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Solutions for increasing brand awareness in the bread and pastry market

Sposoby zwiększenia świadomości marki na rynku pieczywa i wyrobów cukierniczych

Abstract

Research purpose. The current business environment is characterized by extreme competitiveness and consumer bargaining power due to the amount of information available, which makes it increasingly difficult for brands to stand out from the competition and attract new clients. Despite great efforts to create a unique value proposition to respond to changing consumption habits and preferences, a brand will not achieve its goals without the basic and primary value stage which is the creation of awareness. Well-known brands gain advantage over the unknown ones because they seem more trustworthy to the consumer and are therefore more commonly purchased (Shabbir et al., 2017). Increasing awareness allows to convey to the consumer valuable brand-related information, which is consciously combined with certain image-shaping associations. Brand awareness becomes even more important in the market that is filled by many brands with a similar value proposition. The market of such everyday consumer goods, as bread and pastry products, is one of these. The purpose of this article is to identify solutions allowing to increase the brand awareness of bread and pastry products.

Design/Methodology/Approach. Analysis of statistical databases and online sampling were chosen as research methods. A questionnaire for sampling was developed applying validated scales of brand awareness, consumer habits, and positioning of the brand in the market.

Streszczenie

Cel badania. Współcześnie przedsiębiorstwa funkcjonują w warunkach ekstremalnej konkurencji oraz dużej siły przetargowej klientów. Taka sytuacja sprawia, że markom coraz trudniej jest się wyróżnić na tle innych, konkurencyjnych, a tym samym pozyskać nowych odbiorców. Stworzenie unikalnej propozycji wartości, właściwej dla danej marki, będącej odpowiedzią na wciąż zmieniające się potrzeby nabywców, nie może się odbyć bez kreowania świadomości marki. Znane marki zyskują przewagę nad tymi nieznanymi, ponieważ konsumentom wydają się być bardziej godne zaufania, co przedkłada się na częstszy zakup (Shabbir i in., 2017). Kształtowanie świadomości marki oznacza przekazanie konsumentowi ważnych z jego punktu widzenia informacji związanych z marką, powodujących pewne skojarzenia wizerunkowe. Świadomość marki staje się problemem jeszcze ważniejszym w sytuacji, gdy na danym rynku dominują marki charakteryzujące się zbliżonym systemem wartości. Takim właśnie rynkiem jest litewski rynek pieczywa i wyrobów cukierniczych. Celem artykułu jest wskazanie rozwiązań pozwalających na zwiększenie świadomości marki wśród nabywców pieczywa i wyrobów cukierniczych na tym rynku.

Metodyka. W realizacji celu posłużyła analiza statystyczną baz danych oraz doбором próby online. Opracowano kwestionariusz doboru próby, wykorzystując zwalidowane skale świadomości marki, nawyków konsumenckich oraz pozycjonowania marki na rynku.

Findings. Empirical research has revealed that such elements of the marketing complex, as the product range (i.e., the product and its attributes related to quality, health benefits and packaging), distribution of bakery products in a diversity of outlets, as well as marketing communication tools (advertising on TV, at the point-of-sale, on social networks, outdoor advertising) and sales promotion (discounts) receive the greatest attention from the consumers of bakery products. Recommendations for raising awareness include development of the brand personality by appointing a brand ambassador that is in line with the core concept and values of the brand and is attractive and close to the identity of a target consumer. It is suggested to use non-standard and outstanding boards at the point of sale, outdoor advertising in the busiest places of cities and on the main roads. It is also proposed to use paid advertising on social networks, combining it with content marketing and placing not only brand-related entries, but also general, consumer-relevant information about the bread and pastry market. Sales promotion activities should be in line with marketing communication tools. These recommendations would contribute to raising the awareness of brands in the bread and pastry market, as the study revealed that consumers have little knowledge of brands in this market and do not attribute them to their respective manufacturers, which influences their purchasing decision.

Originality/Value/Practical implications. Analysis of statistical data and consumer opinion surveys allows to make assumptions about the bread and pastry market brand awareness management in Lithuania. These insights can be useful for companies engaged in producing and selling food products in the Lithuanian market.

Keywords

brand awareness, brand image, elements of brand identity, marketing communication

Wyniki. Badania empiryczne wykazały, że elementy kompozycji marketingowej, takie jak: asortyment produktów (tj. produkt i jego cechy związane z jakością, walorami zdrowotnymi i opakowaniem), dystrybucja produktów piekarniczych uwzględniająca zróżnicowane punkty sprzedaży oraz narzędzia komunikacji marketingowej w postaci reklamy telewizyjnej, reklamy w punktach sprzedaży, reklamy w sieciach społecznościowych oraz reklamy zewnętrznej i promocja sprzedaży, cieszą się największym zainteresowaniem nabywców pieczywa. Rekomenduje się podjęcie działań z obszaru podnoszenia świadomości marki, zorientowanych na rozwój osobowości marki, oparty o ambasadora marki, wyrażającego koncepcję oraz wartość marki. Sugeruje się także zastosowanie niestandardowych i wyróżniających się tablic w miejscu sprzedaży oraz reklamy zewnętrznej. Zaleca się również wykorzystanie płatnej reklamy w sieciach społecznościowych, połączonej z content marketingiem. Mając na uwadze wyniki przeprowadzonych badań, wskazane rekomendacje przyczyniłyby się do podniesienia świadomości marek na rynku pieczywa i wyrobów cukierniczych na rynku litewskim. Okazuje się, że konsumenci mają niewielką wiedzę na ich temat, nie identyfikują producentów, co znacznie determinuje ich decyzje zakupowe.

Oryginalność/Wartość/Praktyczne implikacje. Analiza danych statystycznych i badań opinii konsumentów pozwala na sformułowanie wstępnych założeń dotyczących zarządzania świadomością marki na rynku pieczywa i wyrobów cukierniczych w Litwie. Te spostrzeżenia mogą być przydatne w implementowaniu działań z obszaru kształtowania świadomości marki przez przedsiębiorstwa zajmujące się produkcją i sprzedażą produktów piekarniczych i cukierniczych na rynku litewskim.

Słowa kluczowe

świadomość marki, wizerunek marki, elementy tożsamości marki, komunikacja marketingowa

JEL: M11, M31

Introduction

Relevance. In today's business environment characterised by intense competition and high information flow, it is a significant challenge for any brand to stand out from others and be noticed by existing and potential consumers. Companies are making great efforts to create a unique identity for their brands by using value-added attributes that are often intangible. However, an essential starting point in the process of brand identity formation is brand awareness, which corresponds to one of the components of value and influences the decision to buy and the formation of loyalty (Shabbir et al., 2017). This means that consumer purchasing behaviour is perceived only when assessing brands at a certain level of awareness;

therefore, significant efforts should first of all be focused on decisions to create or increase brand awareness (Išoraitė, 2015). A study conducted in 2020 showed that the higher the level of brand awareness, the greater the trust and loyalty to the brand and the company that manages it (Bernarto et al., 2020). Brand awareness also conveys valuable information about a product or service to the consumer and creates certain associations in his or her mind as well as shapes its image. In order to establish itself in the mind of the consumer, it is important to use constant marketing communication and ensure the highest possible visibility of the brand. This is particularly important in the market with a large number of brands offering a similar value proposition to consumers. One of such markets is the market for bread and pastry

products. Therefore, the **problem** of this article can be formulated in the form of the question: *what solutions would increase the awareness of brands in the market of bread and pastry products?*

The **object** of research is solutions for increasing brand awareness.

The **aim** of the article is to identify solutions enabling the increase of brand awareness of the bread and pastry products.

Objectives:

1. Provide theoretical reasoning for brand awareness solutions.
2. To evaluate the possibilities for increasing the awareness of the Lithuanian market brands of bread and pastry products.

Research methods: a comparative analysis of scientific literature, quantitative research (a questionnaire-based survey).

Brand awareness and its links to brand image

Although the brand is seen as one of the most important and strongest elements in a competitive environment, it will not deliver the expected results if it does not provide additional benefits to the consumer, who pays increasing attention not to the functional or technical characteristics of the goods but to the attributes of their intangible value (McMurrian & Matulich, 2016). In other words, the consumer buys not a physical product, but an added value — emotion, experience, image, etc.

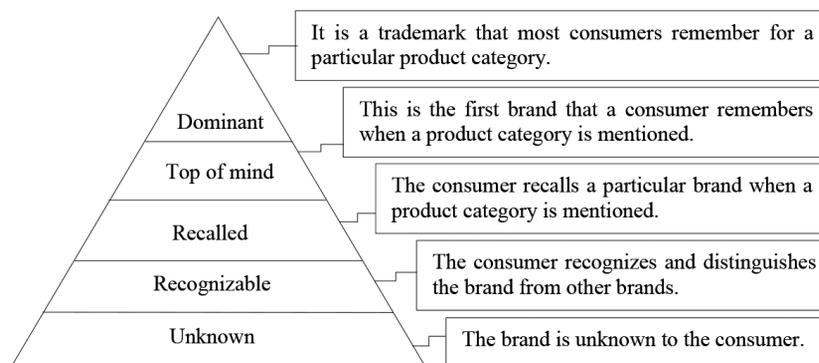
According to Keller (2020), brand value is based on knowledge of a particular brand. This knowledge is shaped by two main sources of brand value: a high level of awareness that is considered to be the starting point in the further process of creating value for the consumer, and the image formed by positive associations.

Brand awareness is one of the five of Aaker's (1992) value dimensions (brand awareness, associations, loyalty, perceived quality, and other brand assets — patents, copyrights, etc.), perceived as the ability of a consumer not only to recognize a brand among other brands but also to remember it when thinking about a particular category of goods. Therefore, it can be stated that awareness consists of two components — recognisability (depth of awareness) and memorability (breadth of awareness) (Keller & Brexendorf, 2019).

It should be emphasized that the company managing the brand needs to know the level of awareness of that particular brand, as further strategic and tactical steps and appropriate marketing communication tools for achieving the highest level of awareness depend on it. The 5-level brand awareness pyramid (unknown, recognizable, recalled, at the top of mind or dominant to the consumer) developed by Aaker (2011) can be used for this purpose (see Figure 1).

This figure shows that the lowest level of awareness is when the consumer simply does not know the brand, which means he or she has not even heard about it. In this case, the enhancement of value-added attributes does not make sense, as the consumer will simply not be aware of them. At this level of awareness, the goal should be to build initial awareness through carefully selected marketing communication tools. The concept of minimum recognition means the ability to recognize brands by their logos, symbols, names, slogans or other allusions. The fact that the consumer remembers the brand when the category of goods which it represents is mentioned shows, that the brand has already occupied a certain place in the consumer's memory. A brand that is named the first in a product category is called "at the top of mind", and, if most or even all of the consumers surveyed first of all name the same brand in a given category, it is considered to be "dominant" and has

Figure 1. Levels of brand awareness (Aaker, 2011)



the strongest position in the consumers' mind. Thus, it can be argued that the level of brand awareness determines at which stage of the brand recognition the consumer is, his or her relationship with the brand and how well the symbolic meaning and social position of the brand is recognized by a consumer (Çizmeçi & Ercan, 2015).

The image of a brand defines the consumer's feelings and general perception of the brand and describes his or her behaviour towards the brand (Zhang, 2015). The image of a brand is created by associations that directly or indirectly link the consumer to the brand. It is important to note that before a brand image can be created, it must have reached a sufficient level of awareness.

Brand associations that increase their value must not only be strong, but also positive, favourable, exclusive and unique compared to competing brands (Keller, 2020):

- Strong associations arise when the consumer links information about a particular product to which he or she assigns certain labels with the knowledge possessed about it. In order for the information obtained to be associated with a brand, the following two criteria are usually required: relevance at a given point of time and consistency of decisions.
- Favourable associations arise when the image of a brand is created through a variety of different allusions, not all of which will be of equal importance to the consumer. Those that the consumer considers to be of the greatest importance fall within the concept of favourable associations.
- Unique associations are those which distinguish a brand from competing brands and thus grant it a competitive advantage.

It should be noted that awareness, as one of the main attributes of brand value creation, plays the most significant role.

Solutions for increasing brand awareness

The created value of a brand that is effectively communicated to the consumer occupies an important place in his or her mind and increases the commitment to the brand. This value is created both with the help of the marketing complex and brand identity solutions formed by the company.

A brand identity is an image created by a company to define the personality of a brand that is intended to be embedded in the consumers' minds through the associations it creates (Farhana, 2012). Identity is also the first step in creating value for the consumer, leading to a harmonious brand-consumer relationship (Keller, 2020). The

sender (the company managing the brand) can communicate the brand identity to the recipient (consumer) through external and internal marketing communication tools.

Such elements of brand identification as *name, symbol, logo, character, packaging, slogan and melody* play an important role in raising brand awareness. The combination of these elements integrates into an identity-building system that enables consumers to recognize a brand (Nguyen & Carvalho, 2016).

Name. A brand name is one of the most important sources of identity that can not only help but also severely damage the overall identity. When consumers hear the brand name, certain images and associations creating a preconceived notion comes to mind that, if negative, can be extremely difficult to be changed. A name can motivate and interest or repel a consumer, so it is important that it is seen as a long-term commitment (Farhana, 2012). A brand name, like other identification elements, must be easy to remember, meaningful, attractive, transferable, adaptable to other elements, and distinctive, i.e., protected in the mind of the consumer (Keller, 2020).

Symbol and logo. A brand symbol is a means of identifying a product/service that does not contain textual information. In some cases, a well-chosen symbol can contribute to increasing awareness more successfully than a name, as visual presentation is more attractive in the flow of information (Farhana, 2012). A symbol is closely related to a logo which is defined as a graphic element of a brand that may depict letters, symbols, or a combination of colours (Āereška, 2021). This is one of the most valuable attributes of the company's intangible assets that corresponds to intellectual property. The logo performs two functions: identification and differentiation (Farhana, 2012). When a certain level of awareness is reached, consumers recognize the brand by seeing only the logo or even only a part of it.

Character. It is a visual symbol of a brand that is given a personality with its own character and history. Characters can be animated and supported by live personas, making it easier for the consumer to identify with the brand actor (Keller, 2020).

Packaging. It is a certain item intended for packaging, protection from external factors, transportation and presentation of the product to the end-user (The Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania, 2022). However, the packaging performs not only a protective function. At the point of sale, packaging plays a significant role as it is considered to be the first contact of the consumer with the brand (Ambrose & Harris, 2017). For this reason, it is crucial for the packaging to catch the consumer's attention and stand out from the competition.

Slogan. It is a short phrase that communicates descriptive and convincing information about a brand (Keller, 2020). The slogan is closely related to the brand name and is used together with it, so it can be considered an extension of the brand (Haque et al., 2018). The main point of the slogan is to convey concise information highlighting the most important aspects of positioning related to the brand.

Melody. Another means of raising brand awareness is the musical message of the brand, which often repeats its name (Keller, 2020). Usually, it is attempted to use a cheerful, positive melody.

The communication of all the above-mentioned brand identification elements to existing or potential consumers seeking to inform, persuade and remind them about the trademark is enabled through marketing communication means (Keller, 2020). The communication process consists of transmitting the purposeful source converted into a message to the recipient through a selected channel and achieving a certain communication result. This result provides feedback to the initial source of communication. In order to create or increase brand awareness, other elements of the marketing complex (product, price, and distribution) also have to communicate about the brand. Therefore, in a broad sense, it can be stated that the integration of all elements of the marketing complex into the overall communication process is classified as integrated marketing communications (IMC).

Attracting and retaining the consumer's attention in today's background of communication noise becomes a particularly difficult task, so the possibility that brand **advertising** will go unnoticed cannot be rejected. Consequently, advertising must be precisely targeted to the brand audience, creative, non-standard, reveal its position, motivate the consumer and be memorable (Keller, 2020). Non-traditional means of advertising (public, demonstrative, and special, at the point of sale) increasingly gain more importance. The activities of influencers through reaching the audience on social networks are also rapidly earning popularity. The audience for these communication disseminators must match the target consumer of the brand (Hackley & Hackley, 2021). **Sales promotion** always goes hand in hand with advertising (Keller, 2020). Contests, coupons, discounts and sales attract the attention of consumers. Despite the fact that frequent sales promotions have a negative impact on image and loyalty, they are quite effective in awareness building. Personal selling is a two-way personal communication process between a seller and a buyer seeking to influence the buyer's purchasing decision (Suharyono & Pahlmalidie, 2021). This marketing communication tool is concerned more

with building associations and loyalty. Another element of communication, **direct marketing**, requires an extensive database of existing and potential users, which is complicated because the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) requiring from the companies to ensure that personal data is not used without the consumer's consent and that all advertising traffic, according to user preferences, can be terminated at any time (WebSol, 2016). In the case of having a valuable database of active consumers, direct marketing can be exploited to increase brand awareness. In order to establish relationships with stakeholders and the public, public relations activities, where ethical strategies are developed and managed through public communication, are applicable (Johnston & Sheehan, 2020). Public relations activities include crisis management, image formation, networking, event sponsorship, writing articles, making conference presentations, participation in social activities, support, lobbying and so on (Todorova, 2015).

Today's society is increasingly seeing messages being communicated in the digital space, which facilitates not only reaching the consumer, but also helps him or her in decision making, comparing competing brands, receiving, and providing feedback. (Atmadi, 2021). Therefore, in order to adapt to these socio-cultural behavioural changes, companies pay a lot of attention to other ways of attracting consumers, increasing brand awareness, and building brand loyalty. The website, blog, email, existing social networks, search and video advertising is other forms that enable to reach the user (Chaffey & Chadwick, 2019).

The research revealing the intensity of mobile device usage by consumers enables the use of short text messages (SMS), multimedia messaging (MMS) and mobile gadget advertising that allows to make an immediate purchase or direct the user to the company's website.

Providing up-to-date and useful information about the brand and solutions of potential problems to the consumer is possible through content marketing tools: video content, blogs, webcasts and posts on social media. The main purpose of these measures is to arouse interest and attract attention to the brand (Keller, 2020).

Application of word-of-mouth advertising, guerrilla marketing, video game advertising, cinema advertising, experiential marketing (product samples at events), and surreptitious advertising (often used on social networks, where the presentation of, at first glance, not directed content does not disclose the true relationship of the person presenting the brand with the brand itself) can maximize the visibility of a brand and thus contribute to increasing its awareness (Clow & Baack, 2018).

Thus, it can be stated that brand awareness is one of the most important and fundamental stages in creating the value of a brand. Brand identity and its identification elements such as name, symbol, logo, slogan, melody, packaging and character, as well as all four elements of the marketing complex, the synchronous and consistent operation of which enables integrated marketing communications, can be used to increase brand awareness. It is important to emphasize that all actions aimed at raising brand awareness in order to reach the widest possible audience have to be interlinked by conveying a message with the same meaning.

Empirical study of the possibilities for increasing the brand awareness of bread and pastry products

Research methodology. In order to increase the awareness of brands operating in the Lithuanian bread and pastry market, first of all, it is important to clarify what associations the trademarks evoke in the respondents and whether they coincide with those which they seek to create and establish in the consumer's consciousness; in other words, it is important to find out whether the identity of the brands being created corresponds to their image. Seeking to identify opportunities for increasing consumer awareness of the brands in the bread and pastry market, empirical research has been applied.

Empirical research is based on the theoretical insights that are mentioned above and the stages of the marketing research process.

The aim of the research is to evaluate the possibilities for increasing brand awareness of bread and pastry products in the Lithuanian market. Three objectives have been identified to achieve this aim:

1. To identify the level of awareness of the Lithuanian bread and pastry market brands.
2. To find out what identity-creating elements can contribute to brand awareness.
3. To evaluate marketing communication tools that could increase awareness of the brands in the bread, and pastry market.

Determination of the research design. The type of descriptive single study was chosen for the empirical research (Nargundkar & Rajendra, 2020). During this study, information reflecting the current situation on the brand awareness of the Lithuanian bread and pastry market was collected and opportunities for increasing the awareness of the brands in this market were identified. Another reason for choosing descriptive research was the possibility to transform findings of it to all target populations (Shukla, 2014).

Research method and instrument. Given the design of the study and the impact of statistically significant information and final actions, a *quantitative study* was chosen as the research method. The research tool is an indirect survey questionnaire consisting of 18 questions designed to accomplish the research objectives.

Sample selection and size. In order to ensure that only those who meet the characteristics of the survey are included in the sample and that the final results of the survey are as accurate as possible, it is important to carry out a selection procedure that can be divided into 3 parts.

The study population. Despite the fact that the target audience for brands in the bread and pastry market according to company data are women in the age group 24-40, all people of working age (15-64 years) living in Lithuania are considered to be the elements of the studied population. This decision is based on the fact that individuals outside the target audience may be included in the survey sample, but they are also consumers of bread and pastry products. When analysing the data obtained, it will be narrowed down to the target audience and compared to the results of the wider population. The scope of the study, as mentioned earlier, is the Lithuanian market, and the time frame covers two weeks from 30 April to 14 May 2021.

Selection method. The non-probabilistic selection method chosen in this study is convenience selection, which is based on reaching the closest and most easily accessible elements of the study population (Pranulis & Dikčius, 2012).

Sample size determination. Taking into account that the target population scope is known (according to the data of Statistics Lithuania (2021), the number of persons aged 15-64 is 1,815,370), two methods were used to determine the sample size: *Paniott formula* ($n = 1 / (\Delta^2 + 1 / N)$), where n is the required number of respondents, Δ is the sampling error, N is the number of members in the population, $n = 400$) and an *online calculator* with 95% credibility and error margin of 5% (Raosoft, 2022); $n = 385$).

For the survey results to be representative, the average of the required sample size, based on the calculation methods mentioned above, is about 390 respondents providing for 95 percent data credibility level and 5 percent probability of permissible error.

Data compilation. The collection of data required for the research was planned by placing the survey questionnaire in the groups on Facebook and by sending a questionnaire via personal messages to the contacts corresponding to the target audience.

Data analysis. Excel and SPSS software packages are used to analyse the survey data in order to determine not only the response rates, but

also the possible links between the different variables.

Analysis of the research results. During the survey, the survey questionnaire was filled in by 225 respondents, of which 220 questionnaires were suitable for analysis; therefore, this number corresponds to 100 percent of all respondents. The reliability level of the study results is 86 percent (Raosoft, 2022). Assessing the results according to demographic characteristics, women consist the largest share of respondents (as much as 69.5 percent), and the substantial number of them (35.9 percent) is classified as receiving lower income (up to 642 Euro). Respondents had to indicate their own age, and according to the received results, they were divided into 3 age intervals: persons under 23, 24–40-year-old and over 41 years. Such fragmentation facilitates the identification of the results for the target audience and is necessary for further analysis and the establishment of possible links. The distribution of respondents between the age groups under 23 and 24–40 years was very similar, 45.9 and 45.5 percent respectively, and 8.6 percent in the group over 41. Women aged 24–40, who are included in the target audience, make up 30 percent of the overall structure and most of them earn below-average income.

In order to determine the **level of brand awareness** in the Lithuanian bread and pastry market, the respondents were asked to name the brands that came to mind first. The questionnaire was compiled according to Babin and Zikmund's (2007) form for determining the level of awareness. Almost 35 percent of respondents mentioned the brand *Vilniaus duona*, which is considered to be the market leader, and 22 percent named the brand *Gardėsis*. Meanwhile, the brand *Lietuvos kepėjas* was mentioned by only 2.2 percent of respondents, among whom there are no women aged 24–40 belonging to the target audience; therefore, it can be stated that in general the memorability of this brand is very poor.

As shown in Figure 2, the brand *Vilniaus duona* was mentioned first most of the time, and because

of that it can be considered being at the top of mind and even the dominant one in the category of bread and pastry products. Another brand that on several occasions has been mentioned as the first is *Gardėsis*. Brands such as *Mantinga*, *Verbūnu duona* which, like the sub-brands *Jorė*, *Agota* and the like, fall into the category of "others" and are listed below. In this case, the brand *Lietuvos kepėjas* in comparison with other brands again occupies the worst position in consumer's memory.

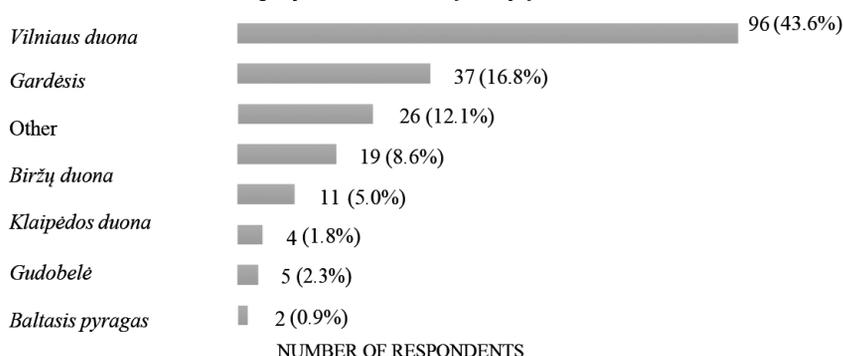
The purpose of the next question was to estimate the recognisability of the brands operating in the bread and pastry market by providing the respondents with the logos of them. The obtained results show that the most recognizable brands are *Vilniaus duona* and *Gardėsis*, as statistically the respondents recognized their logos more than they did not (see Table 1). Regarding all other brands, respondents more often did not recognize the presented trademark. The brand *Lietuvos kepėjas* was the least successful in this category; it was named by only 9.5 percent of respondents, of whom 95.5 percent of the target audience (women aged 24–40 with lower and average income) did not recognize the brand.

Taking into account that in answering the next question the largest number of respondents indicated that they most often buy the products of

Table 1. Recognition of brands by their logo

Brand	Recognized, %	Did not recognize, %
<i>Vilniaus duona</i>	52.7	47.3
<i>Gardėsis</i>	50.5	49.5
<i>Biržų duona</i>	25.5	74.5
<i>Klaipėdos duona</i>	17.3	82.7
<i>Baltasis pyragas</i>	15.5	84.5
<i>Gudobelė</i>	15.0	85.0
<i>Lietuvos kepėjas</i>	9.5	90.5

Figure 2. Percentage of the brands named as the first when mentioning the category of bread and pastry products



the brands *Vilniaus duona* and *Gardėsis*, reputation of which is rated the highest, and the products of the brand *Lietuvos kepėjas* are purchased the least, a conclusion can be drawn which conforms with Keller's (2020) statement that brand awareness is directly linked to purchase decision (see Table 2).

are little known, which shows that there are no strong and, even more, unique associations linked to them. It should also be emphasized that *Gudobelė* is positioned as intended for women, *Biržų duona* as caring and socially responsible, *Gardėsis* as unique and modern, and *Vilniaus duona* as combining tradition and modernity.

Table 2. The link between brand awareness and purchase of the products marked with it

Brand	Memorability, %	Recognition, %	The number of times chosen for 'as the most commonly purchased'
<i>Vilniaus duona</i>	34.8	52.7	156
<i>Gardėsis</i>	21.9	50.5	119
<i>Biržų duona</i>	11.2	25.5	75
<i>Klaipėdos duona</i>	7.8	17.3	56
<i>Baltasis pyragas</i>	3.9	15.5	30
<i>Gudobelė</i>	5.8	15.0	54
<i>Lietuvos kepėjas</i>	2.2	9.5	20

In order to find out the respondents' ability to recognize the slogans of the brands operating in the market of bread and pastry products, a question was asked in which they had to assign the slogan to a certain brand. Based on the obtained results, it can be stated that the slogans of the brands *Vilniaus duona* (recognized by 40.5 percent) and *Gardėsis* (recognized by 25 percent) are the best recognized, while *Biržų duona* and *Klaipėdos duona* are the least recognizable, as only 10 percent of respondents correctly assigned slogans to these brands. 12.3 percent of the respondents recognized the slogan of *Lietuvos kepėjas*, while the answer "I don't know" was chosen by as many as 36.4 percent of them. The results of the study show that the recognisability of the slogans of most brands is not high. There are no statistically significant differences when comparing the responses of different genders and target audience with all respondents; therefore, their data is not distinguished separately.

In order to identify (according to Keller, 2020) the elements that create identity, a question was formulated in which the respondents had to assign the descriptions provided to the indicated brands. These descriptions are based on the positioning of different brands. As it can be seen from Table 3, most brands are perceived by respondents as traditional or more traditional than the modern ones. This quality could be considered an exceptionally strong association. Most brands are also perceived as more family-oriented than exclusively for women. A significant part of the respondents (26.4 percent) stated that the trademarks *Baltasis pyragas* and *Lietuvos kepėjas*

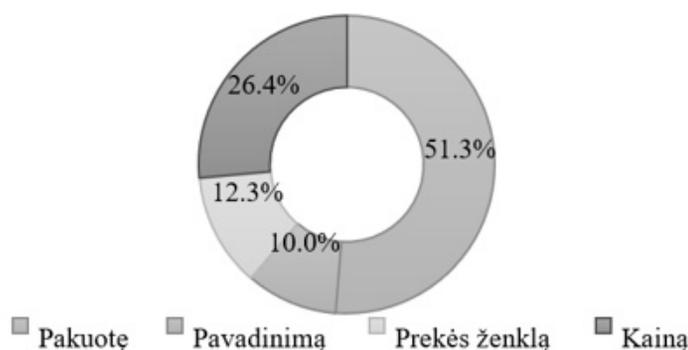
Subsequent questions were aimed at identifying marketing communication tools that could contribute to increasing the brand awareness of bread and pastry products. The survey shows that most of the responses were distributed in a neutral way; it means that they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. However, based on the data obtained, it can be stated that before buying bread and pastry products, respondents do not search for information about them online, and quality as well as health benefits are considered to be the most important selection criteria (although the results slightly exceed the neutral position). The results show that respondents do not always buy only brands that are well known to them, and that low price is not the most important selection criterion. It should be noted that the responses of the target audience slightly differ. Women between 24 and 40 with lower or middle income are more likely to search for information on bread and pastry products online and also tend to buy only products from the same brand.

The next question was presented in a more specific wording, giving the respondents 4 answer options and the opportunity to provide their own response. The purpose of this question was to obtain more accurate information about what is the first point of attention at the point of sale. The obtained data showed that more than a half of all respondents (51.3 percent) pay attention to the packaging first; meanwhile, the smallest share (10 percent) chose the name as an answer option (see Figure 3). The percentage of responses also coincides with the target audience.

Table 3. Associations caused by the brands of bread and pastry products

Characteristic	Most often associated with:	Least often associated with:
Unique	<i>Gardėsis</i>	<i>Klaipėdos duona</i>
Modern	<i>Gardėsis</i>	<i>Lietuvos kepėjas</i>
Traditional	<i>Lietuvos kepėjas</i>	<i>Gudobelė</i>
Combining tradition and modernity	<i>Vilniaus duona</i>	<i>Gudobelė</i>
Attractive	<i>Gardėsis, Vilniaus duona</i>	<i>Klaipėdos duona, Gudobelė</i>
Caring	<i>Gardėsis, Biržų duona</i>	<i>Lietuvos kepėjas, Baltasis pyragas</i>
Socially responsible	<i>Biržų duona, Gardėsis, Gudobelė</i>	<i>Lietuvos kepėjas</i>
Family oriented	<i>Vilniaus duona, Gardėsis</i>	<i>Gudobelė</i>
For women	<i>Gudobelė</i>	<i>Lietuvos kepėjas</i>
Close	<i>Vilniaus duona</i>	<i>Gudobelė, Klaipėdos duona</i>
Good for health	<i>Gardėsis, Gudobelė</i>	<i>Lietuvos kepėjas, Klaipėdos duona</i>
Unknown	<i>Lietuvos kepėjas, Baltasis pyragas</i>	<i>Vilniaus duona, Gardėsis</i>

Figure 3. Percentage of the most notable attributes at the point of sale



Based on the answers to the above questions, it can be stated that the most eye-catching element of the marketing complex is primarily related to the attributes of the product itself, in this case, the packaging, and the wide distribution network; meanwhile, quality and health benefits of products have the greatest impact on choice.

Another question was sought to identify the means of communication (according to Chaffey & Chadwick, 2019; Keller, 2020) that most attract or would attract the attention of consumers with regard to brands in the bread and pastry market. Respondents were given the opportunity to mark all appropriate answers and, if necessary, to enter their option. Regarding the most attractive means of marketing communication, the most effective ones are broadcast advertising (television), sales promotion activities (discounts, sales), point-of-sale advertising (billboards, showcases), outdoor advertising and advertising on social networks. The latter is not associated with influencer advertising,

as it is considered less attractive than the aforementioned measures, word of mouth (recommendation) advertising and outdoor advertising.

Although digital marketing communication tools are an integral part of informing today's consumer, such forms of advertising as video blogging, blogs, newsletters and e-mail advertising are not the most attractive means for consumers (ranked 15–19) in the market of bread and pastry products.

Summarizing the results of the study, it can be stated that brand awareness level of the most trademarks in the market of bread and pastry products is relatively low. This is evidenced by the low level of recall of the brands in the bread and pastry category mentioned in the study, as well as the inability to recognize their logos. Given the interdependence between brand awareness and purchase of its products, it can be argued that the lack of awareness is the main reason why products of some bread and pastry brands are bought less

frequently than those of well-known ones. Although brands in this market are generally linked with favourable things, considered traditional and trustworthy, they lack strong and unique associations. The study revealed that integrated marketing communication tools which can contribute to increasing the brand awareness of bread and pastry products include advertising on TV, at the point-of-sale and on social networks, outdoor advertising and sales promotion (discounts). Elements of the marketing complex such as product (packaging, quality, health benefits) and a wide distribution network were found to be most valued by respondents.

Conclusions

1. Theoretical analysis of brand awareness revealed that it is a key stage in brand value creation that influences purchasing decisions. Raising awareness can be addressed through the use of identity and identification elements (name, symbol, logo, character, packaging, slogan and melody) that are easy to remember, meaningful, transferable and unique. This means that the brand name and slogan have to be concise and unambiguous, and the packaging has to stand out from others in its shape, dimensions or colour. However, the product itself and its attributes, the established price and proper distribution of the product in the market will not ensure the maximum visibility of the brand without the fourth component which is marketing communication. Thus, the integration of all the mentioned elements of the marketing complex into a coherent whole creates a synergy effect and, according to the authors analysed above, increases the brand awareness.

2. The study confirmed the problem that most brands in the bread and pastry market are little known and difficult to recognize for consumers. With the exception of the brands of *Vilniaus duona* and *Gardėsis*, other competing trademarks of bread and pastry products are characterised by low level of memorability and logo recognisability. Despite the fact that most of the brands in this market evoke positive associations of similarity and experience related to Lithuania, its traditions, reliability and naturalness, consumers miss strong and unique associations. Marketing communication tools such as advertising on TV, at the point of sale and on social networks, outdoor advertising, sales promotions (discounts), and such attributes of the marketing complex elements related to the product as quality, packaging, health benefits and a wide distribution network are considered to be the most noteworthy for consumers. According to the results of the study, decisions such as identity building by emphasizing the most important features of the brand, as a personality that are related to the overall concept and in line with positioning, as well as the emphasis on identification elements used on product packaging, in the records on social networks and raising the profile of the slogan through more frequent use of it, have the greatest impact on the increase of brand awareness in the bread and pastry market. In order to ensure the highest possible visibility of brands in the bread and pastry market, it is recommended to use such marketing communication tools as advertising on TV (selecting people representing the target audience), at the point of sale, outdoor advertising and the development of content marketing on social networks.

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