer follow your business only through quality content. Materials should be relevant and unique and published regularly. You can post not only articles, but also videos, polls and texts. The frequency of content updates depends on the scope of the company. If this is a B2B segment, 2-3 activities per week will be enough. If you work in the B2C segment and communicate directly with the consumer, then information should be posted regularly.

As for advertising on social networks, possibilities are quite wide. You can use the product endorsement method, but in a more modern interpretation: advertise your product with the help of opinion leaders – bloggers [3]. From a psychological point of view, such advertising causes less rejection than direct advertising, as users tend to believe their favorite celebrities, bloggers, and can very often follow their recommendations in the form of advertising.

Another equally effective promotion option is targeted advertising. Such advertising is materials that are shown only to those users who meet the criteria set by the advertiser. In other words, only those who might be potentially interested in seeing your ad will see it. Among the criteria for choosing consumers may be age, geographic region, education, marital status, profession and language. There are also retargeting opportunities on social networks – when ads are shown to those people who have ever been interested in your product or service.

Such advertising is usually much cheaper than advertising in classic channels: advertising on TV or in print publications. In addition, it gives businesses the opportunity to show ads only to their target audience, and this significantly increases its effectiveness. It is easy to conclude that the above features can help you scale your business and attract many new customers.

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