Aspects of Mobility of e-Marketing from Customer Perspective

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Abstract—The main aim of this article is to identify students' opinions concerning the place, role and influence of electronic marketing tools on making purchases on the Internet. The authors have applied the division of e-marketing into its traditional and electronic forms, on desktop computers and mobile devices, which was significant due to diversified opinions of clients concerning its use. The studies have been carried out with the application of a CAWI method examining a convenient, partially randomly selected sample of clients (students) who are the most active in the Internet. The studies were aimed at evaluating specific e-marketing media and techniques which, in the customers' view, influenced shopping on the Internet. In particular, the respondents commented on the advantages, disadvantages and benefits resulting from the application of e-marketing on mobile devices. The conclusions and recommendations from the study may contribute to better use of these factors in order to facilitate consumers' purchases, not only in the Internet.

I. INTRODUCTION

THE PRIMARY objective of this paper is to present the impact and significance of electronic marketing (e-marketing) in the purchasing process, based on the opinions of a selected group of potential clients. It is a next study conducted as part of a series of research analysing a similar group of respondents in the situation where the opinions on e-marketing are largely diversified, and a dynamic development of mobile devices may be observed. Simultaneously, it should be noted that the study is of supplementary nature in relation to comprehensive studies undertaken by the authors examining the quality of websites and mobile applications.

Electronic marketing is understood in this paper as a combination of all components related to information technologies, especially the Internet, in order to increase the willingness of potential customers to make purchases [13]. It is associated with many tools which are mainly applied on the Internet [18] as well as new sales and payment techniques [3]. It encompasses a wide range of themes connected with, for example, the evaluation of the possibilities of new devices (smartphones, tablets), users' response to new marketing forms and tools, the development of new e-marketing tools, etc. Kaznowski [10] believes that it is a significant part of the marketing strategy of an organisation. On the other hand, it is the result of a combination of modern marketing theories, use of information technologies [16] as well as the product

of project management, in particular, change and risk management [7]. In order to create a marketing strategy related to the promotion of products and services via the Internet, it is necessary to carry out a project consisting in, among others, building an e-shopping website and devising marketing tools which would help to promote this website on the Internet. For a marketing strategy to be successful, we should collect and examine the opinions of potential clients regarding the media and marketing techniques. If we consider all the above comments, then electronic market will represent all the above-mentioned marketing activities aimed at meeting operational, tactical and strategic goals with the application of the Internet infrastructure [5]. At present, mobile marketing is an essential part of electronic marketing. Due to the fact that it is perceived as all (advertising and promotional) activities using the functionalities of mobile devices [2], [9], it is difficult to distinguish between advertising available in browsers and special, dedicated smartphone mobile applications [8]. According to AMMA (The American Mobile Marketing Association), mobile marketing is understood as any form of marketing, advertising or promotional activity addressed to clients and transmitted via the mobile channel [15]. This definition of the phenomenon is the one applied in the present article. In addition, m-marketing offers basically unlimited possibilities of adapting the forms of promotion and communication to the needs of an individual recipient [12].

Electronic marketing was the object of many studies, both in the Polish and foreign markets, also from the point of view of a client [14], [6], [17], [19], [11], and new works analysing this field continue to appear. It is true that the majority of significant studies were published before 2015, the period of the most intense development of modern smartphones and tablets along with their dedicated applications, nevertheless, especially in mass surveys, new development trends and new phenomena appearing on this market are constantly being analyzed [20].

The authors of this article aim to distinguish some of the basic tendencies related to these new phenomena as well as implications for the future development of electronic marketing, including mobile marketing. The present studies, which main aim is to analyse the use of e-marketing among the users

of all kinds of computer devices used to access the Internet. The findings presented in this article, discussion and resultant conclusions constitute a report of the research involving a selected sample of Internet users in Poland at the beginning of 2019.

II. THE ASSUMPTIONS OF THE METHODOLOGY AND PRESENTATION OF A STUDY SAMPLE

Following the previously conducted research [5], [4], the authors adopted the verified research procedure which consists of the following stages: constructing the first version of the survey questionnaire; verifying the questionnaire analysing the respondents' comprehension of the questions contained in the survey and the significance of the queries for the research, with the participation of randomly selected groups of respondents engaged in the pilot study, random selection of the groups of students for the study; making the verified and improved survey questionnaire available for the selected student groups (with the application of a CAWI – Computer Associated Web Interview method); analysis and discussion of the obtained findings; conclusions and possible directions for e-marketing development, on the basis of literature references and the authors' own studies.

In its final form, after eliminating the least significant questions and introducing changes aimed at clearer presentation of the remaining queries, the survey questionnaire included twenty-three substantive questions, divided into five groups and five questions related to the so-called demographics of the study sample. The scope of questions for the specified parts of the survey was as follows: electronic marketing environment, the effectiveness of electronic marketing, evaluation of e-marketing as a source of information on products/services, evaluation of the distinguished e-marketing media and techniques: the evaluation of selected e-marketing media, respondent's approach towards marketing on mobile devices and some demographics features.

The presented study was carried out in mid-March 2019. The research sample was selected as a partially convenient and partially random sample among the students of the University of Warsaw. An invitation to complete a survey questionnaire was distributed electronically among 356 students, both full-time and part-time courses, as randomly selected students' groups. 294 students completed survey questionnaires, which constitutes nearly 83% of the sample. This indicates nearly a threefold increase in the number of respondents from the same environment compared to the study of 2016 [5], which suggests increased interest in topics related to the possibilities of using the Internet for marketing purposes, especially in its mobile form. The selection of the sample consisting of students brought about certain limitations with regard to the possibility to interpret the findings. As the studies by Batorski and Płoszaj [1] indicate, the age group among which the studies have been carried out is a population which is most active in the Internet, most focused on innovation, and the one which is also the fastest to purchase and apply the latest technical solutions. Therefore, it is difficult to generalise the

obtained results to be indicative of the entire society. On the other hand, it is a group which for the above-mentioned reasons is the most competent to evaluate the tools used in the internet and mobile marketing, because they spend the greatest amount of time in the Internet, not only to obtain information, but also to make purchases and communicate with the shops, using websites and mobile applications many times a day.

In the analysed sample, more than 95% of the respondents were representatives of this most active social group. The group included individuals who were 18-24 years old, with the average age of slightly over 21, where all survey participants had secondary education. Among the respondents, there were 57% of women and 43% of men, which reflects the present gender structure of UW students. At present, in the examined study sample there were 55% of working students and 45% of students who were not professionally active. More than 52% of the respondents came from cities with over 500,000 residents, further 11% from towns with 100-500,000 inhabitants, 24% from the towns with 10-100,000 residents, less than 5% from small towns up to 100 inhabitants, and only 9% were from villages. In the present study, the share of students coming from large cities increased, mainly at the expense of people coming from rural areas.

III. ANALYSIS OF THE OBTAINED FINDINGS AND THEIR DISCUSSION

The survey questionnaire was made available on the servers of the University of Warsaw. The questions were divided into several groups, and the analysis of the responses with the discussion and comments are presented below.

The first group of questions was of introductory nature. Its goal was to identify the conditions of using electronic marketing. The queries concerned the frequency of using the Internet, the type of most frequently visited websites, devices used for this purpose as well as the place and frequency of doing online shopping. The response to the first question appears to confirm the other findings [1] – all students use the Internet a few times a day. Undoubtedly, this was due to the popularity of mobile devices and – as it seems, a specific environmental culture of using them everywhere and at any time. This conclusion also results from the response to the following question, where over 23% of the respondents stated that it is the main and the only device which they use to connect with the Internet. Given that almost 12% of respondents use only a laptop and desktop computer for this purpose, this still confirms a clear advantage of this device over others. The greatest share of the sample – 44%, however, uses a combination of a laptop and a smartphone to connect with the Internet. As indicated in the comments section, the smartphone is mainly used to listen to music, communicate, obtain information and carry out small financial operations. Financial decisions which require careful consideration and extensive works or communications are usually associated with working on a laptop. In comparison with the situation from three years ago, the use of the smartphone as the only device to connect with the Internet declined (by nearly 10%),

and the use of smartphone and laptop increased (by almost 11%). The most frequently visited websites are social media websites (25%). Websites providing information/news are also popular - 12%. Thus, it emerges that the main and widely appreciated functions of the Internet are those which are associated with providing information or communicating. The use of search engines is also of primary importance with regard to providing information which the respondents require (18%). However, searching for a particular item is not always associated with purchasing it on the Internet: it is frequently only connected with looking for data concerning a given product or service. Nevertheless, e-shopping websites are most frequently visited by 19% of the respondents, and financial services by 21%. Thus, the area where electronic marketing might be applied is wide. The growing popularity of the use of mobile devices is demonstrated by the indicated places of accessing the Internet – nearly 93% of the respondents stated that they use it everywhere, and 13 times fewer people (7%) responded that they use it at work, at home or the university.

The second part of the survey concerned the perception of the effectiveness of the application of electronic marketing by internet users: their subjective evaluation of the phenomenon of e-marketing, its comparison with traditional marketing and evaluation of the potential advantage of e-marketing over traditional marketing. The respondents assess internet marketing as good or very good in over 84%, and only over 15% perceive it as satisfactory or non-satisfactory. This is probably caused by the opinion that 24% of the respondents are convinced that internet and mobile marketing is better, and over 50% believe that the greatest effectiveness is achieved through a combination of electronic and traditional marketing. In turn, nearly 23% of survey participants think that the two types of marketing are difficult to compare because they are addressed to different target groups. In the case of almost a quarter of recipients, there exists a belief that the effectiveness of marketing depends on the age of the recipients and the most frequent use of media (smartphone versus laptop) associated with it. The respondents regard continuous availability (33%, 25% in 2016) via mobile and remote or desktop devices and the possibility of buying items after clicking on the advertising field (via link) (nearly 26% as compared to 19% in 2016) to be the greatest sources of advantage of marketing in the Internet over traditional marketing. Also, the previously emphasised possibility to obtain more information about a product or service (25%) is of considerable importance.

The third part of the survey concerned issues related to the use of sources of obtaining information on products and services on the Internet and outside the Internet as well as its subsequent application. Among the analysed sample, the Internet proved to be an a decisively dominant medium (86% individuals) to access information about products and services (as compared to previous score at the level of 33%). In combination with the information obtained from a circle of friends and colleagues, this comprises over 98% of the places of obtaining commercial information. The importance of such media as television, radio, press, leaflets or paper information materials appears to be nearly non-existent, which points to little interest in this form of marketing among the representatives of this social group. Comparison engines turned out to be the most common tool (as it is believed by over 40% of the respondents) to search for information about products and services on the Internet. On the one hand, individuals are eager to use them, on the other hand, they do not perceive them as a tool which would be of crucial importance from the point of view of the effectiveness of e-marketing. The second place is taken by social media (nearly 31% share in the respondents' opinions). Even three years ago such an opinion would be encountered with disbelief; however, at present the influence of social media is becoming more and more important. This is also evidenced by the high, third place of blogs (15%). It is important to point out that even though a blog is in fact seen as a source of largely subjective information, it is still a medium which shapes consumers' tastes and views in certain sectors (e.g. fashion and cuisine). E-marketing offering different advertising forms contained on websites and carried out via emails is losing its importance (in total the score amounts to less than 9%). This form of advertising, which until recently was seen as dominant in this type of marketing, in a sense, is already regarded as a traditional form.

In the fourth part of the survey the respondents were asked to evaluate particular media and e-marketing techniques: the effectiveness of the applications of the media, approach towards selected e-marketing techniques, places in the ranking of products which induce consumers to make purchases, elements which respondents pay particular attention to and those which attract them the most as well as the evaluation of the respondent's approach to placing particular elements of e-marketing in marketing media and on various types of devices. The evaluation of the effectiveness of selected electronic marketing media was based on a four-point scale from: unsatisfactory, satisfactory, good and very good. The highest rated techniques were: presence in social media (26% of very good scores), clarity and attractiveness of a website (24% of very good scores) as well as the presence in mobile solutions (20%). The highest number of good scores were obtained by positioning (18%) and sponsored links (15%). In the latter case, the opinions were divided because slightly more people (18%) evaluated them only at a satisfactory level. Banners, links to other websites (19% and 18% respectively) and newsletters (21%) were evaluated at the border between satisfactory and unsatisfactory. The most unsatisfactory technique was related to advertising mailing messages (43% of unsatisfactory scores). This survey section was also aimed at creating a specific ranking of factors which motivate clients to make purchases. In this ranking, the first place among the responses was taken by the clarity and attractiveness of a website (33% of views). The second position was occupied by the presence in social media (22% of opinions). The subsequent places were taken by factors such as discounts after exceeding a specific value of the purchase (17% responses) and positioning (11%). The last positions in the assessment were taken by pop-up

windows (43% in the last position), e-mailing advertisements (20% in the penultimate position). According to respondents' opinions, clients pay the most attention to graphic elements (34%) as well as the innovativeness and attractiveness of the presentation (29%). They pay the least attention to technical elements of e-marketing such as: text (8% of the surveyed students believe it is the case) or the sound and music (14% of responses). So, what would attract them to visit the website? In the views of the study participants, at present, the most efficient in this regard are elements such as short videos (28%) and large graphic banners between a logo and the content (16%). The least effective are: buttons (5%) and pop-up windows (8%). The above ranking shows a specific transition of the existing clients to more modern technical elements of e-marketing and "fatigue" with the forms which are frequently encountered in the current practice of using the Internet. From the point of view of a client, the greatest acceptance for placing e-marketing in selected marketing media was recorded in the case of e-shopping websites (23% of responses), social media websites (20%) as well as company and news websites (15% and 16% respectively).

The last group of survey questions concerned the respondents' approach to the phenomenon of marketing on mobile devices, namely: advantages and disadvantages of m-marketing, benefits of m-marketing and the effectiveness of m-marketing techniques in relation to the client. Among the greatest advantages of m-marketing, the respondents mainly distinguished the fact that it is available at all times and everywhere (24%) and it can apply a personalised advertising message (21%). The last positions were taken by the high effectiveness of this medium (8%) as well as the fact that it can be treated as a determinant of modernity (10%). The advantages of m-marketing bring direct benefits for the client. Among the selected benefits, the most important factor (37% of the responses) was the use of NFC technique or QR codes (e.g. train tickets). According to the survey participants, the second significant benefit was geolocation and mobile navigation (31%). The subsequent positions were taken by the possibility to create mobile websites (13%) and SMS marketing (9%). The biggest disadvantage of m-marketing is the necessity of longer screen scrolling (34% of respondents believe it is the case) and increasing difficulty of getting rid of advertising messages (33%). Another negative factor is the fact that they take too much space on a screen which is already rather small (20%). The smallest number of people believe that advertising on mobile devices is too general and the graphic presentation is of lower quality (3-4%).

According to the survey participants, the greatest influence is indicated in the case of graphic advertising elements (66%). The next place is taken by the video advertising of the application (17%) and graphic advertising of the application (11%). The remaining kinds of mobile advertising are of limited importance, namely, they constitute only 5%. In the last six months, the aspects which had the greatest impact on respondents' purchases included: the use of mobile applications (44%), using geolocation and mobile navigation

(17%) as well as SMS marketing (14%). The remaining m-marketing techniques did not exert any significant influence on the purchases made by the respondents in the last six months.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The conducted and presented studies lead to the following conclusions:

- the examined population is "immersed" in the Internet nearly all the time, using mainly mobile devices to search information, exchange communications, enjoy broadly defined entertainment (music, films, computer games), as well as make purchases or carry out financial transactions. This tendency has strengthened in the last three years,
- the opinion about electronic marketing and its impact on purchases is still very high. This is not reflected in the value of purchases; nevertheless, this results from appreciating the informative function of the Internet. Continuous availability and convenience of the use is not only or mainly associated with making purchases, but it also serves to obtain information about a product or service. The decisions concerning the purchase and the way this operation is being carried out (via the Internet or traditionally) are taken later,
- the attitude of the respondents towards comparison engines is unclear. On the one hand, nearly everyone uses them; on the other, clients do not perceive them as the most important tool which might be seen as a specific advantage of e-marketing over traditional marketing,
- the effectiveness of e-marketing media, in the respondents' opinion, depends mainly on the presence in the social media and characteristic features of the website (its clarity and attractiveness); in the ranking of the factors inducing consumers to make purchases, apart from the above aspects, the respondents list also discounts offered after exceeding a certain amount of money,
- pop-up windows and spam mailing are the two most disliked elements in e-marketing,
- the respondents mainly pay attention to such technical elements of e-marketing, like graphic elements, in particular, short videos, appearing mainly on social media websites,
- the irritation associated with excessive advertising in mailings is growing; while the degree of acceptance of e-marketing received via traditional and modern devices is rather high (28%). The studies concerning this very phenomenon in relation to websites [e.g.] show that this solution appears to be the most undesirable with regard to the evaluation of the website quality. The greatest level of acceptance for video marketing on mobile devices undoubtedly also plays an important role in this respect,
- we may also observe a phenomenon of a specific shift of the interaction with the Internet from traditional to mobile devices and more and more common blurring of the boundaries between mobile laptops and tablets due to the greater universal use of laptops. The dominating position of smartphones in everyday life also has more

and more influence on the evaluation of e-marketing in its mobile form,

- the advantages of m-marketing result from its continuous availability and a possibility to personalise the message; the disadvantages mainly consist in the fact that it occupies a large part of the screen and its related necessity of longer scrolling or the fact that such an advertisement is more and more difficult to remove from the screen.

The limitation of the study was the fact that it was carried out among a rather uniform sample of respondents coming from academic environment. As previously mentioned, this was the most active group with regard to new technologies, and the obtained findings tend to present a somewhat idealised view of the clients' relation towards both the technologies themselves as well as the operating media of electronic advertising. The study should be extended to include also other social groups which do not use the Internet to such an extent, both in their private life and economic activity. This would allow for a more comprehensive, holistic view of the possibilities of e-marketing applications. On the other hand, international and intercultural studies seem to be a very interesting direction for further studies, which would allow for specific universalisation of the obtained findings.

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