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## MEASURES FOR INCREASE THE EFFICIENCY OF MARKETING FUNCTIONS EXECUTING IN PHARMACY CHAINS

#### Abstract

In this article a role and place of marketing functions in activity of pharmacy chains have been installed, the list of basic marketing tasks and functions has been formed. The estimation of importance and degree of solving marketing functions of pharmacies and pharmacy chains has been conducted. The labour time of pharmacist on marketing activities has been investigated, the total balance of expenses of time on marketing activities has been compiled. The recommendations about increase the efficiency of marketing functions executing in pharmacy chains and rational organization of work of pharmacists who decides marketing tasks have been worked out.

**Keywords:** marketing functions, pharmacy chains, the effectiveness of marketing activities.

#### I. Introduction

Retail segment of the pharmaceutical market of Ukraine is one of the leading sectors of the domestic economy. Recently, according to world globalization trends, the pharmacy chain business expended [1,8]. Tendency of pharmacy companies to gain leadership in the competitive environment requires the necessity of organization and conducting in pharmacies reasonable marketing arrangements. In particular, the quality, completeness and timeliness of marketing functions executing depends the effectiveness of marketing activities of each pharmacy and the pharmacy chain as a whole.

Indefeasible fact is that today marketing covers all activities of pharmacy, harmoniously combining the process of income obtaining with the provision of high quality pharmaceutical care to the population. On such conditions is important question about of professional pharmacy staff associated with the solution of marketing functions, and develop scientifically ground ways of enhance the marketing activities of pharmacies and their chains.

In the pharmaceutical scientific literature the questions about the importance of marketing concept in the management of pharmaceutical enterprises have been

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sufficiently widely covered, the characteristics of pharmacies' marketing activities on marketing mix elements have been analyzed [3,9,10]. However, generalized research of structure, level of marketing functions executing in pharmacy chains and provision by specialists for decision of marketing tasks are practically absent.

#### II. Formulation of the problem

The aim of this work is to determine the structure, importance and effectiveness of complex marketing functions pharmacy chains in the process of solving social and economic problems, and also research of labour time of pharmacist on marketing activities.

#### III. Results

For realization of effective marketing policy in pharmacy chains an important value has a process of determination the complex of basic marketing tasks that need to properly execution. In practical activity of pharmacy chains marketing tasks can be realized through implementation of general marketing functions (F1 - analytical, F2 - marketing production, F3 - marketing communicative and F4 - function of management and control), which provide integrated marketing activity of pharmacy chains [4]. We proposed the following definitions: «Marketing functions of pharmacy chains» - is separate spheres of the specialized activity undertaken in the process of solving problems of organization and implementation of company marketing; «marketing tasks» - are coordinated and systematic series of activities which aimed to comprehensive implementation of marketing functions.

It should be noted, that the marketing functions of pharmacy chains are closely related to the overall objectives of pharmacy as a health institution. Proper execution of marketing functions contributes to the achievement functional purposes of pharmacy in the process of implementing its mission providing of pharmaceutical products to the population, hospitals and other institutions, organization of pharmaceutical care, health and educational work among the population and informational assistance to doctors [4]. Schematic image relationship of marketing component with the main fields of pharmacy's activities is shown in Fig. 1.

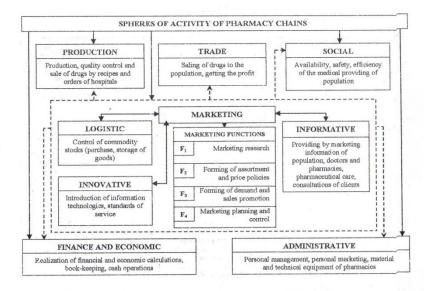


Fig. 1. The place and role of marketing functions in activity of pharmacy chain

Based on general functions of marketing and taking into account the features of marketing activity of pharmacies, we have been developed the structure of marketing functions of pharmacy chains, which is presented in Fig. 2. Recommend to use this structure as a model for studying of marketing functions of pharmacy chains by comparing theoretical list of tasks with activities that actually pharmacists perform [5].

Consider the actuality of this question, to assess the effectiveness of executing marketing functions in pharmacies were questionnaire of \$\alpha 400\$ pharmacies' heads various types and forms of ownership. Managers ranked by the 10-point scale importance the basic marketing functions and assess the deggree of their performance in every pharmacy and chain [6]. The survey restults presented in Table 1, show dependence of marketing functions executing deggree from their importance.

#### **MARKETING FUNCTIONS** F1 - ANALYTICAL F<sub>3</sub> - MARKETING COM-F4- FUNCTION OF MA-FUNCTION MUNICATIVE FUNCTION NAGEMENT AND CONTROL F<sub>31</sub>-Communicative policy: F11-Marketing research: F41-Marketing management activity of pharmacy: F311 - The choice of effective F111 - The study of market, its means of forming demand and F411 - Organization of strategic structure, trends and operational planning sales promotion F112 - Analysis of competitors' F<sub>412</sub> - Development of marketing F312 - Development of advertising activity and PR-campaigns programs F113 - Analysis of the client Providing of all F313 - Development of programs environment, subdivisions by marketing for the formation of customer segmentation information lovalty F114 - Research of demand on Development and F314 - Collaboration with medical drugs management by client database Study of consumers F<sub>115</sub> staff F415 - Creation of CRM-systems needs F315 Informational and F416 - Management of the F116 - Analysis of chain promotional work with the marketing risks assortment policy F42 - Marketing Control: doctors F<sub>117</sub> - Analysis of price policy F316 - Develop a system of F41 - Control of marketing F118 - Analysis of suppliers discounts functions in the chain price-lists F422 - Control of implementation F119 - Analysis of marketing F<sub>317</sub> - Merchandising of marketing tasks in pharmacy F318 - Educational activities, risks F423 - Evaluation of purposes F129 - The study of the seminars, trainings, presentations planned on the actual results prospects of development, ways F319 - The introduction of F424 - Conducting a SWOTto increase profitability additional types of service analysis Faze - Creation and support of image of pharmacy chain F2-MARKETING PRODUCTION FUNCTION F21-Assortment policy: F22- Price policy: F<sub>23</sub>-Distribution policy: - Choice of pricing F211 - Planning and forecasting of rational assortment strategies F231 - Planning of the effective F212 - Choice of suppliers, control of F222 - Analysis of factors infludistribution system commodity stocks encing the price level F232 - Forecasting of products F213 - Analysis of commodity stocks F223 - Calculation of margins sales volumes in pharmacy on products, setting reasonable F233 - Realization of drugs to F214 - Forming of orders on medicines prices the population, hospitals F215 - Order of pharmaceutical F224 - Registration of price tags F234 Realization on products consultative and informative F216 - A reception and registration of F225 1 Realization work products before realization revaluation F235 - A redistribution of F217 - Placement of product in storage F<sub>226</sub> - A correction of prices commodities intrachain depending on F236 - Search and attraction of F218 - Analysis of realization and fluctuation new customers turnover of drugs F227 - Control over the prices in F237 - Logistic approaches F219 - Broadening of the assortment a pharmacy introduction by parapharmaceuticals F228 - Control over the prices in

Fig. 2. The structure of marketing functions of pharmacy chains

a pharmacy chain

F220 - Conducting of ABC-analysis

Table 1. The results of efficiency estimation of marketing functions executing in

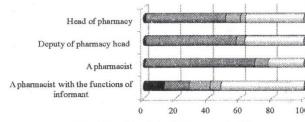
Marketing functions	Importance, points	Degree of executing, %		
		low	middle	high
$\mathbf{F_1}$	8,44	15	10	75
F <sub>2</sub>	8,21	7	8	85
F <sub>3</sub>	6,51	19	14	67
F <sub>4</sub>	6,76	39	16	45

Thus, according to the respondents' estimation, the most important is the production (F2) and analytic (F1) function, indexes of their executing were 85.0% and 75.0% respectively. Found, that 55.0% management and control tasks (F4) and 33.0% communicative policy tasks (F3), mostly implemented on low and middle levels in the studied chains. It should be emphasized that taking into account importance all components of the marketing mix and effectiveness criteria of marketing activity 90-100% functions should be implemented at a high level.

Among the main reasons of marketing functions which not decide in pharmacy chains almost 85.0% managers of these structures noticed the lack of marketers, lack finance and insufficient attention to the importance of these tasks and lack of

experience applying marketing concepts in management.

At the next phase of research was interesting to analyze the level of providing of pharmacy chains by specialists which decide marketing tasks. By method of photos of the working day, was investigated the expenses of pharmacists' working hours and was determined the contribution of each specialist in the process of solving marketing functions (Fig. 3). As a result, received average indicators of working hours on marketing activities for pharmacy head, his deputy, pharmacists and pharmacist with the functions of the informant, that make up 64.0%, 63.0%, 78.0% and 48,0%, respectively. It is worth to note that pharmacists spend significant percentage of working time on marketing activities, but a significant number of tasks are not performed at the proper level. For example, such important tasks as analysis of the costs on marketing activities and evaluation of the effectiveness of marketing activities, management of marketing risk, marketing planning, control of marketing programs' realization, development of advertising and PR-campaigns in the most cases don't resolve in the studied pharmacy chains [5].



■F1 ■F2 ■F3 ■F4 ■ Other types of activity

Fig. 3. The structure working hours of pharmacists

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A significant percentage of working time associated with the work implementation that does not correspond typical duties of pharmacists. This is a causes a lack of time to solve many marketing functions. In particular, in some pharmacies the head of pharmacy spend more than 30.0% of working time to sale of goods to the population, reception of goods, also they engage in merchandising. Pharmacists spend extremely high rates of working time on marketing (78.0%) in comparison with pharmacy heads, because they perform their daily activities, connected with sales of pharmaceutical goods that belongs to the production function (Fig. 2).

Most of the marketing functions for efficient performance in pharmacy require knowledge and skills of qualified marketers who today are in demand among employers as the pharmaceutical industry and other areas of economy. Thus, the introduction of marketer position into the pharmacy chains is very promising direction of increasing the effectiveness of their marketing activities.

The modern list of marketing functions for pharmacy chains, which require a more effective solution, greatly expanding the range of classic specialties in the field of pharmacy. In order to study the needs of pharmaceutical companies on specialistsmarketers were surveyed of pharmacy chains managers. The survey results presented in Fig. 4, indicate that the retail pharmacy chain is ready to accept the position of marketer in the pharmacy staff to increase the level and completeness of implementation of marketing functions.

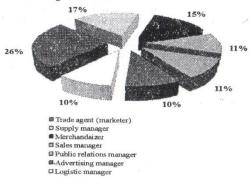


Fig. 4. The list of positions necessary in pharmacy chain

Thus, managers of pharmacies noticed a number of positions in which exists a real need for pharmacy chains: for example, marketer, sales manager, advertising manager, public relations manager, merchandaizer. The position of marketer got the highest percent (26.0%). The introduction of marketer position in staff of pharmacies the efficiency of decision of the most marketing tasks and the quality of pharmaceutical care to the population will increase. Pharmacists in this case are be

able to devote more time and attention to providing quality advice to clients in accordance to basic provisions of pharmaceutical care and modern service standards.

It should be noted that in conditions of commercialization of pharmaceutical business, increased competition and the simultaneous introduction of Good pharmacy practice (GPP) pharmacy chains should focus not only on profit but on the performance of social functions important for the population. Maximum solving of marketing functions provides to achieve high economic performance of the pharmacy chains, and promotes to realization the social component of their activity (Fig. 5) [7].

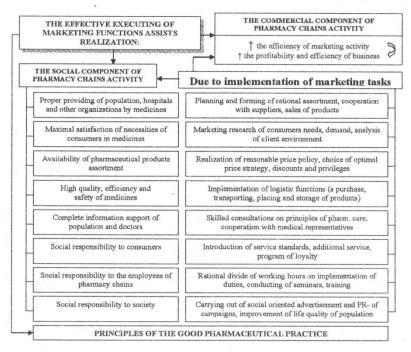


Fig. 5. A value of efficiency of marketing functions executing in activity of pharmacy chains

So undeniable is the fact that the work of qualified marketers has recently become necessary to ensure the effectiveness of marketing activities of pharmacy chains and perform tasks of social responsibility to consumers of drugs and society in general. In conditions of instability of the Ukrainian economy precarious financial situation of

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many domestic pharmacies prevents the imposition of position of marketer. At the same time the marketing activities on the appropriate level with a maximum full implementation of a range of marketing functions economically ground and even recoupment of marketing expenses. The financial potential of a pharmacy chains, compared to independent pharmacies, from an economic point of view justifies the feasibility of introduction the position of marketer in staff of pharmacy.

Given the above, guidelines to improve the system of solving of marketing functions in pharmacy chains, which provide for the following measures, we have proposed:

- the assess of the effectiveness of pharmacists' marketing activity should be based on indexes solving marketing tasks and awareness of the pharmacies' heads the importance their quality performance;
- determination the structure of marketing functions complex, its content filling;
- allocation of marketing functions between top-management and structural subdivisions, fixing them in corresponding duties instructions;
- determination of functional connections between employees, that decide marketing functions;
- providing of coordination marketing and other functional spheres of pharmacy chains activity;
- estimation of degree marketing functions implementation, analysis expenses structure of working hours of pharmacies on marketing activities;
- study of marketing tasks and functions that have to be solve;
- identification of possible reserves of working hours and monitoring of irrational and inefficient expenses of time;
- introduction of marketer position in staff of pharmacy or pharmacy chain, the optimal allocation of costs of working time by pharmacists;
- control of efficiency of marketing functions and tasks implementation on the level of all structural subdivisions of pharmacy chain.

#### IV. Conclusions

- 1. A role and place of marketing functions in activity of pharmacy chains have been allocated.
- A list of basic marketing tasks as marketing functions of pharmacy chains has been formed.
- The estimation of importance and degree of solving marketing functions of pharmacies and pharmacy chains has been conducted.
- 4. The expenses of working time of pharmacy's specialists on marketing activities have been investigated, the total balance of expenses of time on marketing activities for head of pharmacy, his deputy, pharmacist and pharmacist with the functions of the informant has been compiled.
- 5. The importance of efficiency solving marketing functions of pharmacy chains in the system of social, commercial component of their activities and principles of Good pharmacy practice has been substantiated.

6. The recommendations on the increase of efficiency of implementation of marketing functions in pharmacy chain and rational organization of work of pharmacists who decides marketing tasks have been worked out.

7. The expediency of the introduction of marketer in staff of pharmacy chain has been substantiated.

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