

# MARKETING

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**Experience Marketing —  
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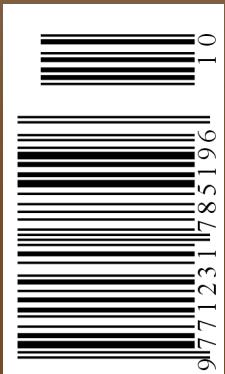
A method to measure the emotional  
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in the field of customer experience

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00-252 Warszawa, ul. Podwale 17 lok. 2  
tel. 795 189 869 e-mail: mir@pwe.com.pl  
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**Wydawca:**

Polskie Wydawnictwo Ekonomiczne S.A.  
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# Spis treści

<b>Editorial</b>	2
------------------	---

<b>Od redakcji</b>	3
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 <b>Experience Marketing — research, ideas, opinions (2)</b>	
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<b>A method to measure the emotional experience of audience by the EMOJ tool. The case study of Macerata Opera Festival</b>	4
---	---

*Maura Mengoni, Andrea Generosi, Luca Giraldi, Marco Torcianti*

<b>Modern research methods in the field of customer experience</b>	14
--	----

*Michał Ścibor-Rylski, Marta Reducha, Jędrzej Ochremiak*

<b>Experiential marketing and building brand communication strategies in social media</b>	22
---	----

*Zbigniew Spyra*

<b>Wspomnienie o Panu Profesorze Leszku Żabińskim (1947–2019)</b>	31
---	----

Archiwum artykułów i spisy treści kolejnych numerów są dostępne na stronie internetowej czasopisma:



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# Editorial

The topic of this special issue of "Journal of Marketing and Market Studies" is experiential marketing, a concept that has emerged in the marketing science in the late 90-ties. Its main assumption lies in the claim that contemporary customers are bored with traditional marketing tools and techniques and seek memorable experiences that would stimulate them in a sensory way, evoke real emotions, provoke them intellectually and allow to become members of a certain community. The experiential marketing originally focused on 'creative' industries, i.e. entertainment and tourism, but nowadays this concept spreads to more mundane industries, such as retailing and banking. It is believed that memorable customer experiences bond the customer with the brand via increased satisfaction, engagement and loyalty. In turn, companies increase their profitability, market share, as well as brand reputation and recognition. The concept of experiential marketing has been increasingly studied by Polish authors, to whom we dedicate this special issue.

This two-part special issue includes seven papers, among which there is one literature review, two methodological papers devoted to the development and validation of new techniques of measuring customer experiences, three empirical studies and a bibliometric analysis.

The first paper describes the state of research on experiential marketing in Poland (Dziewanowska & Kacprzak). The systematic literature review method was employed to collect relevant empirical studies on the topic and analyze the main research directions. It appears that customer experience is still a novelty in Polish marketing science, with most of the papers in this field being published after 2016. The majority of articles present case studies focused on the use of experiential marketing in a certain organization or industry. The need for quantitative and qualitative studies, which would not only replicate western concepts but also test new and original ones and develop methods of measuring customer experience, is clearly visible.

The second paper — by A. Dąbrowska & M. Janoś-Kresło — focuses on the importance of the customer experience in service marketing and presents the results of two quantitative studies conducted among two interesting market segments: single individuals and customers aged 60+. The article is also supplemented with a qualitative study — 18 individual interviews with service companies' employees. The Authors point to the disturbingly high number of customers with ambivalent attitude to service providers which contradicts the experiential marketing rule of delivering exceptional and unforgettable experiences.

In the following paper M. Gębarowski presents a bibliometric analysis of the papers on extreme forms of tourism such as war-zone tourism or tombstone tourism, which according to the Author represent new fields of the experience economy. As a result, the Author points to gaps in the existing body of literature that can be filled by future studies in extreme tourism.

M. Spychalska-Wojtkiewicz & M. Tomczyk in their paper merge the design thinking concept with experiential marketing. Design thinking is a new approach to innovation that puts human needs in the center of the innovation process. The results of qualitative studies on an international sample of managers prove that design thinking is a useful method of designing innovative customer experiences.

Next papers of this special issue partially fill the gap mentioned above by providing two new methods of measuring customer experience. The paper by M. Mengoni et al. presents a tool developed to measure customer emotions by analyzing their facial expressions. Prof. Mengoni with her team from EMOJ (a spin-off company of Polytechnic University of Marche, Italy) has developed the tool and tested its possibilities during an opera festival in Macerata. It opens new possibilities to improve the quality of cultural events as the customer emotions can be matched with the exact point in time during the show.

The subsequent paper by M. Ścibor-Rylski and his team from Kantar Polska research agency describes the use of two new tools that measure the customer experience — a qualitative, employing gamification ("Our city" game), and a quantitative one (CX+). The use of a board game developed online allows to reconstruct a customer journey map as well as category entry points and all circumstances that may influence the final customer experience. In turn, the CX+ instrument measures the consistency of a brand promise and delivered customer experience. The paper also provides results of validation studies for both tools.

The last paper — by Z. Spyra — is devoted to the topic of building a brand communication strategy in social media. The proposed model is called SMART and its key elements of communications comprise: synergy, methodicalness, attractiveness of the content, reactivity and transposition. The proposed model was tested in a quantitative study on a sample of 709 young consumers, which allows to rank the elements of the model from most to least important.

We hope you will find these papers interesting and inspiring!

*Guest Editors*

*dr hab. Agnieszka Kacprzak & dr hab. Katarzyna Dziewanowska*



# Od redakcji

Tematem specjalnego wydania „Marketingu i Rynku”, który oddajemy do rąk Czytelników, jest marketing doświadczeń, koncepcja, która pojawiła się w naukach marketingowych pod koniec lat 90. Jego główne założenie polega na stwierdzeniu, że współcześni klienci są znudzeni tradycyjnymi narzędziami i technikami marketingowymi i szukają niezapomnianych wrażeń, które pobudzą ich zmysły, wzbudzą prawdziwe emocje, sprowokują intelektualnie i pozwolą poczuć się członkami określonej społeczności. Marketing doświadczeń początkowo koncentrował się na branżach „kreatywnych”, tj. rozrywkowych i turystycznych, ale obecnie ta koncepcja rozprzestrzenia się również w bardziej prozaicznych sektorach gospodarki, takich jak handel detaliczny i bankowość. Uważa się, że niezapomniane wrażenia klientów łączą klienta z marką poprzez zwiększoną satysfakcję, zaangażowanie i lojalność. Z kolei firmy zwiększają swoją rentowność, udział w rynku, a także poprawiają reputację i rozpoznawalność marki. Koncepcja marketingu doświadczeń jest coraz częściej badana także przez polskich autorów.

Niniejsze wydanie specjalne na temat marketingu doświadczeń obejmuje siedem artykułów, w tym jeden przegląd literatury, dwa artykuły metodologiczne poświęcone opracowaniu i walidacji nowych technik pomiaru doświadczeń klientów, trzy badania empiryczne i analizę bibliometryczną. Artykuły zostały zaprezentowane w dwóch kolejnych numerach „Marketingu i Rynku” — nr 9 i 10.

Pierwszy artykuł opisuje stan badań nad marketingiem doświadczeń w Polsce (K. Dziewanowska i A. Kacprzak). Zastosowano w nim metodę systematycznego przeglądu literatury, aby zebrać odpowiednie badania empiryczne na ten temat i przeanalizować główne kierunki badań. W wyniku przeprowadzonej analizy można stwierdzić, że koncepcja doświadczenia klienta jest wciąż nowością w polskich badaniach nad marketingiem, a większość artykułów z tej dziedziny została opublikowana po 2016 r. Duża część z nich zawiera studia przypadków dotyczących wykorzystania marketingu doświadczeń w określonej organizacji lub branży. Widoczna jest potrzeba badań ilościowych i jakościowych, które nie tylko odtwarzają zachodnie koncepcje, ale także testowały oryginalne teorie oraz opracowały nowe metody pomiaru doświadczeń klientów.

Drugi tekst — autorstwa A. Dąbrowskiej i M. Janoś-Kresło — koncentruje się na znaczeniu doświadczenia klienta w marketingu usług i przedstawia wyniki badań ilościowych przeprowadzonych wśród dwóch interesujących segmentów rynku: singli i klientów w wieku 60+. Artykuł uzupełniono także badaniem jakościowym — 18 wywiadami indywidualnymi z pracownikami firm usługowych. Autorki wskazują na niepokojąco dużą liczbę klientów o obojętnym stosunku do usługodawców, co jest sprzeczne z podstawowym założeniem marketingu doświadczeń, jakim jest dostarczanie wyjątkowych i niezapomnianych wrażeń.

W kolejnym artykule M. Gębarowski przedstawia analizę bibliometryczną artykułów na temat ekstremalnych form turystyki, takich jak turystyka w strefach wojennych lub turystyka nagrobna, które według autora reprezentują nowe dziedziny ekonomii doświadczeń. W rezultacie autor wskazuje na luki w istniejącej literaturze, które można uzupełnić przyszłymi badaniami w dziedzinie turystyki ekstremalnej.

M. Spychalska-Wojtkiewicz i M. Tomczyk w swoim artykule łączą koncepcję design thinking (myślania projektowego) z marketingiem doświadczeń. Design thinking to nowe podejście do innowacji, które stawia ludzkie potrzeby w centrum procesu innowacji. Wyniki badań jakościowych na międzynarodowej próbce menedżerów dowodzą, że design thinking jest przydatną metodą projektowania innowacyjnych doświadczeń klientów.

Kolejne artykuły tego specjalnego wydania częściowo wypełniają wspomnianą wyżej lukę metodyczną, zapewniając dwie nowe metody pomiaru doświadczeń klienta. Artykuł M. Mengoni i in. przedstawia narzędzie opracowane do pomiaru emocji klientów poprzez analizę ich wyrazu twarzy. Prof. Mengoni ze swoim zespołem z EMOJ (spółka wydzielona z Polytechnic University w Marche, Włochy) opracowała to narzędzie i przetestowała jego możliwości podczas festiwalu operowego w miejscowości Macerata. Narzędzie to umożliwia poprawę jakości wydań kulturalnych, ponieważ pozwala dopasować emocje klientów do konkretnego momentu w czasie pokazu.

W kolejnym artykule M. Ścibor-Rylski i jego zespół z agencji badawczej Kantar Polska opisują wykorzystanie dwóch nowych narzędzi mierzących doświadczenie klienta — jakościowego, wykorzystującego gamifikację (gra „Nasze miasto”), i ilościowego (CX+). Zastosowanie internetowej gry planszowej pozwala zrekonstruować mapę podróży klienta, punkty wejścia do kategorii oraz wszystkie okoliczności, które mogą mieć wpływ na ostateczne doświadczenie klienta. Z kolei CX+ mierzy spójność obietnicy marki i satysfakcję klienta. Artykuł zawiera również wyniki badań walidacyjnych dla obu narzędzi.

Ostatni artykuł numeru specjalnego (Z. Spyra) jest poświęcony budowaniu strategii komunikacji marki w mediach społecznościowych. Proponowany model nosi nazwę SMART, a jego kluczowe elementy komunikacji obejmują: synergię, metodyczność, atrakcyjność treści, reaktywność i transpozycję. Proponowany model został przetestowany w badaniu ilościowym na próbce 709 młodych konsumentów, co pozwoliło uszeregować elementy modelu od najbardziej do najmniej ważnych.

Zyczymy ciekawej, inspirującej i miłej lektury!

*Redaktorzy numeru specjalnego  
dr hab. Agnieszka Kacprzak i dr hab. Katarzyna Dziewanowska*



### **Prof. Maura Mengoni, PhD**

Polytechnic University of Marche, Department of Industrial Engineering & Mathematical Science

ORCID: 0000-0003-2826-7455

e-mail: m.mengoni@univpm.it

### **Andrea Generosi**

Polytechnic University of Marche, Department of Industrial Engineering & Mathematical Science

Emoj s.r.l., Ancona, Italy

ORCID: 0000-0001-6173-9616

### **Luca Giraldi**

Emoj s.r.l., Ancona, Italy

ORCID: 0000-0002-3446-8993

e-mail: l.giraldi@emojlab.com

### **Marco Torcianti**

Emoj s.r.l., Ancona, Italy

ORCID: 0000-0002-4285-4333

# **A method to measure the emotional experience of audience by the EMOJ tool. The case study of Macerata Opera Festival**

## **Metoda pomiaru doświadczenia emocjonalnego odbiorców za pomocą narzędzia EMOJ. Studium przypadku Macerata Opera Festival**

This paper aims to present a case study on the application of Emotional Analytics to measure audience experience in the culture sector. The adopted technology enables audience measurement by detecting persons' face and recognizing the emotions they feel in real time, while watching a show or attending a cultural event. It is the result of a long-term research and development project, whose goal is to advance neuro-marketing by proving a non-invasive ad wearable technology to investigate individual affective and emotional response in public spaces. The developed Emotional Analytics platform is called EMOJ and in summer 2019 has been used to analyse the experience lived by the audience of the Macerata Opera Festival, a series of opera representations that take place in the Sferisterio Arena, in Macerata. The goal of this project is to provide useful information on the quality of each performance and of the entire festival perceived by the audience, in order to make the right choices to improve the performances and to have a return on ticket sales for the coming years.

#### **Keywords**

customer experience, artificial intelligence, emotions detection, marketing for cultural organizations, experiential marketing

Artykuł przedstawia studium przypadku dotyczące zastosowania analizy emocjonalnej do pomiaru doświadczenia odbiorców w sektorze kultury. Przyjęta technologia umożliwia pomiar widowni poprzez wykrywanie twarzy osób i rozpoznawanie emocji, które odczuwają w czasie rzeczywistym podczas oglądania programu lub uczestnictwa w wydarzeniu kulturalnym. Jest to wynik długoterminowego projektu badawczo-rozwojowego, którego celem jest rozwój neuromarketingu poprzez doskonalenie tzw. ad wearable technologii stosowanej w celu badania indywidualnej reakcji afektywnej i emocjonalnej w przestrzeni publicznej. Opracowana platforma analizy emocjonalnej o nazwie EMOJ latem 2019 r. została wykorzystana do analizy doświadczeń widzów Macerata Opera Festival — serii przedstawień operowych, które odbywają się na Sferisterio Arena w Macerata. Celem tego projektu jest dostarczenie użytecznych informacji na temat jakości każdego spektaklu i całego festiwalu postrzeganego przez widownię, aby udoskonalić widowisko i wskutek tego poprawić wyniki ze sprzedaży biletów w nadchodzących latach.

#### **Słowa kluczowe**

doświadczenie klienta, sztuczna inteligencja, wykrywanie emocji, marketing dla organizacji kulturalnych, marketing empiryczny

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## **Introduction: The growing importance of Customer Experience Management**

Marketing is constantly in evolution and today it includes many aspects that just few years ago were unthinkable. The technological progress, the innovative applications of technologies and the increasing integration between online and offline are changing the marketing mind-set, and this is the main reason of the growing importance of CX (customer experience) in marketing strategies. "Customers in the modern marketing world do not want to be told, they want to participate and experience the benefit themselves. Customer empowerment has a real, measurable advantage for organization. When people have a chance to try products, play with new technologies or see a company's environmental principles made clear, they develop a more personal connection with a brand. They become partners in the experience and more an investor in the brand's success" (Seligman, 2012).

Thanks to the web, customers are more informed and aware than ever. They interact with each other and talk about brands (to comment and criticize), with great bargaining power towards companies. Consequently, CX is becoming one of the most important part of a business strategy, because positive experiences are the key for building strong, durable and profitable relationships with customers.

"Offering high-quality products and services is not enough to survive in today's economy. Companies have to compete in a more complex level by creating a satisfactory customer experience through all stages of the buying process, managing the customer's expectations and assessment before, during and after the purchase" (Klaus, 2014).

CX concerns every moment of contact between a business and its customers, in all the touchpoints (physical and digital) and in every step of the customer's journey. "It can be seen as a summary of interactions, mental images and feelings that the customers on the inner accept on the business's engagements" (Seligman, 2018).

Thanks to a good CX, brands have the possibility to be remembered and spread by satisfied customers, who can become brand ambassadors. By promoting the product and the company by word of mouth (both online and offline), they will be the most effective marketing weapon, because the message comes from a trusted source (a friend or a relative).

Moreover, the experience made with a company is never the same for two people, because of the limitless differences between the human beings. That is why it is crucial for a business to study and understand its customers, with tools like the buyer personas analysis made from market researches and surveys. These tools are useful for defining the

different approaches to adopt with every kind of customer, in order to establish a positive connection that involves products, services, assistance and all the marketing and communication activities (Revello, 2015).

In fact, the real power of a good CX strategy is achievable with a good Customer Relationship Management system, because it allows combining the experience of a single customer with all the data we have on him/her, in order to be able to provide custom products, services, assistance and contents. "In addition, CEM goes far beyond CRM by moving from recording transactions to building rich relations with customers" (Schmitt, 2010).

Customer Experience Management and Customer Relationship Management are different but complementary, because the first is useful for marketers to build a strong, personalized and memorable customer experience, through the data collection from behaviours and interactions across the various touchpoints. CRM instead is useful for sales staff, because it can create a custom service in favour of a high value sale, and its goal is to have loyal customers that repeat the purchase.

"The increasingly settled view of researchers is that customer experience is generated through a longer process of company — customer interaction across multiple channels, and is generated through both functional and emotional clues." (Klauss, 2013).

Emotional connection is crucial for the creation of durable and profitable relationships with customers. The emotional insight can inform management, designers, marketers, salespeople and others at a more comprehensive and pertinent level. Such insight in tandem with transactional history would provide the knowledge required to build a more powerful connection between a company's brand and its customers (Hill, 2008).

CEM should be the basis of every omnichannel marketing strategy. "Omni-channel marketing refers to the synergistic management of the available channels and customer touchpoints to enhance the customer experience and improve performance. It has become a cornerstone of marketing strategy, but putting it into practice is still one of the major challenges that firms face today" (Melero, Sese, Verhoef, 2016).

The integration of physical and digital channels that a company uses to dialogue with its customers is the only way to manage and optimize their experience. The synergic management of the various channels can guarantee to consumers a coherent and gratifying experience in each of them, with no differences of approach and effectiveness due to the channel chosen by that customer in that moment.

Omni channel plays an increasingly important role in company's strategic choices. For this reason, it becomes crucial to invest time and resources on specific CEM activities, always keeping in mind



that the starting point is data management, and the point of arrival is the personalization of the contents conveyed and offers proposed, starting from these data (Giraldi, 2016). Acquiring a deep knowledge of customers comes from extracting information on them, in every touchpoint used by the company. It means in one hand to exploit the big amount of customers data, collected from online and offline channels, and to extract from them valuable information with speed and precision. On the other hand, companies must activate qualitative researches to go deeper into the single customer behaviours, with custom surveys based on his/her activities and on all the data we can collect about that specific customer.

The Customer Experience Management (CEM or CXM) refers to a specific and long-term project that consists in the implementation of a series of processes that companies should adopt if they want to track, supervise and govern the interaction with customers, in order to improve their experience to the point of consolidating their loyalty.

In other words, CX should be the starting point of all the business strategies, because it affects many other activities, including production, logistic organization and all the marketing activities.

CEM can give all members of the organization a complete view of the customer, and the advantages include better customer service, better customer retention, higher conversion rates and an improvement in the overall customer lifetime value. Strengthening brand loyalty leads to more revenue, because brand supporters spend more, more frequently, buy more products and services and let the brand reach more people.

CEM is also useful to identify customers who are about to move away from the brand, helping the marketing and sales team in choosing the right offer, promotions or any other incentive to keep them loyal. "Satisfy the customer has new meanings in a society in which technology is enabling companies to give attention to customers at an unprecedented level" (Davenport, 2001).

## Emotions detection with EMOJ's technology

CX is strongly related to the emotions felt by a person when he/she comes in touch with a brand. "To fully leverage experience as part of a customer-value proposition, organizations must manage the emotional component of experiences with the same rigor they bring to the management of product and service functionality" (Berry et al., 2002).

Different studies in marketing, communication and psychology tell us that the emotional part of

our brain often overcomes the rational one, especially in the purchase choices of many kinds of goods, for example the famous impulse purchases (Shapiro, 2014). Often people buy something for emotive reasons and then find rational motivations to justify the purchase.

"Delivering great CX also relies on understanding that customers' decisions are influenced by emotion as well as logic. To gain customers' confidence, it's essential to take their perspective seriously and seek out ways of stimulating positive emotional responses and preempting negative ones." (Villani, 2019).

A CX strategy is based on the emotions that a brand can arouse in people that get in touch with it. Emotions are the most powerful trigger to make a person do all the steps of the customer journey we planned, from unknown to customer until loyal customer, that repeats the purchase and talk positively about our brand and products.

The growing relevance of emotions in marketing strategies is giving a boost to the market niche of emotion detection, recognition and measurement. Nowadays, there are different methods and technologies to recognize human emotions, with different levels of intrusiveness. Obviously, the use of invasive instruments (e.g., ECG or EEG, biometric sensors) can affect the subjects' behaviour, especially the spontaneity and consequently the emotions felt during the measurement. The majority of such techniques, methods and tools refer to three research areas: facial emotion analysis, speech recognition and biofeedback emotion analysis. All techniques elaborate the data captured by a network of sensors, either embedded in wearable systems or distributed in space, and collected by data management systems (Mengoni et al., 2017).

The most well-known limits in the application of such technologies in public spaces are intrusiveness (due to the necessity of wearable devices) and complexity of sensors' network. To overcome these limitations, in 2015 a team of researchers of the Polytechnic University of Marche started to investigate the possibility to combine computer vision, Internet of Things and Artificial Intelligence to develop an innovative emotional analytics system that simply processes the images captured by commercial multimedia sensors.

In 2017, EMOJ was born as the spin-off the above-mentioned University, to transform the world of Customer Experience by its innovative multi-platform system, that detects faces, gaze, facial expressions and recognizes age, gender, areas of attention and emotions in real time. The software analyses the images captured by 4k cameras and webcams by combining computer vision and deep learning techniques. EMOJ builds



a bi-dimension emotional model and creates proper image training sets suitable for analytics purposes. Raw data, resulting from the application of emotional analytics engine can be then elaborated to calculate a set of key performance indicators that vary according to the field of application; for instance, in case of audience monitoring indicators are monitored people engagement, degree of valence and excitement, level of attention, etc. EMOJ technology is able to detect up to fifteen people with a single camera, and it can detect even more people at once combining many cameras. The only limit for monitoring many people simultaneously is the power of the computer that run the system, while a normal pc or smartphone is able to run the single person detection version. The software is not heavy, despite the inner CPU processes all the data and no information goes to the external server.

The identification of emotions is based on the work of psychologist Paul Ekman, who in the 1970s studied the human expressions of feelings and defined six fundamental emotions: happiness, sadness, disgust, fear, surprise and anger (Ekman, 1975).

A person's emotional state at a specific time is the result of the blend of these universal basic emotions. EMOJ has developed its algorithm starting from Ekman's emotions definition because it is valid for every type of person, from different cultures and different ethnic groups.

Once the emotional model had been defined, the work focused on the training of the algorithm. It includes the development of a neural network (to collect and understand the input images), the implementation of machine learning (to enable system to self-adapt and learn by doing) and deep learning (to reinforce its ability by working on big amount of data).

The proposed platform aims to analyse emotions and behaviour of the customer along the journey in a non-intrusive way.

The great EMOJ challenge is that the system works in real time. This guarantees the respect of GDPR 2016/679 about privacy, because images are suddenly processed and then throw away, without any association between the person's name or ID and his/her face. Moreover, EMOJ technology can detect people's emotional reaction to a specific element they are interacting with, in every single moment and along the whole user journey. This tool that can recognize the emotions a person is feeling and its intensity. The kind and the intensity of an emotion are related to what that person is watching (or listening, or tasting) in that precise moment, so EMOJ's platform can give important informations on the emotive impact of every choice made at different level and from different business units.

The system adopts two different strategies to capture the user's emotions and make the experience adaptable and reactive. It acts directly on the environment that surrounds the person to improve his/her experience in a reactive manner. Furthermore, it provides a decision support system (DSS) able to help the manager in defining the optimal CX strategy and in planning the actions to be taken for the short and long term. For this reason, EMOJ's technology can help a business to get in touch with its customers in many ways, giving important information for marketing, communication and CX managers.

The concrete applications of this technology are countless, both in physical and digital world. For what concerns the first, EMOJ has already worked in projects in the fields of automotive, retail and audience measurement.

For example, one of the most important project realized by EMOJ was the emotional detection in retail contexts, where it was used to track customers' behaviours in the moment of the evaluation of the products (Ceccacci et al., 2018). Compared to the other tools and methods for emotional recognition and analysis, EMOJ presents many advantages such as:

- Non -invasive solutions that integrates several technologies;
- Modular architecture of technologies that let each module work as a stand-alone tool, so that the functionality of the system is not compromised when modules are missing;
- Web-based user interface, easily accessible remotely yet protected by security protocols. Thus the user can access data in a cloud-based environment;
- Emotion recognition technology inserted in a customer experience context.

In the digital domain, EMOJ technology can be embedded in e-commerce platforms, to improve the conversion rate, reduce the number of abandoned carts and increase revenue. It allows the e-commerce to know precisely which elements of each web page is more effective in attracting user's attention, or where the user is exactly watching, in order to modify texts, pictures, marketing campaigns and offers based on those informations. EMOJ makes possible to evaluate every part of the text, images, videos, calls to action, links and other elements that can contribute to increase the sales of the e-shop.

Another example of digital application of EMOJ is in e-learning platforms, to measure the students' levels of attention and engagement. This is very useful to certify that who attend an online course is actually participating and understanding its contents, but also to compare teachers' ability, based on student's levels of engagement and attention and on the changes of their emotional state during the lesson.



## Case study: The Macerata Opera Festival

One of the most interesting application of EMOJ concerns the Culture. In summer 2019 EMOJ started a collaboration with "Arena Sferisterio Association", in a medium-term project to improve the artistic performance by measuring the audience of the Opera Festival live shows applied its technology in opera live shows, held at the open-air Roman theatre Arena Sferisterio, in Macerata (Italy).

The Association wished to analyse the emotive state of the audience during the representations of Macerata Opera Festival and measure its satisfaction and appreciation level, in order to structure an offer able to better attract spectators to the next editions of the festival, expected for summer 2020. This could lead to a positive impact on ticket sales, as well as on the image and diffusion of the brands Macerata opera festival, Sferisterio Arena and city of Macerata.

EMOJ monitored a sample of twelve people of the audience during ten representations of the *Carmen*, *Macbeth* and *Rigoletto* (operas held in the 2019 summer season), and measured the levels of attention and the feelings aroused by every show (Figure 1).

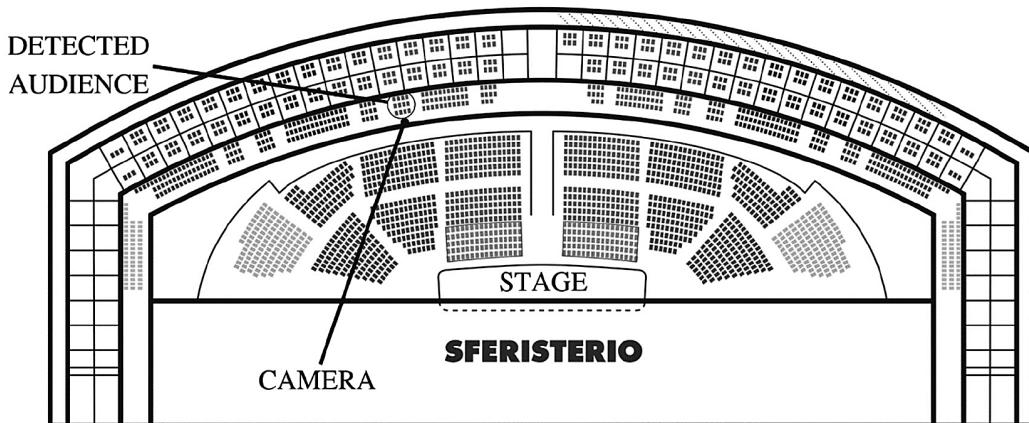
monitoring of the twelve persons are aggregated for each opera and for each type of shows (e.g. *Macbeth*, *Carmen* and *Rigoletto*).

Audience selection to be live monitored is based on the representing Sferisterio's buyer personas. Actually, the sampled audience was not randomly chosen; individuals were selected to correspond to the five Sferisterio's buyer personas, found thanks to surveys submitted in the last two seasons of the Macerata Opera Festival and to market research on open-air theatres.

The most important part of the first phase is a strategic benchmark with competitors' offers, which deeply investigated many important aspects, such as:

- The titles and number of the representations scheduled by each competitor for the 2019 summer season;
- Tickets prices and the number of price levels of the different tickets;
- The applied discounts for groups or individuals (old/young/babies/disabled), and for cumulative tickets (valid for more than one show);
- The collaboration with no profit associations;
- The integration in the local touristic offer;
- The general communication, with analysis on the main marketing messages and brands positioning;
- Competitors' websites, including aspects such as user experience, search engine optimization

Figure 1. Map of the Sferisterio Arena and theatre area subjected to monitoring



Source: author's own work.

Monitored data are mapped with the duration of each opera act, each aria and relative musical features link audience reactions to the opera characteristics. It is then possible to understand the real impact of the choices made by art director and conductor on the audience and the level of the perceived quality. Collected data from the

and advertising, the user journey from the home page to the ticket purchase, the quality of pictures and the usability of the website design;

- Competitors' use of social networks, investigating the quality of the content and the ability to build a strong community.



The second phase of Associazione arena Sferisterio's marketing plan is a new and deeper analysis on the audience of the shows of the 2019 summer season. The results of EMOJ's emotional analysis of the audience are the central point of the study on the experience lived by Sferisterio's customers. It provides precise indications on every moment of all the shows, in order to compare the appreciation and emotions aroused by every event that takes place on the stage.

EMOJ's emotion detection represent the qualitative investigation, while the quantitative one is an audience survey for every show and another survey in the box office (in the purchase moment), to investigate the appreciation level on a big amount of people in the audience.

The integration of the results of the two analysis will allow the Associazione arena Sferisterio to understand in which elements to improve its offer, both in the aspects strictly related to the representations, and in all the other elements that can lead to an increase in the perceived quality.

The main goal of the project is not only to improve the quality level of the representations, but also to understand how to improve other factors, such as the logistic organization and the communications activities.

The aim is to get better the full festival offer, which includes other kinds of shows, such as rock concerts and ballets. Moreover, the festival is strictly related to the touristic offer of the Marche region, collaborating in many activities with cultural operators, receptive structures and food and wine local companies.

The third part of the marketing strategy is the integration of the results of EMOJ's analysis in the global strategy for the Macerata Opera Festival 2020.

The mid-term planning of opera season is made once every three years, and the summer 2020 has been planned along with 2019 and 2018. Widening the statistical analysis with new surveys and adding EMOJ's emotional tracking results, make possible for Associazione Arena Sferisterio not only to improve the performance of 2020, but also to make a better strategic planning for the next three years, until 2023.

## **Experimental results and discussion**

The following figures (Figure 2–5) show the results of the emotional analysis carried out on the audience of the Macerata Opera Festival for all monitored shows. The pie graph on the left shows the prevalence of felt emotions for the whole show. The blue curve on the right represents the

emotional valence. Valence is positive or negative affectivity. It could be described by bipolar scales that, in aggregate, defined a continuous dimension from pleasantness (happy, pleased, hopeful) to unpleasantness (unhappy, annoyed, despairing) (Bradley and Lang, 2000). The values on the abscissa refer to the monitoring time (i.e., once every 2 minutes). The values on ordinates represent the following levels of valence:

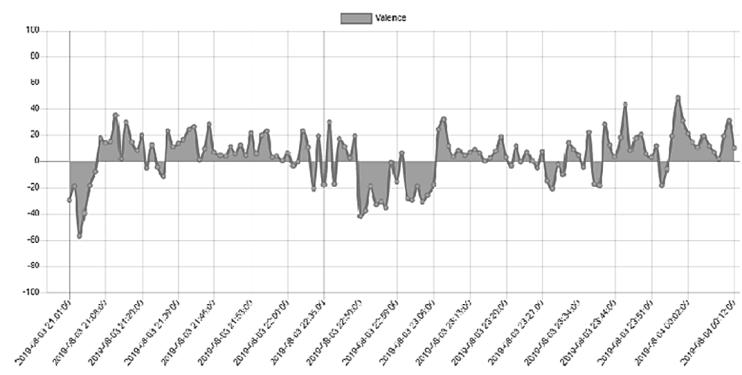
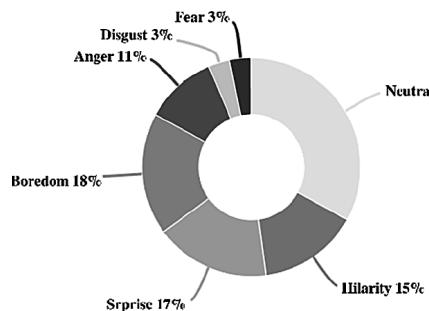
- 0 corresponds to the neutral condition, when the person is in a state of relaxation and well-being;
- 100 corresponds to "happiness", the maximum level of satisfaction experienced by the person;
- From 1 to 99 positive emotions are present and the value 50 corresponds to surprise;
- From -1 to -99 the negative emotions are represented. They pass from different levels of sadness, which correspond mainly to the feeling of boredom and disgust that appears in moments of poor pleasantness of the experience;
- -100 corresponds to anger, the condition where the person experiences feelings of annoyance and frustration.

The "neutral" state corresponds to a state of relaxation, while the "sadness" one to boredom. Anger and disgust can be considered as states of annoyance and frustration that derives from a low interest in the show or indicate an unpleasant sensation.

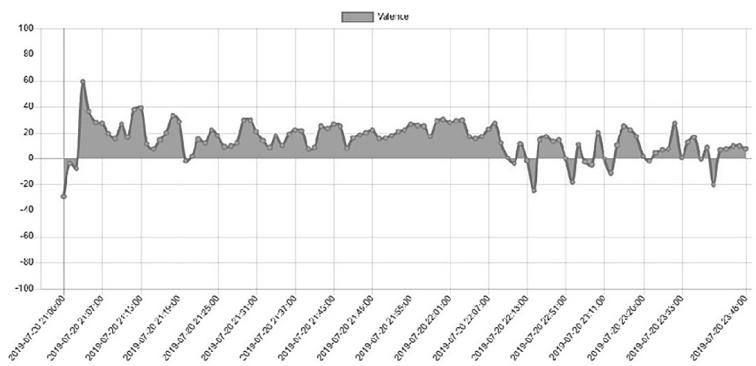
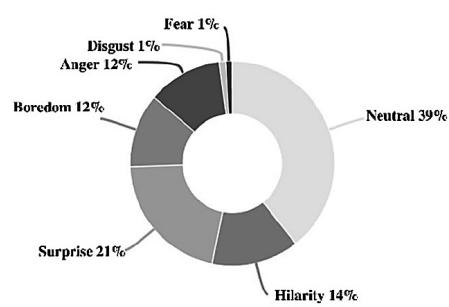
The value of valence is the average value of the emotions felt by all monitored persons. This means that a zero valence can represent not only a moment of general relaxation, but also a result of contrasting monitoring, such as a scene that arouses positive emotions for a person and negative feelings for another one, at the same time.

Valence values are represented with both a pie graph, reporting the percentage of the felt emotions for the whole show, and a curve in a Cartesian space with the registered values for the opera duration. 11 valence graphs are obtained in total, i.e. 4 for *Carmen*, 4 for *Rigoletto* and 3 for *Macbeth*. Figure 2, 3 and 4 present an example of them while Figure 5 shows the aggregated results for the *Macbeth*'s opera.

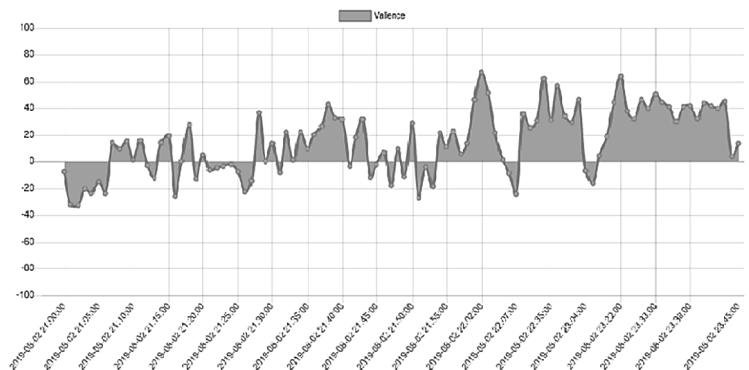
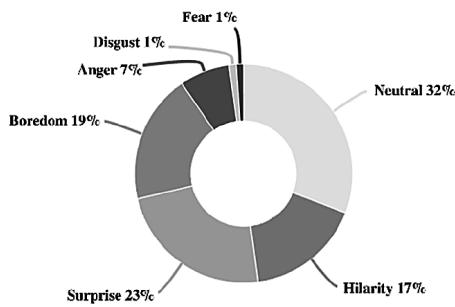
The comparison of the valence curves of the same opera in the same graph highlights differences of the artistic performance in the diverse events (Figure 5) and which aria arises enthusiasm and joy. For instance, in *Carmen*, the Opera company maintained the same level of audience arousal in acts N.1, 2 and 4, while audience experience varies in act N.3. In addition some contextual factors can affect emotions. An example is weather (e.g. unexpected cold or rain). The rain affected the *Carmen* of 28th July (Figure 2). This is demonstrated by the more negative peaks at the beginning of the second half of the show. Other factors that can affects the emotional

**Figure 2. Pie graph and the emotional valence curve for one Carmen's show**

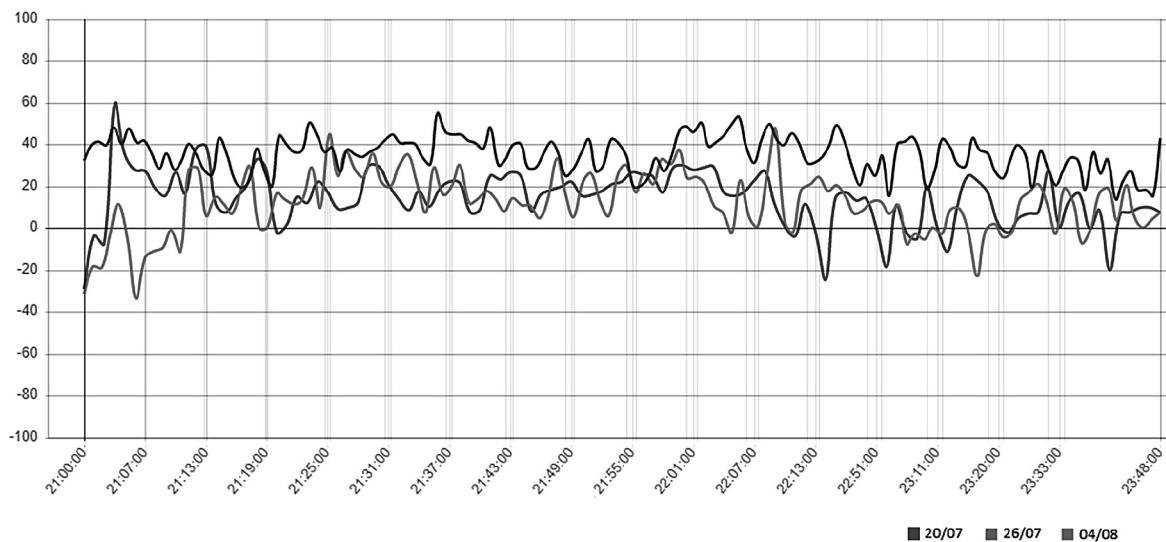
Source: author's own work.

**Figure 3. Pie graph and the emotional valence curve for one Macbeth's show**

Source: author's own work.

**Figure 4. Pie graph and the emotional valence curve for one Rigoletto's show**

Source: author's own work.

**Figure 5. Comparison of the audience experience in all Macbeth's shows**

Source: author's own work.

**Table 1. Most appreciated opera arias**

<b>Carmen</b>	<b>Macbeth</b>	<b>Rigoletto</b>
<p>The "Prelude" (first scene of the first act); "L'amour est un oiseau rebelle" (Carmen's habanera), the opera's most famous aria, about the untameable nature of love (at the half of the first act);</p> <p>"Votre toast, je peux vous le rendre" ("The Toreador Song"), another very famous Carmen's aria (at the beginning of the second act);</p> <p>"La fleur que tu m'avais jetée", a lovely duet between Carmen and Don José (conclusion of the second act).</p>	<p>"Vieni! t'affretta!" ("Come! Hurry!"), when Lady Macbeth is introduced in the plot, determined to propel Macbeth to the throne which is the cause of several murders (second scene of the first act);</p> <p>"Si colmi il calice ("Fill up the cup"), when Macbeth see Banco's ghost (third scene of the first act);</p> <p>"Ah, la paterna mano" ("Ah, the paternal hand"), when Macduff is determined to avenge the deaths of his wife and children by Macbeth (first scene of the fourth act);</p> <p>The chorus "Patria oppressa" ("Down-trodden country"), when the Scottish refugees stand near the English border before the battle (first scene of the fourth act);</p> <p>"Una macchia e qui tuttora" ("Yet here's a spot"), Macbeth's most famous scene, when Lady Macbeth is sleepwalking shocked by guilt about the deaths she caused (second scene of the fourth act).</p>	<p>"Gualtier Malde!... Caro nome che il mio cor" ("Dearest name"), when Gilda meditates on her love for the Duke, whom she believes is a student (half of the first act);</p> <p>"Ella mi fu rapita!" ("She was stolen from me!"), when the Duke is concerned that Gilda has disappeared (beginning of the second act).</p> <p>"La donna è mobile" ("The woman is fickle"), Rigoletto's most famous aria that is a real showcase for tenors. Here the Duke reflects on the personal vision of emptiness and female inscrutability, where the woman is seen as susceptible to changes both in thoughts and in words at the first change in mood and the course of events (beginning of the third act);</p> <p>"Cortigiani, vil razza dannata" ("Accursed race of courtiers"), Rigoletto attempts to run into the room in which Gilda is being held, but the courtiers block his way (half of the second act);</p> <p>"Vho ingannato, colpevole fui" ("Father, I deceived you"), when Gilda says she is glad to die for her beloved (final duet).</p>

Source: author's own work.

experience regard the main events of a scene (e.g. a lovely kiss between the two main actors, the moment of murder, the entrance of the whole company), the expressiveness of the actors, the orchestra performance, the scenography elements changing during the different opera sessions, etc.

Another general tendency recorded by the emotional detection is a higher value of the valence in the sung parts than in the spoken ones. This suggest us that the orchestra is one of the most important elements that define the engagement level of the audience.

Moreover, positive peaks are recorded in correspondence of the most famous arias, or in the most meaningful scenes for the plot. Table 1 reports the most appreciated arias for each opera.

The comparison of the three operas' average valence allows the study to focus on how the audience experiences emotions and to indicate which opera was mostly appreciated (Figure 6). The results show that the most appreciated opera is *Macbeth*, with a higher value of valence and that *Rigoletto* mostly excited the audience than the other operas (i.e. lowest value of neutral state percentage).

A more accurate analysis is possible by mapping the emotional curves with the video

time of the shows. They depend on some operative factors such as the video recording start and stop during acts' pauses that were manual.

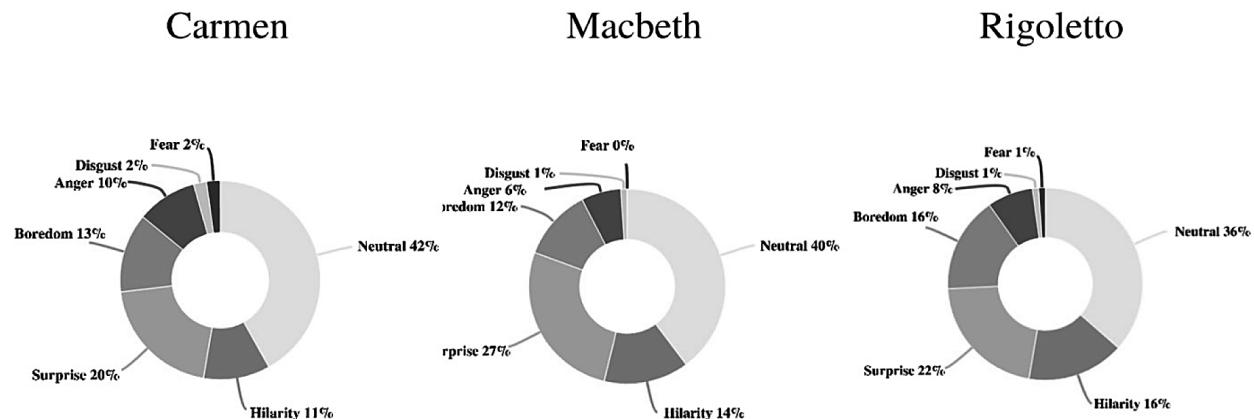
As a consequence, the emotional curves of the same opera are not perfectly synchronized. Comparison and research findings are not strongly affected by this gap.

## Conclusions

CX is becoming very important not only in leading business strategies, but also in improving artistic performance and hence increasing culture attractiveness. The audience is like the customer. The only way to keep customers loyal is offering them memorable and custom experiences, not only when they purchase our products and services, but also every time there is a contact between an offering and a person.

Tracking people's emotions and instinctive reactions to marketing inputs is the challenge to win. Only what is measurable is manageable, and the capability to acquire a big amount of customer's data is more important than ever, because it is from data that companies set their goals and builds their strategies.

Figure 6. Overall emotional experience of Carmen, Macbeth and Rigoletto



Source: author's own work.

streaming of the same show. This allows the audience emotions to be related to what happens stage by stage. Audience experience mapping results to be a useful tool for the art director to improve the general performance by correcting specific opera elements.

A specification is due for the complete understanding of the above reported graphs. There are some differences in the monitoring

EMOJ developed one of the most useful tools enabling the measurement of emotional without being invasive and intrusive. It gives companies the opportunity to know a person's emotive state in real time, and to offer personalized experiences based on behaviours and feelings recorded. This is a powerful marketing tool that has already been applied in many different contexts, both in the physical then in the digital world.



On summer 2019, an interesting application of EMOJ tool took place in Macerata, when it is used to monitor the emotions aroused on the audience by opera shows, in the Arena Sferisterio for the Macerata Opera Festival. A sample of 12 spectators for each show were recorded and analysed in real time. An overall of 11 shows were tracked and the felt emotions are mapped for every part of the dramas. The presented work reports the

experimental results and a discussion of the impact of the analysis on the culture sector. In addition to emotional analytics a survey was submitted to 800 attending Opera visitors to understand the appreciation level of the shows and the perceived quality of the entire festival. The study of the survey data combined with the emotional analytics investigation provides a roadmap for the Sferisterio Association to improve the next year opera season.

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**PWE poleca**

**HISTORIA  
MYŚLI  
EKONOMICZNEJ**  
Ryszard Bartkowiak



Polskie Wydawnictwo Ekonomiczne

Podręcznik prezentuje rozwój myśli ekonomicznej na tle zmieniającej się gospodarki – od XVIII do końca XX wieku. Od XVIII wieku główną formą gospodarowania jest gospodarka rynkowa, dlatego ówcześnie sformułowane teorie i powstałe nurty myśli ekonomicznej są w dużej części nadal aktualne i wykorzystywane w formułowaniu wytycznych dla polityki gospodarczej. Z tego powodu poznanie historii myśli ekonomicznej jest niezbędne dla zrozumienia zasad funkcjonowania współczesnej gospodarki.

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**Dr Michał Ścibor-Rylski**

University of Warsaw, Faculty of Management  
ORCID: 0000-0002-0594-492X  
e-mail: mscibor-rylski@wz.uw.edu.pl

**Mgr Marta Reducha**

Kantar Polska  
e-mail: marta.reducha@kantar.com

**Mgr Jędrzej Ochremiak**

Kantar Polska  
e-mail: jedrzej.ochremiak@kantar.com

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# Modern research methods in the field of customer experience

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## Nowoczesne metody badawcze w obszarze customer experience

Customer experience studies are an important component of research portfolio of every significant research agency. The main goal of this article is to show the key areas for CX and types of research which conducted in the field. The article also features two latest tools examining customer experience developed by Kantar research agency: the qualitative tool based on gamification - "Our City" and the quantitative one called CX+. The underlying premises of both tools and the areas of applications with their unique contribution in the CX research process have been described as well.

**Keywords**

customer experience, market research, methodology, gamification

JEL: M300

## Introduction

The decision making process is no longer a linear experience — the traditional AIDA model (attention — interest — desire — action) has transformed into a more complex iterative approach where a customer is seen as skipping some stages and returning to previous experience, active, gathering information, yet simplifying the task at some stages by activating the heuristic reasoning mode (Kotler, Kartajaya, & Setiawan, 2016). A consumer living at the end of the second decade of the 21st century actually faces unlimited possibilities to acquire information about products, combined with increasing number and variants of

Badania customer experience stanowią ważny punkt oferty każdej liczącej się agencji badawczej. Głównym celem artykułu jest pokazanie obszarów kluczowych z punktu widzenia CX i rodzajów badań w nich prowadzonych. Dodatkowo przedstawione zostały dwa najnowsze narzędzia do badania customer experience rozwijane przez agencję badawczą Kantar: oparte na grywalizacji jakościowe „Nasze Miasto” oraz ilościowe CX+. Opisano założenia stojące za obydwooma narzędziami i wskazano obszary zastosowań wraz z zaznaczeniem ich unikalnego wkładu w procesy badania CX.

**Słowa kluczowe**

customer experience, badania rynku, metodologia, grywalizacja

these products. On one hand, the number of touchpoints increases, yet on the other customers become more resistant to traditional marketing support. The role of emotions in the decision making process is greater, these are feelings which affect not only the repeated purchase intent, but they make consumers eager to promote the brand among friends and family, to identify with the brand in social media and to take part in various brand events. What counts now are selected touchpoints which will offer unique experience and bond consumers with the brand. This is a new form of loyalty modifying and extending the traditional customer journey which also impacts mental availability of a brand — the component which Sharp (2010) considers the priority task of



contemporary marketers. The term denotes willingness to think about a brand in shopping occasions, which is highly influenced by customer experience: their recollections and associations — both sensory: the taste of Magnum ice cream eaten in childhood, the way the new Toyota smells, and emotional ones: like enjoying a visit to the dealer ending with a successful test drive of one's dream car.

The rapid development of complexity in the consumer journeys and the increasing number of different, multichannel touchpoints requires new, advanced research methods. This article presents the approach to the measurement of customer experience in the market research agency. Two new methods are described: qualitative, gamified tool "Our City" designed to help in the deep exploration of customer journeys and quantitative CX+ which measures the relationship of the brand promise and the provided experience.

## **Customer experience and its measurement**

Customer experience (CX) is one of important themes in the contemporary marketing — it is a subject of numerous articles and scientific studies (e.g. Meyer & Schwager, 2007; Cetin & Dincer, 2014; Vasconcelos et al., 2015). It is worth quoting the most general of many definitions of CX proposed by Klaus and Maklan (2013, pp. 228): "the customer's cognitive and affective assessment of all direct and indirect encounters with the firm relating to their purchasing behaviour". Other researchers also emphasize the importance of both cognitive and emotional processes in shaping customer experience (Verhoef et al., 2009). Homburg, Schwemmle and Kuehnl (2015) define CX as a multidimensional consumer trip across various touchpoints, whilst Lemon and Verhoef (2016) point out the role of individual actors of the customer experience shaping process: brand (and its various revelations), products, services and staff.

Customer experience is a wide concept affecting all stages of the decision process and multiple touchpoints. It occurs when people do their pre-purchase research — both offline and online, when they have contact with a brand in store, during the mere process of purchase and finally, when they use the product or the service (e.g. Brakus, Schmitt, and Zhang 2008).

Customer experience affects customers' satisfaction (Anderson & Mittal, 2000), their loyalty towards a brand and creating a more in-depth relationship of participants (Paharia, 2013), and their eagerness to recommend a brand — word-of-mouth (Keiningham, Cooil, Aksoy, Andreassen & Weiner,

2007) across the channels — both traditional and digital.

Since customer experience became a focus of attention of the marketing practitioners, the matter of its measurement has been gaining importance. In the literature there are many attempts to identify the CX components. Dziewanowska (2015) presents a thorough review of different approaches towards defining the frames of the customer experience. E.g. Gentile, Spiller and Noci (2007) created a model consisting of six elements: sensory experiences, emotions, cognitive processes, pragmatic aspects, lifestyle and affiliation. Doubtlessly, such a multidimensional approach creates a great challenge for the designers of the CX measurement methods.

Beside purely theoretical approaches towards customer experience, there are some empirical attempts at measuring CX. Brakus, Schmitt and Zarantonello (2009) have developed the Brand Experience Scale a short quantitative tool comprising four experiential dimensions: sensory, affective, behavioral and intellectual. One of the important outputs of the application of this scale was the typology of customers including five segments: hedonistic, action-oriented, holistic, inner-directed and utilitarian (Zarantonello & Schmitt, 2010).

Also Klaus and Maklan (2013) have created a scale to measure CX. The scale, called EXQ, consists of four dimensions: product experience, outcome focus, moments-of-truth and peace-of-mind. It touches upon numerous aspects related to product competitive advantages, customer experience in the process, how a brand functions and reacts in key moments.

Very interesting approach towards the measurement of CX propose Kim, Cha, Knutson and Beck (2011). Their Customer Experience Index serves as a fully operational tool which can indicate the gap between the customers' expectations and their satisfaction and produce the set of concrete recommendations for the company.

This article will present another more elaborate quantitative approach towards examining customer experience with the inclusion of two aspects: brand promise and the created experience.

## **Implementation of CX strategies and market research**

Brands have developed their strategies and carried out missions for years. Taken the changes described in the previous section, at present brands need to fill their missions with content not only in ATL activities but in all touchpoints as well. The



challenge faced by brands is how to translate values and manifestos into the language of experience. Conscious and consistent customer experience management and creating values and advantages in this area are reflected in growth of business. For instance, Kantar studies on the British market confirm that brands most effective in managing customer experience on the financial market generate double intent to use new products offered by these brands and ten times higher recommendation propensity, which finally leads to higher potential for growth (Kantar, 2018b).

Performance of such brands is described as 'customer centric' — which refers to the philosophy of brand actions with client and their needs being in the centre. The market is aware of benefits of this approach — 91% of presidents of British companies claim they believe in customer centricity. Yet only 19% customers on the British market would describe their brands as "truly customer-centric" (Kantar, 2018a). The data prove there is still room for improvement of the customer experience area.

This is a field where emotions play a significant role. They serve as a kind of conveyor belt transforming individual experience into recollections. If a customer can remember some event after a longer period of time, this is usually possible if they are able to link it to some emotions, for instance, they remember feeling disappointed in that very moment. The more intense are emotions, the better and more durable is the recall. Continued use of brand services, customer's loyalty towards the brand, intention to increase intensity of using, or using a broader range of products and services, are conditioned not just by the sole experiences but by the way consumers recall them (Kahneman, 2010).

The next part of this chapter will discuss the process of implementing customer experience on the example service market, and the implications for market research based on the model used by Kantar agency. Four stages of implementing this approach can be identified in organisations operating on the service market: 1. developing a CX strategy, 2. implementing this strategy by introducing operational changes, 3. promoting customer-centric approach inside the organisation, 4. monitoring impact of the strategy upon business results.

## CX strategy development

The stage of developing customer experience strategy should address four factors: customers' needs and expectations, competitive framework and current brand position — experience the brand offers at present, as well as brand positioning. The goal of this stage is to create a vision of how the

brand positioning should translate into customer experience in various touchpoints and where the brand can base its uniqueness in the customer experience field. The role of research is to deliver inspirations in these areas and to run an initial CX audit of the brand. Qualitative and quantitative exploratory studies offer significant support here, and so do relationship surveys.

A detailed scope of study derives from the knowledge of the organisation. Organisations usually have access to data and insights on the main category drivers, customers' profiles, their needs and offered experiences. That is when analysis of such information is recommended with focus on two areas which play the key role in creating customer experience strategies — customer mission and customer experience with the brand. Understanding the mission lets us identify the functional category drivers — the reasons why customers enter interactions, i.e. their brand "journey". The analysis of customer experience with the brand aims at reaching the emotional aspects of their journey and the interactions or touchpoints which are most involving and have a potential to create powerful, positive and engaging experience.

CX strategies are usually developed during workshops with managers. It involves translating the brand promise into the strategy of creating experience with critical assessment of the direction. Stage 1 is completed by defining the strategic direction and initial diagnosis of brand CX. The outcome of this brand review defines the type of activities to be undertaken in the subsequent stage.

## Introducing operational modifications

The next stage is the operational execution of the strategy — development of solutions for individual processes and touchpoints to carry out the customer experience vision of the brand or entire organisation. This is a long process with a funnel construction, consisting of several steps. The first step is time for organisation to define its priorities — select products, processes or target customers for the business. This choice determines the order of steps to follow — namely mapping transaction journey for selected products to identify the moments of truth and so called pain points. They should be further developed — to assess how well the brand or organisation offers attractive experience coherent with the brand vision in these customer journey moments. Based on the diagnosis, the processes may be qualified for further modification to better meet customers' needs and be more coherent with the CX strategy of the brand.



This is the stage where research may result in the most significant changes of the organisation. The studies play a role in actually every of the steps described above. At first right mapping of customer journey with qualitative tools is of utmost importance. The tools recommended for the customer journeys related processes are cognitive interviews. An alternative to cognitive interviews would be focus groups with a preceding online module — participants attending a so called bulletin board, i.e. an online platform used to reconstruct individual journeys and experience in such processes. The outcome of qualitative studies is a mapped customer journey. The mapping involves a possibly deep and precise reconstruction of the processes, including all touchpoints and emotional experience aspects. The moments of truth and pain points of the journey are further assessed with quantitative tools diagnosing the components and quality of experience offered by the brand in meaningful moments. This diagnosis is run during so called transaction studies, i.e. studies where customers are examined during or directly after an interaction or process. The key aspects here include fresh experience that has not been processed or rationalised yet. If the diagnosis of the process is negative, some process optimisation or reconstruction tools are implemented. These would usually include workshop processes carried out in the design thinking approach, i.e. with users and their needs being in the centre.

Stage 2 is completed with a program revising experience offered by the brand across the touchpoints and a selection of so called KPIs (namely key performance indicators) to be monitored at later stages of CX strategy implementation.

### Promoting customer-centric approach in organisations

The third stage involves activating customer centric behaviour inside the organisation. This is the time to decide how research findings will be consumed by various departments and teams in the company. The essential condition for success in the process is proper communication of the objectives of implementing the customer centric philosophy inside the company. Organisation changes hardly ever concern merely the product or service consumer has direct contact with. There is usually a demand for thorough modification of processes and working style in the areas customers cannot see (*back office*). Research plays two roles at this stage — tactical and strategic.

The tactical dimension involves mainly all the current management of unsatisfied customer

relationship (*close the loop process*). Hot alerts are frequently used in transactional studies carried out in particular touchpoints, i.e. just after customer's experience with the brand. These are messages sent to respective departments and employees in the organisation to notify them that a given customer is not satisfied with some interaction with the brand. They require an urgent response to solve customer's problems or at least reduce their dissatisfaction. The research activities and *close the loop* process in big organisations with tens or hundreds of thousands of customers concern a high number of customers. Smooth management of hot alerts is the basic retention and loyalty boosting tool following difficult brand experience.

The strategic dimension of working with research outcomes at this stage mainly includes a long term development of selected relevant research findings. If we deal with *insights* from dissatisfied customers, what is required here is introducing some improvements to eliminate problems faced by these customers, and hence to make their experience in given touchpoints more positive. If information delivered by highly satisfied customers (e.g. promoters from NPS segmentation) is analysed, we focus more on development and innovations.

The last meaningful element of the third stage is study on employees. This is important for at least two reasons. First of all this perspective helps to diagnose problems reported by customers. It also lets us verify attitudes and opinions of employees and how customer centric they are. Here four areas should be analysed: staff involvement, leadership assessment, awareness and evaluation of organisation objectives and strategy as well as assessment of available resources. Employee surveys usually give grounds to diagnosing numerous barriers which hinder implementation of the customer centric culture in the organisation.

### Monitoring business impact of the introduced strategy

Stage 4 is the test time — business verification of effectiveness of CX strategy implementation. It is based on financial analyses checking return of investment, comparing the implementation cost and effectiveness. Market research plays a great role here — relationship research data is treated as an additional context to interpret financial results. Its aim is to deliver knowledge for more in-depth analysis of strategy effectiveness. Customer information contributes the following elements to the data base (CRM): satisfaction, some demographic, behaviour or psychography variables. One should note that profitability analysis should



take into account the market context, competition changes and activities, as it is market dynamics that drives implementation of customer experience processes in organisations, and development of tools supporting these processes by research agencies.

So far we have presented an overview of research solutions used at different stages of CX strategy implementation in organisations, using the example of service industry, focusing on the common solutions. The next chapters will be devoted to two new tools based on the premises of the gaming role in the research processes (the tool: Our City) and the role of brand promise in implementing CX strategy (the tool: CX Plus) — the approaches created in response to the growing interest in the processes concerning emotions and experience.

## Qualitative approach towards CX studies — "Our City" game

The chapter will describe the latest tool to examine customer experience — "Our City". This is a board game designed in Kantar Polska to add more in-depth component to the standard qualitative research processes on online platforms and in cognitive interviews.

Gamification in market research improves involvement of participants and lets us obtain information which is not available in traditional approaches — it can also serve as an advanced projection technique. The experiments show that tasks based on gaming mechanics are more effective than the traditional ones, and research participants consider the process more enjoyable (e.g. Harrison, 2011; Puleston & Sleep, 2011; Puleston & Rintoul, 2012; Ścibor-Rylski, 2018; 2019).

Designing "Our City" we hoped to create a tool which would let us enter the decision making process, explore its stages and get to know the importance of all the relevant touchpoints, as well as enable interaction of participants and which could be used during focus group interviews.

"Our City" consists of a board, a set of elements required for the game mechanics and the set of rules. The tool may be used to carry out various research goals:

1. Reconstructing a complex decision making process/ customer journey — it is used when we want to follow individual steps leading to purchase of a product or service: e.g. a car, a TV set, a bike, a mortgage or a trip abroad. In this version players move across the board recalling subsequent stages of their decision making

process. The form of the board game increases involvement and helps them remember more details and recall their customer experience in particular touchpoints.

2. Identifying and exploring the Category Entry Points (Sharp, 2010). These include reasons or occasions related to buying a product from a given category. "Our City" may be used to define CEP related to any category — then the game serves as a tool to reconstruct all possible touchpoints and to explore them. We learn how a given CEP appeared, what were the circumstances, needs, who respondent was with, what respondent was doing at the time and, finally what brands were present at this stage, i.e. were mentally available (Sharp, op. cit.).
3. Exploring any occasion/ situation which could take place in respondent's city. Our City then serves as a narrative technique — we do not use the rules but only the board where respondents move and tell us about e.g. their last social activity: where it started, what was the flow of the meeting, which places were visited, which brands occurred at respective stages. In this approach the game is used to facilitate structuring experience and recalling some details related to particular moments.

The strength of Our City lies in the combination of a board game involving participants with an elaborate narrative technique which lets a researcher understand individual customer experience: pain points, success points, moments of truth etc. With right moderation of consumers' narrative, every response may be probed and we finally arrive at a detailed experience map for a given category: with both functional (where, how and how often?) and emotional aspects (how I felt then, what was irritating?).

## Qualitative validation of "Our City" game

In August 2019 a qualitative validation of "Our City" tool effectiveness was run. The main goal was to verify the mechanics of the game, the obtained figures and opinions expressed by participants of studies — a focus group interview with the game lasts up to 3h, so comfort of respondents is an issue which needed to check.

The theme of validation study was customer experience related to buying a new car. 18 residents of Warsaw and the suburbs participated in this study: both men and women, aged 24-58. All of them bought a new car in the past 6 months. The process consisted of two stages. In the first one all respondents took part in an online study (a bulletin



board on Krealinks platform). The goal of this stage was to get to know participants, to get an initial view of decision making processes and to eliminate less involved respondents. At the second stage three focus group interviews were run, each with four participants and lasting 3h. During the FGI participants played "Our City" game reconstructing all the stages of their decision making processes and thoroughly describing customer experience in individual touchpoints. After each session was completed an additional interview was held with all the participants.

The outcome of qualitative validation is positive — we have achieved highly detailed data combined with involvement of participants of the study. The group process (e.g. Brown, 1988) helped to increase self-awareness of respondents during the FGI — they referred to opinions expressed by other participants, confronting them with personal experience, and finally recalling some elements of own processes they could not remember during the online stage. The obtained qualitative data seems fairly in-depth. Additionally, the story structure imposed by "Our City" game mechanics has led to adding structure to individual narratives and to arriving at a more in-depth customer experience analysis in particular touchpoints.

Participants of the validation process expressed very positive opinions about their experience with the "Our City" game and found it more interesting than the standard research approach (these were respondents who previously participated both in focus group interviews and individual interviews). The respondents also admitted that during the game they managed to recall experience they could not remember at the preceding online stage. Competition being an element of the game mechanics generated a favourable response as well. These observations are confirmed by the quotations from the interviews held after completing the "Our City" game:

*"This is a fairly interesting type of experience, I have figured out what my decisions were like, what the process was like, here the process of buying a car, and I discovered that it was not so simple at all"* (Katarzyna, 50).

*"Competition in this game was motivating. It was such a trigger to get even more involved"* (Mateusz, 24).

*"The game structured the whole process which was long, and in normal conditions, if we were talking about it without the game, I would present it in a much more chaotic manner, I would get back to some plots, I would skip some things, and here I was able to order it and to focus on what mattered most in fact"* (Agnieszka, 54).

*"I guess this is a tool which helps us really say all we meant, and these may often be things we would simply not say because we would skip them"* (Adam, 30).

The qualitative validation of "Our City" tool seems a success. At present more validation studies are planned — now quantitative ones. Their goal will be to verify the hypothesis that respondents give more information during studies involving gamification in the decision making process than in the traditional approach.

## Quantitative approach towards CX studies — CX+ tool

CX+ is a quantitative tool created in response to the growing importance of customer experience and its role in the brand strategy implementation. Contrary to traditional research methods which treat brand aspects and satisfaction studies (customer experience) separately, this tool focuses on the relationship of the brand promise and the experience created by the brand, merging these two areas. CX+ is founded on the assumption that one of the key factors of brand success in the present market context is guaranteed coherence of the clearly verbalised brand promise and the created experience.

The measurement of CX brand performance is based on five pillars: 1. Clear brand promise (it is clear to consumers what a company stands for). 2. Empowered employees (we use two to three attributes to measure the operational excellence). 3. Empowered customers (great experience on digital channels and whether it is easy for customers to switch between different service channels). 4. Lasting moments (how customers felt about recent experience with the company). 5. Exceptional delivery (level of preference of one brand over another).

The analysis outcome is the index called *experience advantage* (CX+ Index) which, as assumed above, derives from the CX brand performance and the gap between the brand promise and real customer experience with the brand. These indicators are calculated for all brands present on the market. Afterwards ranking of brands is created with standardisation procedures. The figures assigned to individual components are relative and highly correlated. What's worth noting, brand promise is reconstructed based on perceptions of consumers who do not use the brand, whilst brand experience is analysed among brand users.

From a very general perspective, three possible scenarios of customer experience and brand promise relationship may be observed: 1. Positive gap (experience exceeds brand promise). 2. Negative gap (experience underdelivered vs brand promise). 3. Brand experience in line with



brand promise (no gap). These different scenarios have different implications for brands. If a positive gap is identified, the experience area most likely gives a potential to strengthen the brand promise. If the gap is negative, the brand should undertake some steps to fix customer experience in the area identified as the weakest, or to reconsider the brand promise. The situation when the brand promise is coherent with experience is comfortable for the brand, yet not sufficient — one should assume that the market may force a change or some additional action. This is one of the reasons why the gap should be analysed in the entire market context and brand position in the ranking.

The validation of the tool was performed on 11 markets (Brazil, France, Spain, Netherlands, India, Germany, Poland, Republic of South Africa, USA, Great Britain, Italy). In Poland it was carried out in the financial sector and was completed in August 2019. The local validation was conducted among the clients of retail banks and on the sample of 2751 respondents. The sample profile was as follows: aged 18–65, representative mix of male and female, the clients of 13 biggest brands (constituting over 90% of market share of retail banks market). It took the form of an online questionnaire designed for 18-minute-long completion. The measurement was standardised separately for five areas of CX+ model, based on the five pillars described above: clear brand promise, empowered employees, empowered customers, lasting moments, exceptional delivery.

The outcome of the Polish validation study was presented during the Experience Advantage conference in Warsaw in October 2019. The study can be applied to various markets. It gives access to knowledge about the market leaders, position of a brand and its Experience Advantage index (CX+ Index) and it defines the direction for the organisation to follow.

## Closing note

Brand activities and tools used to connect with consumers are created in response to various factors which may not be directly linked to marketing, but more to consumer trends in lifestyle, media consumption or shifts in financial

status. A growing demand of experience is observed on the Polish market — already one in three Poles (34%) claims that they would rather spend money on experiences than on material things (Kantar, 2019), the index is lower than seen in the western markets, which may imply that local interest in experience is likely to grow. Presumably then, the importance of experience marketing will increase as well, leading to development of research tools which may even better adjust to goals set for customer experience with various brands, being even more effective in blending different areas of brand activities.

The tools described above already indicate a certain change in the measurement of customer experience. CX+ is a research methodology covering two areas which were separated in traditional approaches, namely: customer experience and brand strategy. For this reason the tool is particularly useful at the early stage of creating customer experience strategy. Apart from the strategic stage, it can also be used at later steps of customer experience implementation in order to verify CX strategy and its correlation with brand promise. In such cases its role is to evaluate the brand in focus and its competitors and provide the organisations with operational recommendations.

"Our City" game is a tool which combines the benefits of two standard qualitative methodologies traditionally applied to map customer journeys — cognitive interviews and focus group interviews. On the one hand — similarly to cognitive interviews — it allows for in-depth understanding of individual customer journeys and identification of its key stages and touch points. It helps the game participants to reconstruct their processes in detail and focus on the experiences of strategic importance. At the same time, it stimulates respondents' interaction and group dynamics, which allows to include the elements which go beyond customer journeys mapping and, for example, indicate how customer experience can be improved in order to better suit the current market needs. It is particularly useful at the operational stage of launching customer experience strategy in an organization.

In this context, both solutions complement each other by finding different places in the process of creating and implementing CX strategies in the organization.

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**Paweł Wyrożębski**

**Biuro zarządzania projektami (PMO)**

**POLSKIE WYDawnictwo Ekonomiczne**

## PWE poleca

Każda organizacja funkcjonująca w globalnej gospodarce jest zmuszona nieustannie podejmować wyzwania dotyczące m.in. wdrożeń nowych produktów i procesów, aby móc utrzymać się w konkurencyjnym i ciągle zmieniającym się otoczeniu. Powszechną praktyką staje się więc powoływanie w przedsiębiorstwach jednostek organizacyjnych zarówno planujących, organizujących, jak i nadzorujących realizowane przedsięwzięcia.

Do zadań biura zarządzania projektami (Project Management Office – PMO) należą: wspieranie i realizowanie planów strategicznych przedsiębiorstwa; utrzymanie kapitału intelektualnego; planowanie i nadzór nad wykorzystaniem zasobów; koordynacja i centralizacja podległych projektów; zarządzanie środowiskiem projektowym, w tym planowanie, standaryzacja i synchronizacja, szkolenia, kontrola; doskonalenie praktyk i rezultatów zarządzania projektami; likwidacja lub łagodzenie problemów; raportowanie projektów do wyższego szczebla zarządzania.

Biuro zarządzania projektami (PMO) to publikacja wypełniająca dotychczasową lukę na polskim rynku wydawniczym. Autor przedstawia aktualny stan wiedzy i najnowsze wyniki badań w zakresie PMO. Znakomitym uzupełnieniem podjętej tematyki są zagadnienia portfela projektów, zarządzania wiedzą projektową oraz dojrzałości biur zarządzania projektami.

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**Dr Zbigniew Spyra**

University of Economics in Katowice

ORCID: 0000-0003-4413-3609

e-mail: zbigniew.spyra@ue.katowice.pl

# Experiential marketing and building brand communication strategies in social media

## Marketing doświadczeń a budowanie strategii komunikacji marki w mediach społecznościowych

The aim of the paper is to characterise the concept of experiential marketing as an idea constituting the basis for building the strategy of brand communication in social media. The paper presents "genetic code" for building such strategy that was "encrypted" in SMART acronym. The deliberations presented in the paper can contribute to building the model in which it is vital to include social media in the process of creation of experiences and desirable emotions associated with them. The paper is prepared on the basis of review of Polish and foreign literature on the subject, observations of economic practice and selected results of authors own research.

Celem artykułu jest scharakteryzowanie koncepcji marketingu doświadczeń jako idei stanowiącej podstawę do budowania strategii komunikacji marki w mediach społecznościowych. Przedstawiono „kod genetyczny” dla budowy takiej strategii, który został zaszyfrowany w akronimie SMART. Zaprezentowane w artykule rozważania mogą stanowić przyczynek do budowy modelu, którego istotą byłobyłączenie mediów społecznościowych do procesu kreowania doświadczeń i związanych z nimi pożądanych emocji. Artykuł został opracowany na podstawie przeglądu krajowej i zagranicznej literatury przedmiotu, obserwacji praktyki gospodarczej i wybranych wyników własnych badań.

**Keywords**

experiential marketing, social media, marketing communication, brand

JEL: M300

### Introduction

It is observed now that the importance of social media as a channel of interactive communication with customers is rapidly growing. At the same time a lot of brands include social media in the process of creation of experiences and desirable emotions associated with them, while believing that emotions will translate into increased liking and attachment to brand (Dziewanowska, Kacprzak, 2013, p. 87). It is, as it seems, a response to dynamically changing situation of the environment, as well as changing nature of the very consumers. They are becoming increasingly more aware and active market participants, sure of their choices, who make purchases to provide themselves with specific, often sophisticated feelings, emotions and experiences (Kiezel, 2010, p. 48).

For brands, they can later become the basis for building relationships and long-term bonds, which in turn will translate into decisions concerning preferences. In this situation contemporary marketing communication with the use of social media as an instrument of market activities is gaining the features of increasingly greater activity and creativity, which significantly increases its significance in marketing strategies of brands. At the same time, defining the grounds for building effective strategy of marketing communication with the use of social media is still a new experience for many brands and a new area of market activity in terms of quality. This situation requires seeking such approaches or models that would support building such a strategy. The main aim of the paper is to identify the elementary pillars that could constitute the fundament for building effective



strategies of brand communication with the use of social media, and at the same time would well correspond with determinants resulting both from dynamically changing environment and the nature of the very consumers. In relation to the aim of the paper formulated in this way, the author proposes the "genetic code" for building such communication strategies. It is encrypted in SMART acronym. In the author's opinion, deliberations presented in the paper can help to build the model, the essence of which would be inclusion of social media in the process of creation of experiences and desirable emotions related to them. They can also constitute the introduction to research of both quantitative and qualitative character in the discussed subject area. The paper is prepared on the basis of the review of Polish and foreign literature on the subject, observations of economic practices and selected results of author's own research.

## **Experiential marketing — the essence of the concept and the proposal of a new set of instruments**

Nowadays we are observing significant changes in the sphere of marketing and its evolution. The process of evolution of marketing comprises both the sphere of marketing concept and its organisational dimension or implementation (Kozielski, 2016, p. 101). Dynamic changes in economic, social or technological environment are driving forces for this process. The changes in economic environment are reflected in growing interest of marketing theoreticians and practitioners in economic models based on gratuitous sharing, exchanging and paid rental of products (sharing economy) or collaborative consumption. On the other hand, changes in social environment result among others in descriptions of concurrently functioning four generations of consumers (Baby Boomers, generations X and Y — the so-called millennials or generation Z), which is increasingly more observable in literature on the subject. At the same time it is often emphasised that each of these generations is interested in different values. However, it seems that changes in the sphere of technological environment have the greatest impact on the process of evolution of marketing. This is proved by many premises. They include, among others, the results of research that show that three quarters of American marketers agree with the statement that marketing has changed in the recent two years more than in the previous 50 years (Kall, 2015, p. 9), or the proposition of change in the spelling of marketing into markeTIng that aims to emphasise the

significance of information technologies (TI) (Mazurek, 2012, p. 112). It is even said that under the influence of new technologies and IT solutions, marketing is evolving towards MarTech — technologized marketing (Gregor & Kaczorowska-Spsychalska, 2018, p. 15). Ph. Kotler et al. (2017, p. 31 and next) indicate that new technologies brought the change in demographic profile of the most influential consumers on market while claiming that it is the so-called YWN segment (youth, women, netizens). At the same time they emphasise that in the era of digital technologies the access to community, bonds and interhuman contacts are more important than financial resources, which is more typical of the YWN segment.

While dynamically changing the environment, the driving forces presented above push the contemporary organisations to seek increasingly more creative and efficient methods of gaining and retaining customers. The emergence of various types of marketing concepts or ideas is the result of the phenomenon. The concept of experiential marketing is one of these concepts. It has a growing group of supporters both among the scientists and practitioners of economic life. Ph. Kotler (2004, pp. 89–90) defines it as designing experiences around products/services and approaches it as the complementation of the traditional offer with strong emotions and entertainment that are worth remembering. Some authors believe that it is not only a trend, but a new emerging paradigm of the marketing of the 21st century (Boguszewicz-Kreft, 2010, pp. 130–140). V. Ramaswamy (2011, pp. 195–196) claims that customer experience, and specifically the experience of value co-creation should be the basis for explanation of the marketing logic. At the same time he formulates the premises for such an approach to marketing, while emphasising among others, that experience comes from interaction, and that the value is the function of co-creation experience for individual market participants as well as of human emotions related to these experiences that are important for them. G. Rosa et al. (2016, p. 36) also perceive experiential marketing as the most innovative approach to the marketing of co-creation of value with consumer, whereas L. Malär et al. (2011, pp. 35–52) indicate experiences with brands as the key integral construct of the brand capital.

The concept of experiential marketing is based on the assumption that creating and providing customers with positive, unique, memorable experiences, additional emotions and feelings that should involve and bind them emotionally are the distinguishing features on the market that enable enterprises to build competitive advantage (Dziewanowska & Kacprzak 2013, p. 89;



Boguszewicz-Kreft, 2013, p. 53). Thereby, experiential marketing significantly goes beyond the traditional formula of classical 4P tools that constitutes the canon of previous marketing knowledge and forces contemporary enterprises to review and modify their strategies and marketing actions through reconfiguring the set of marketing tools towards creation of the ability to generate unique emotions that the customer experiences on sensory, affective, cognitive, behavioural and relational level<sup>1</sup>.

Therefore the "new 4P", representing **portals, paths, pulses, people** can be proposed (Gruda & Jakubów, 2016). A new set of marketing instruments emphasises both the significance of changes in technological environment of contemporary companies and the phenomenon related to the shift of considerable part of marketing activity, including activity associated with building customer experiences, to the virtual world associated with these changes. The "new" set of tools in combination with understanding the customer and determining the method of interaction with them can offer greater chance to attain a competitive advantage and become a new research perspective in marketing. Certainly it is a proposition corresponding to new challenges facing marketing and worth intellectual reflection. Characteristic features of the "new" set of marketing instruments is presented in Table 1.

Summing up we should agree with the statement formulated by I. Skowronek (2012, p. 10), that no market entity can avoid the emergence of experiences of their customers, but each can consciously shape the experiences and build relationships based in a greater degree on emotional value. At the same time, the proposed new set of marketing instruments focuses attention on two important aspects:

- firstly, marketing can be viewed not only from the perspective of the classical set of 4P or even 4C tools (customer solution, customer cost, convenience, communication), but also from the perspective of other instruments, so that efficient strategies and marketing programs could be built on their basis;
- secondly, from the marketing point of view, abundance of means of communication in social media actually offers vast possibilities of their application in marketing communication and building customer experiences; however, it should be remembered that while using this multitude of means in the process of creation of efficient strategies and marketing programs, the models of behaviour cannot be transferred uncritically from the so-called traditional market, and thus the use of new set of instruments is necessary.

**Table 1. Characteristic features of the "new" set of marketing tools**

Name of the instrument	Description
Portals	All contact points of the company (brand) with customer, both virtual, e.g. social media and physical. It is the key instrument of experiential marketing because each contact with the company (brand) is the carrier of experience for customer. Identification of all points of contact is necessary to determine their impact on building customer experience
Paths	The so-called customer paths and application of the concept of "consumer journey map", i.e. description of how they move between points of contact with company (brand). Their recognition is necessary because the knowledge about how the consumer moves, why he changes the points of contact as the carriers of experience enable appropriate actions in the sphere of marketing
Pulses	All operational functions (systems of motivation, organisation, support for marketing processes and processes of management of IT solutions, etc.) that on the basis of the above analyses allow to gain knowledge about "the methods of customers' thinking and acting" better than before (Zaltman, 2008, p. 37), and they ensure proper relationships with customer on each stage of cooperation and involvement
People	Workers, because it is assumed that in the process of continuous changes, especially resulting from implementation of new technological solutions, organisational culture that supports open, creative people enthusiastically approaching all innovative changes is needed. At the same time, the occurrence of this "instrument" in the new set of 4P should emphasise that in the world dominated by new technologies, human factor still remains crucial

Source: author's own case study based on (Gruda & Jakubów, 2016).



## Social media as a carrier of experiences of contemporary consumers

Experiential marketing is the concept comprising provision of experiences to consumers in each point of contact with brand (company). Nowadays it is observed that increasingly greater part of marketing activities in which consumer has contact with brand is transferred to virtual space, including social media. Thereby, they are becoming vital carriers of customer experience in a similar or often greater dimension than are products/services with their attributes, sales methods, traditional customer service or communication in traditional media. It seems that one can easily formulate the thesis that for many contemporary consumers social media are becoming a natural channel of communication with brand, a point of contact, and thus the source of their experiences. In the literature on the subject there are many definitions of social media. The definition proposed by M. Kaplan and M. Haenlein (2010, pp. 59–68)<sup>2</sup> is one of the most widely accepted by both the researchers and practitioners. It describes social media as a set of applications based on technological and ideological Web 2.0 basis that enables creation and exchange of the content created by the users. At the same time it should be said that combining technological aspect and interactivity that result in creation of new content is what is common for most definitions.

Growing interest in social media in terms of creation of customer experiences results from their growing popularity and continuous expansion of their possibilities in affecting companies and customers. This is proved by the results of research conducted by Cumulus Media company among others. It shows that within almost only 60 seconds 174 000 internet users were scrolling Instagram, 481 000 twits occurred, 4 300 000 films were seen on YouTube, 2 400 000 snaps were sent, and 973 000 users logged in the Facebook (IAB, 2019). At the same time, in 2018 social networks had 3.484 billion users in the world (462.5 million people in Europe), who spent on average over 2 hours using social media during the day, and there were almost 9 accounts in social media per one Internet user (data based on Hootsuite & We Are Social, 2019). What does it mean for brands? Firstly, this data illustrates the potential of social media and show that they have impact on almost each aspect of personal life of contemporary consumers and market activity of companies. A thesis can be formulated with great probability that while seeking contact with brand, increasingly larger number of customers will choose social media regardless of the time of the day and the place of

residence. Additionally, according to Ph. Kotler and K.L. Keller (2013, p. 586), thanks to the speed and topicality of message, social media stimulate innovativeness of companies and give them complete knowledge about consumer needs and desires. This allows to support other communication activities of the company and develop consumer engagement and activity. These and other arguments somehow "demand" from brands to include activities in the sphere of social media in a broad eco-system of their contemporary communication and building customer experiences.

Furthermore, it is worth emphasising that application of social media by companies/brands can be referred to all three management levels (Mazurek, 2016, pp. 24–25):

- operational (e.g. current promotion of brand, ongoing customer service, keeping and maintaining dialogue between enterprise and customers or users);
- tactical (e.g. generating conversion and thus transformation of the user — the Internet user into customer who, on the basis of the content, he had contact with in social media, will be encouraged to perform a specific transaction);
- strategic (the use of social media to change the way of functioning of organisation and encourage innovative look at market relationships between enterprise and customer, e.g. crowdsourcing and crowdfunding activities).

Despite many benefits of inclusion of social media in marketing communication of brands and using them as a carrier of experiences of contemporary consumers, some limitations and related challenges are arising. Firstly it refers to restraining control over communication activities and the process of building positive experiences. At the same time "consumer nature of man" who as a customer is increasingly more demanding, active and realises the power of their opinions is also changing. Furthermore, consumers want to communicate with brand through their favourite social networking platform. Anyway, it often happens that negative experiences associated with for example traditional model of customer service stimulate people to seek the answer in social networks or to describe their experiences in social networks, while writing how a given brand (company) "treated" them during contact (more on the subject: Sadowski, 2013, p. 153 and next). Then communication often changes its character from the dialogue between the brand and "dissatisfied customer" into the so-called "multilog", i.e. actually multilateral communication conducted simultaneously between brand and its consumers and between the very consumers<sup>3</sup>. This situation causes that efficiency and effectiveness of brand actions in social media result not only from the activity of a given brand but is determined by many



variables independent of the very brand that lie within the activity and attitudes of the users — consumers (Mazurek, 2016, p. 26).

The potential of social media, benefits and limitations related to their use in marketing presented above makes brands attach increasingly greater importance to social media as a point of contact between customer and brand, and at the same time the carrier of positive experiences. Only well designed marketing communication that offers appropriately formulated content can be the source of such positive experiences. It provides customers with information they seek; it can engage them and build relationships based on trust.

Communication with the use of social media designed in this way, while becoming the source of positive experiences of consumers, can significantly contribute to building brand capital at the same time. This is indicated among others, by Christodoulides et al. (2006, pp. 799–825). In their view, constituent constructs comprise for example consumer experience on the Internet measured by the simplicity of navigation and reaching desirable information online, brand procreativity in virtual space measured by evaluation of the level of engagement in the dialogue with consumer and evaluation of the level of taking into account their opinions, emotional relationship, measured by the sense of consumer belonging to the group of brand users , as well as care and understanding from brand, and also trust measured by the level of ensuring privacy of the content and transaction, among others.

Summing up the deliberations, it should be emphasised that social media as a new interactive communication channel open new possibilities for brands, in the sphere of shaping customer experiences. They become for them both an opportunity, while opening many possibilities unknown before, but also a significant challenge because of their features. They demand recognition and understanding of dynamically changing environment and great ability to adapt to new reality.

brand towards the present and potential buyers, but it can be interpreted as "constructive dialogue" continuously conducted with the use of achievements of modern technologies. This dialogue also, or maybe mainly, consists in collecting information "coming from the market". It can be stated that through social media modern brands have become some kind of aggregator (Weber, 2011, p. 22) that gathers new ideas, research and opinions around itself, an active participant and creator of online communities, moderator of consumer discussion about brand and thanks to this, a source of newer and newer experiences for users.

In this situation, contemporary marketing communication with the use of social media is gaining the features of increasingly greater activity and creativity as an instrument of market activities. This significantly increases its importance in marketing strategies of brands. At the same time, determination of grounds for building efficient strategy of marketing communication with the use of social media is still a new experience for many brands. This situation requires seeking such approaches and models that would support building of such a strategy and at the same time would correspond well with determinants resulting from dynamically changing environment. SMART formula presented in Table 2 can be the response to such a search for an answer. The author defines it as a "genetic code" of brand communication with the use of social media. When the notion of "genetic code" is used in sciences of management, we usually focus on several most important encrypted features of the discussed phenomenon. Thus it can be said that "genetic code" of modern brand communication with the use of social media is a specific type of "code" for such dedicated strategy, presenting its fundament based on five pillars, i.e. synergy achieved by coherence of the strategy of brand presence in social media with the strategy created in offline space, methodicalness, content attractiveness, reactivity and transposition (compare Table 2).

## **Genetic code of contemporary communication of brand/company with the use of social media versus the concept of experiential marketing**

Social media significantly change the way and character of contemporary marketing communication. Firstly, it is no longer only a unilateral process of sending information from

## **Research methodology and discussion**

Data necessary to evaluate consumers' opinions on individual elements of the genetic code of contemporary brand communication with the use of social media was obtained through the survey with the use of the direct interview technique. The study was conducted from December 2018 until January 2019 by the students of the University of

**Table 2. SMART formula as the "genetic code" of the present brand communication with the use of social media**

<b>Elements of the "genetic code" of communication</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>S</b> Synergy	Synergy effect can be achieved through coherence of the strategy of brand presence in social media and the strategy created in offline space
<b>M</b> Methodicalness	Regularity in publishing content — consistently and in compliance with specified principles
<b>A</b> Attractiveness of the content	Attractive and engaging content, building the brand image consistently with the rule stating that "on social media you are what you publish"
<b>R</b> Reactivity	Availability, ensuring that the consumers will immediately obtain the answer to the questions, findings or suggestions related to brand
<b>T</b> Transposition	Ability to generate, recognise and implement ideas coming from consumers and transmitted via social media

Source: author's own case study.

Economics in Katowice within the "Marketing research" course. Due to growing significance of the commercial potential of social media as the channel of marketing communication and interaction with customers, the main purpose of the study was to identify the way in which the use of social media in brand marketing communication is perceived by contemporary consumers. The research tool applied in the study was a review questionnaire that was composed of 16 questions in the main part and three questions about respondents' particulars (sex, age, education). The main part of the questionnaire included general and relevant part. The purpose of the general part was to identify the respondents' profile in terms of the use of social media, also including the determination of the rate of respondents who declared the fact of non-using social media and recognition of the reasons for the lack of activity in social media. The relevant part was aimed only at the respondents who declared in the research that they used social media. It included questions referring to their interactions and experiences with brands that apply social media in the process of marketing communication with them.

The research questionnaire was addressed at people born in four different periods that were determined at the beginning of the research (they were respondents born after 2000 as representing the so-called generation Z, born in 1980–1999, the so-called generation Y, born in 1965–1979, the so-called generation X and born in 1946–1964, the so-called Baby boomer generation). Non-probability sample selection was applied. At the same time, considering the results of COBS research (Felisiak, 2018) according to which mainly age determines online presence and presence in social networks, as

well as the style of using the Internet (presence in social media is definitely more often than on average declared by Internet users who are less than 35 years old, whereas explicitly less frequently by people aged 55 and more) it was stated that the most represented group in the sample should include respondents who are representatives of generation Z and generation Y. The Internet and social media are in a way for them a natural space of learning, searching for and collecting information, a natural method of communication and building experiences in the sphere of broadly perceived social interactions, including interactions with brands (Tapscott, 2010, p. 50). There were 709 respondents in the study, including 400 women (56.4%) and 309 men (43.6%). According to adopted assumptions people representing the so-called generation Z and generation Y were prevailing in the sample (in total 63.9%). The respondents born in 1965–1979 — the so-called generation X represented 21.0%, and those born in 1946–1964, the so-called baby boomers represented 15.1%. Due to the fact that 16.2% respondents declared that they did not use social media (they were people born mainly in 1946–1964 and in 1965–1979), the questions from the relevant part of the questionnaire (the sample of 585 respondents in total), were actually aimed at people representing generation Y and Z.

The author realises that the method of sample selection does not entitle to perceive the studied sample as representative, and restraints the possibility to formulate statistical conclusions and generalise results for the entire population. However, it seems that the research results can constitute an important source of information in the sphere of discussed subject area and



furthermore they allow for analyses in both holistic approach and in comparative approach to specific generations.

Table 3 shows results of research on significance of specific elements of the genetic code of contemporary brand communication with the use of social media in consumers' opinions who previously declared that they used social media and actively observed brands in them. The respondents were asked to order provided five vital, identified determinants of brand activity (component parts of "genetic code") to build its desirable image in social media from 1 to 5 in such a way that the determinant that according to the respondent was the most significant was ranked as 1 and the determinant that is the least important was ranked as 5. In the next stage of the research procedures the places indicated by respondents were attributed the scale according to the following rule: rank no 1 — 5 points, rank no 2 — 4 points, and so on... rank no 5 — 1 point. The last stage was adding the points obtained by specific component parts and development of ordinal scale of preferences based on obtained results.

Research results presented in table 3 allowed to create the following series of preferences: Attractiveness of the content → Synergy → Reactivity → Methodicalness → Transposition. In

can be applied by brands. They are content of the following character (<http://www.smartinsights.com/content-management/content-marketing-strategy/the-content-marketingmatrix-new-infographic>, accessed 1.07.2019):

- Entertaining, referring to emotions. Their task is to build the brand awareness among consumers. They include knowledge quizzes on lifestyle types, contests, games, films with the brand mark, among others.
- Inspirational, referring to emotions. They aim at affecting the sale of products/services. They comprise widgets, content supported by the image of famous people (celebrities), opinions of other people expressed in forums, discussion groups, opinions under products and also rankings that compare products with others.
- Educational, referring to rational premises. Their task is to build the brand awareness. They include papers, e-books, infographics, press releases, all types of reports, including reports on trends, videos with manuals.
- Convincing, referring to the reasons of rational consumers. Their task is to influence buying decisions. They include demo materials in the form of videos, checklists, webinars (seminars conducted on the Internet), examples of good business practices, calculators, spreadsheets.

**Table 3. Final results of research on significance of component elements of "genetic code" of contemporary brand communication with the use of social media based on respondents' opinion**

Category of brand/company actions	Number of indications					Number of points
	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5	
Synergy	142	103	125	116	99	1828
Methodicalness	114	102	137	110	122	1731
Attractiveness of the content	133	141	122	110	79	1894
Reactivity	119	138	107	125	96	1814
Transposition	77	101	94	124	189	1508

Source: author's own case study.

the author's opinion it can facilitate preparation and implementation of an effective program of social media application in brand communication.

It shows that **attractiveness of the content** is the key element of "genetic code" of contemporary brand communication with the use of social media. A very interesting "mathematical" definition of content attractiveness proposed by the head of NewsCred strategy should be mentioned here. It says that it is a common part of content "produced" by brands and the content that consumers need. At the same time to prepare attractive content, brand can apply the so-called Content Marketing Matrix. The matrix illustrates four types of content that

**Synergy** obtained through implementation of the strategy of coherence of the brand presence in social media with the strategy created in offline space is the next important component in respondents' opinion. This component can be considered the key to efficient and effective brand communication and building customer experiences, especially in the period of systematically growing number of available communication channels that consumers use, and in which they can contact brands and build their own experiences. The skill of implementation of coherence in the strategy of brand presence in social media with the strategy created in offline space proves the ability of the



brand to approach the issue in a broad holistic way. Providing the consumers with coherent brand message in their natural environment should be the task of each brand. The matrix of media application that should perform a key and/or complementary role on specific stages of "consumer journey" from the stage of building brand awareness, engagement, active consideration, purchase, consumption, building relationships and promotion proposed by A. Young (2010, p. 157) could be a useful tool for implementation of this component in the strategy of communication.

**Reactivity** was in the next place in the series of preferences. This element indicates the fact that social media represent the space of immediate reaction — consumers in incredibly short time can produce posts that are a reaction, an effect of an experience with brand and in the same way they expect an immediate reaction from brand. Reaction time can therefore be considered one of important determinants of communication success in social media. Sotrender's research of 2017 shows that operators of mobile networks as well as such brands as Player.pl, Idea Bank and ipla can "boast" of reactions on the level 98–100% questions on Facebook. It was also found that the fastest reaction was 174 seconds and belonged to Plus, the first 25 brands/companies from TOP 100 reacted in a shorter time than one hour, whereas the brands that posted comments the fastest included Media Expert (2 minutes 23 seconds), Plus (2.59 minute) and T-Mobile (3.38 minute). At the same time the research shows that 42% consumers expect a response within 30 minutes and 42% within an hour (results of research based on presentation of J. Zajac during Akademia Marketingu [Marketing Academy], Krakow 8–9.11.2017).

**Methodicalness** is the next component of contemporary brand communication with the use of social media in the "ranking". In fact, each brand is aware that they cannot fully control the process of marketing communication and build only positive experiences among their consumers in social media, but they can actively participate in exchange of opinions and develop discussion with a thread introduced by them, etc. This represents the necessity to prepare a well-developed plan of the brand presence and communication, comprising the rules of social media monitoring, to publish content that is interesting for users, to engage the users in further promotion of specific messages, to measure the effectiveness of actions, consistency, etc. among others. Such "methodical" behaviour allows the brand to build an expert position in a specific time, and this in turn increases consumer trust in brand. Methodicalness also represents the necessity to care about the language of communication adjusted to the target group, development of visual form of posts and the rules of using hashtags, etc. among others.

**Transposition**, i.e. the brand ability to generate, recognise and implement the ideas coming from consumers and communicated via social media was attributed the least significance on the scale of preferences. The lowest position of transposition as a component of "genetic code" of contemporary brand communication with the use of social media in respondents' opinions can prove that consumers are not likely to choose this type of experiences. This is because they demand from them an activity that is greater than average. Maybe it would be a good idea to identify what would encourage consumers to engage more in co-creation of brand marketing offer and greater activity. Certainly, the reasons for consumers' involvement in co-creation of brand offer will be diversified in such research (for example money bonus, chance for employment, valuable reward, participation in a play, own satisfaction and the wish to present their skills and creativity among others), nevertheless, it will allow the brands to design the processes in companies so that they will be able to benefit from knowledge and experiences of consumers and engage them in market operations of brand. This is a challenge to many brands, nevertheless we can provide many examples of brands, for example Lego Dell, Procter & Gamble, Sony, Starbucks and Unilever (Gouillart & Ramaswamy, 2011), that implement effective efforts to engage customers more while offering them the possibilities of building experiences in the process of co-creation of a given brand value and real impact on what the brand will offer and how it will change. It should be emphasised that the significance of this component will be growing because it can generate many new experiences for customers, not only comprising submission of ideas of a new product or modifications of existing products, but also creation of new kinds of creative content concerning brand, spending time with brand in an active way, activity in the role of "brand spokesman" or participation in development of brand promotional and pricing strategies, etc.

## Conclusions

Social media significantly expand the scope of possibilities for brand operational activity and impact on customers. Thus brand communication and building customer experiences will be regularly transferred to social media that overcome traditional forms of communication with their promptness. Furthermore, they are becoming the source of many positive experiences. This allows brands to build competitive advantage not only on the basis of functional features of products/services, but firstly on the basis of creation and provision of positive, unique memorable experiences and emotions to consumers, which can engage and emotionally attach customers



to brands. Additionally, while being an interactive space for consumers, social media fulfil two key roles (<http://www.portalspozywczysty.pl/handel/wiadomosci/ekspert-w-strategiach-komunikacji-sieci-handlowych-social-media-pelnia-dwie-wazne-role,153044.html>, accessed 1.07.2019):

- Firstly, they allow brands to communicate own, practical content in each place where consumers are found (YouTube, FB, Instagram, etc.), while becoming in a way their "everyday companion". Additionally, this communication can be complemented with influencers whose task is to authenticate the practical content of communication.
- Secondly, they allow brands to communicate offers, promotions and discounts while

enhancing buying awareness of consumers and their ability to evaluate the price attractiveness properly. Satisfaction that is a result of acting like the "bargain hunter" is related for many of them not only to utilitarian but also emotional benefits that are then often shared with friends.

In such situation the importance of social media in brand communication strategies is significantly growing. Although social media generate challenges to brands, they clearly increase communication abilities of companies and they become an important source of customer experiences. The author believes that deliberations presented in the paper will contribute to further research on discussed area of both quantitative and qualitative character.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Indicated five areas of experiences represent the typology of experiences broadly applied in the literature on the subject that refers to Schmitt's modular approach (more on the subject: Kacprzak, 2017, p. 42 and next).

<sup>2</sup> General approval in the literature on the subject for the proposed definition of social media is proved at least by the number of citations of the paper that include the definition (p. 61) — according to Google Scholar on 1.07.2019, there were 15 607 of them.

<sup>3</sup> Here the issue of occurrence of the so called Streisand effect should be indicated. It is the phenomenon of censoring and deleting some posts with claims, uncomfortable questions or negative opinions by brands. The research shows that such actions of brands bring the opposite effect and the content is disseminated among a wide group of people for example through the use of the so-called mirrors or through peer-to-peer networks (<http://www.islownik.pl>, accessed 1.07.2019).

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# Wspomnienie o Panu Profesorze Leszku Żabińskim (1947–2019)

Z wielkim smutkiem i żalem przyjęliśmy informację, że 19 września 2019 r. w wieku 72 lat odszedł na wieczny spoczynek powszechnie ceniony i szanowany wybitny uczeń oraz nauczyciel akademicki profesor Leszek Żabiński.

Prof. zw. dr hab. Leszek Tadeusz Jerzy Żabiński urodził się 18.08.1947 r. we Wrocławiu i zawsze był silnie związany z tym miastem. Studia ekonomiczne ukończył w 1969 r. w Wyższej Szkole Ekonomicznej we Wrocławiu, na Wydziale Ekonomiki Przedsiębiorstw. Na tej uczelni, przekształconej wówczas w Akademię Ekonomiczną im. Oskara Langego, w 1975 r. doktoryzował się na Wydziale Gospodarki Narodowej. Macierzysta uczelnia była dla profesora Leszka Żabińskiego miejscem pracy w latach 1969–1979. Stopień doktora habilitowanego nauk ekonomicznych (w zakresie ekonomii) uzyskał on w 1981 r. na Wydziale Ekonomiki Produkcji i Obrotu Akademii Ekonomicznej w Poznaniu.

W 1979 r. profesor Leszek Żabiński związał się z Katowicami. W latach 1979–1985 pracował w katowickim oddziale Instytutu Rynku Wewnętrznego i Konsumpcji, którego był dyrektorem (1987–1991). W latach 1992–1995 pełnił też funkcję kierownika Zakładu Ekonomiki Górnictwa i Regionu Głównego Instytutu Górnictwa w Katowicach. W sierpniu 1979 r. rozpoczął pracę w Aka-

demii Ekonomicznej im. Karola Adamieckiego w Katowicach (obecnie Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny), gdzie w latach 1984–1987 r. był Prorektorem ds. Dydaktyki. Kierował na UE w Katowicach Zakładem Ekonomiki Obrotu Towarowego i Usług (1984–1987), a wcześniej był wicedyrektorem tego Instytutu (1981–1984). W 1989 r. otrzymał tytuł profesora nauk ekonomicznych. W 1991 objął na tej uczelni kierownictwo Katedry Polityki Rynkowej i Zarządzania Marketingowego, od 1995 roku na stanowisku profesora zwyczajnego, i pełnił je aktywnie do 2016 r. W latach 2002–2008 pełnił funkcję Dziekana Wydziału Zarządzania, a w roku 2012 został wybrany na czteroletnią kadencję na stanowisko Rektora Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego w Katowicach.

Profesor Leszek Żabiński był związany z licznymi krajowymi i zagranicznymi towarzystwami naukowymi. Był członkiem Towarzystwa Naukowego Organizacji i Kierownictwa, International Association for Research Economic Psychology w Brukseli oraz The European Marketing Academy (EMAC). W latach 1993–2005 był prezesem w katowickim Oddziale Polskiego Towarzystwa Ekonomicznego, a w latach 2002–2006 członkiem Zarządu Krajowego i Prezydium PTE. Od 2006 r. wchodził w skład Rady Naukowej Polskiego Towarzystwa Ekonomicznego. Profesor Leszek Żabiń-

ski był także powoływany w skład Komitetu Nauk Organizacji i Zarządzania (1999–2003), a w latach 1996–1999 był członkiem Rady Głównej Szkolnictwa Wyższego oraz przewodniczącym Komisji Ekonomicznej w tejże Radzie. W latach 2003–2006 był członkiem Państwowej Komisji Akredytacyjnej oraz Komitetu Nauk Ekonomicznych Polskiej Akademii Nauk. Od roku 2012 był członkiem Konferencji Rektorów Akademickich Szkół Polskich, Konferencji Rektorów Uniwersytetów Ekonomicznych oraz Konferencji Regionalnej Rektorów Uczelni Śląskich, gdzie pełnił też funkcję sekretarza. Był także honorowym członkiem Business Centre Club oraz honorowym prezesem Polskiego Towarzystwa Ekonomicznego. Liczba organizacji, w których działał profesor Leszek Żabiński, wskazuje jednoznacznie na niezwykłą aktywność oraz silną pozycję w środowisku, które doceniało jego pracę, wiedzę, umiejętności i zaangażowanie.

Profesor Leszek Żabiński wyraźnie dostrzegał znaczenie współpracy z praktyką i aktywie działał w wielu krajowych i zagranicznych podmiotach oraz organizacjach. Zasiadał w Sekcji Ekonomiki Górnictwa Komitetu Nauk Górniczych PAN (1993–2003). Był członkiem Rady Strategii Społeczno-Gospodarczej przy Radzie Ministrów RP (2002–2005) oraz Rady Nadzorczej Polskich Hut Stali S.A. (2002–2004). Za olbrzymią aktywność i zasługi dla polskiej nauki był wielokrotnie odznaczany wysokimi odznaczeniami państwowymi oraz nagradzany licznymi nagrodami ministerialnymi oraz uczelnianymi.

Profesor Leszek Żabiński był ekspertem z zakresu polityki rynkowej, teorii rynku i zarządzania marketingowego. Wśród obszarów jego zainteresowań naukowych i badawczych należy wymienić teorię rynku i marketingu, marketing, zarządzanie marketingowe, marketing strategiczny, globalny i relacji, metodologię naukowych badań biznesu i marketingu, polityki gospodarki turystycznej, aspekty rynkowe i ekonomiczne transformacji, w tym restrukturyzacji sektorowej i regionalnej.

Profesor Leszek Żabiński był niezwykle pracowitym i oddanym nauce badaczem, czego efektem jest ponad 350, bardzo wartościowych i cenionych w środowisku prac naukowych i naukowo-badawczych, których był autorem. Zawsze podkreślał potrzebę łączenia teorii z praktyką, stąd wiele z tych opracowań miało charakter wdrożeniowy na rzecz wspomnianej praktyki gospodarczej. Były to m.in. prace z zakresu zarządzania i marketingu strategicznego w hutnictwie, górnictwie, przemyśle artykulów konsumpcyjnych w handlu spożywczym, w mediach.

Wśród bardzo licznych publikacji naukowych profesora Leszka Żabińskiego, będących efektem

jego niebywałej pasji i zaangażowania w pracę naukową i badawczą, można wymienić m.in.: „Zarządzanie marketingowe. Podstawy teoretyczne. Węzlowe specjalizacje badawcze” (red. nauk.) z 2004 r., „Marketing globalny i jego strategie” (red. nauk.) z 2002 r., „Modele strategii marketingowych” (red. nauk.) z 2000 r. (wszystkie trzy wydane przez Wydawnictwo Akademii Ekonomicznej w Katowicach). Szczególne miejsce na liście publikacji zajmuje książka „Marketing produktów systemowych” (red. nauk.) wydana w 2012 r. przez Polskie Wydawnictwo Ekonomiczne. Była ona zwieńczeniem kilku lat badań profesora Leszka Żabińskiego i jego zespołu nad rolą współczesnego marketingu w procesach tworzenia, komunikowania i dostarczania ofert systemowych produktów materialnych oraz usługowych. Problematyka produktów systemowych była dla profesora Leszka Żabińskiego bardzo ważna — był twórcą tej koncepcji i jej najlepszym ambasadorem. Podejmował ją wielokrotnie w swoich artykułach naukowych oraz w trakcie wystąpień i dyskusji na licznych konferencjach środowiskowych, w tym na szczególnie ważnych dla tego grona badaczy Zjazdach Katedr Marketingu, Handlu i Konsumpcji.

Profesor Leszek Żabiński zawsze bardzo mocno podkreślał znaczenie odpowiedniego upowszechniania, dyskutowania i publikacji efektów prac badawczych. Był inicjatorem i redaktorem naczelnym czasopisma Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego w Katowicach w języku angielskim „Journal of Economics and Management”. Był też członkiem Rady Naukowej czasopisma „Marketing i Rynek”, tytułu bardzo ważnego dla całego środowiska naukowo-badawczego zajmującego się marketingiem, rynkiem i zachowaniami konsumentów. Był członkiem Rad Programowych wielu konferencji i często przewodniczył sesjom plenarnym czy tematycznym. W niezwykły sposób potrafił stworzyć atmosferę sprzyjającą dyskusji i wymianie opinii. Jego spokój oraz życzliwość była pomocna szczególnie dla młodszych pracowników nauki, którzy dopiero uczyli się niełatwej sztuki publicznych wystąpień i obrony swoich tez.

Profesor Leszek Żabiński był też bardzo cenionym dydaktykiem, który prowadził zajęcia na wszystkich poziomach studiów — licencjackich, magisterskich, podyplomowych oraz doktorskich. Dzięki jego wykładom studenci i słuchacze mieli okazję poznawać nowe koncepcje marketingu, zarządzania marketingowego, planowania marketingowego i tworzenia strategii marketingowych. Jako nauczyciel akademicki pełnił opiekę promotorską na studiach I i II stopnia. Wypromował ponad 200 magistrów. Był także promotorem i recenzentem wielu rozpraw doktorskich i habilitacyjnych.



Wypromował 15 obronionych rozpraw doktorskich, z których 10 zostało opublikowanych.

Jako Kierownik Katedry Polityki Rynkowej i Zarządzania Marketingowego, której był inicjatorem i twórcą, profesor Leszek Żabiński potrafił dzielić się swoją wiedzą i bogatym doświadczeniem naukowym. Przez wiele lat był dla swoich podopiecznych nauczycielem i mentorem, dzięki któremu mogli poznawać najlepsze wzorce badawcze i zgłębiać tajniki pracy akademickiej. Profesor Leszek Żabiński umiał wykształcić szczególną relację mistrz-uczeń, która była dla jego wychowanków niezwykłą okazją do obcowania ze wszechstronnym badaczem i naukowcem z krwi i kości. Relację opartą na szacunku z obu stron, co motywowało nas do wysiłku i podejmowania nowych wyzwań. Zawdzięczamy profesorowi Leszkowi Żabińskiemu umiejętność odpowiedzialnego podejścia do zadań, systematyczność i zacięcie badawcze. To była bezcenna lekcja, która pozwoliła nam się rozwijać, ukształtowała nas i pomogła nam dojrzeć. Nie do przecenienia jest warsztat, który zyskaliśmy dzięki tej relacji, podobnie jak wszyscy, którzy mieli okazję współpracować z profesorem Leszkiem Żabińskim. Te zasoby wiedzy i umiejętności zdobyte pod jego okiem procentują i nadal będą procentować w życiu zawodowym i w kontaktach międzyludzkich.

Zachowamy we wdzięcznej pamięci organizowane przez profesora Leszka Żabińskiego zebranie Katedry, podczas których oprócz kwestii naukowych i zawodowych można było też poruszyć sprawy bardziej przyziemne i spotkać się z życzliwym przyjęciem i sympatycznym słowem. Wiele osób współpracujących z profesorem dobrze pamięta, że zawsze znajdował czas na rozmowę, gdy była taka

potrzeba, na znalezienie rozwiązania w trudnych niekiedy sytuacjach, na wsparcie merytoryczne, gdy konieczna była konsultacja. Tym cenniejsze są teraz notatki i komentarze pisane przez profesora jego wyjątkowym, bardzo charakterystycznym piśmem.

Oprócz zamiłowania do nauk ekonomicznych i nauk o zarządzaniu profesor Leszek Żabiński miał też inne pasje, do których należały zwłaszcza historia i nauka społeczna Kościoła katolickiego i chrześcijaństwa. Interesowała go też muzyka klasyczna oraz literatura polska i europejska. Był erudytą o niespotykanej wrażliwości i otwartości na drugiego człowieka, który nigdy nie stronił od dialogu. Potrafił widzieć wiele różnych spraw bardzo szeroko i wielostronnie. Był humanistą w największym znaczeniu, którego postawa intelektualna i moralna może i powinna być wzorem do naśladowania.

Odszedł autor licznych prac naukowych, wybitny uczyony i nauczyciel akademicki, ale także, a może przede wszystkim, mądry, dobry i życzliwy człowiek, który cieszył się powszechnym autorytetem i szacunkiem. Zegnamy profesora Leszka Żabińskiego, który był bardzo zaangażowany w sprawy środowiska akademickiego i miał szczególną umiejętność jego integrowania. Będzie nam go brakować, choć zostaje pamięć o nim, która będzie inspirować do rozwoju i podejmowania działań godnie kontynuujących rozpoczęte przez niego dzieła.

**Dr hab. Małgorzata Kieżel**

Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny w Katowicach,  
Katedra Zarządzania Marketingowego i Turystyki

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