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### GAMIFICATION AS A NEW TREND IN MARKETING

*The article deals with area and the examples to use gamification as a new trend in marketing. The using of gamification in company marketing actions require from marketers not only proper planning and introducing but a lot of creativity and innovation. It has been assumed that gamification can be a reply of a company to increase its competitiveness.*

Keywords: marketing, gamification, relations with customers, relationship marketing, management.

**Introduction.** Contemporary companies function in the changing social, political and economic environment. According to this fact, the dynamic of Polish market provokes to continuous search of the best possibilities to choose the ways to reach with an offer to the customers. The marketing theory responds to these challenges, proving that it is dynamic branch and inspires to research, searching and discussion aiming at creating new offers or repeat, broadened and enriched reinterpretation of classic marketing. The research has proved that the traditional marketing actions are losing their meaning (printed materials, for instance), but the role of new solutions is increasing.

Undoubtedly, the existence of the company, its success and future are inextricably linked with marketing, which is why the requirements and expectations towards marketing are growing. It is caused by the pressure from the dynamic changes of competitive conditions, spending of huge financial means; deepen by the opinions about decreasing usefulness of some marketing actions. Gamification seems to be the newest discovery and the company responds to increasing competition, influencing the quality of relations between marketing subjects. Relationship marketing allows creating, enriching and maintaining of the long-lasting relations with all crucial for surrounding marketing subjects. By its nature gamification can help to create new relations and customers, middlemen, suppliers and staff involvement. The goal of this report is to present gamification notion and to suggest using it. A special attention is directed to the possibilities given by gamification in the relation with customer management. This work is only an introduction to further deliberations on using the conception of competition in relation with other company subject management.

**Analysis of the recent researches and publications.** Until recently, the subject of gamification as a new trend in marketing was not often raised in theoretical considerations. Problems of this trend in marketing are showed in the works of such scientists, as: Niewęglowski M [8], Starzyński S. [11], Tkaczyk P. [12], Wrona K. [15] and others.

**The object of the article** is to investigate the features of gamification and its using in marketing sphere.

**Main material. Relations with customers.** Having directed the actions to market, sections, isolated according to their social- economical and psychological descriptions, new conceptions, which stress the individual customer's perception and treatment have been created. The customers have been less and less stereotypical. They start to show active attitude, are critical towards company actions and products and services, offered them. It is the result of customers' lifestyle individuation, their aspirations for both personal development and expression. Traditional social models, relatively weakly diverse, are replaced by the

models reflecting the customers' requirements growth, huge changeability and behaviour on market. Consequently, the picture of rebellious, free, waiting for an attractive offer with the elements of surprise provoking to activity and involvement is created. The modern purchaser is often bored with traditional marketing actions. It is good to be aware of the fact that the customers are more and more difficult to be satisfied because they have got distinct needs, they know their expectations which are the result of an active attitude to the changes in the surrounding. They aspire to realize their reactions, to analyze their spending more exactly; that is why they are not still ready to response to every marketing action. There is impression that they still need to be an individual and get the special individual offer created for them. Relationship marketing has got the elements of individualisation, actions focused on not only to carry out some transactions but also to maintain the customer for longer time making him more involved, contributing to value. The definition of relationship marketing (described as partnership, relations, connections as well), is presented very often in the literature by different authors in different ways. Some of them suggest definitions more similar to each other, where the others focus on the different aspects specified for this conception. In this situation there is not one, commonly used definition. However, this term was used for the first time in the early seventies by Barbara Bund Jackson [9]. Then scientists started to focus on relations on the market. The term of relationship marketing began to be popular and common. Relationship marketing, as separated conception, was introduced by L. Berry Jackson with the reference to services marketing in 1983. Simultaneously in the seventies, in Scandinavian countries (Finland and Sweden) the theory of relationships marketing, based on particular research, was created. Scientist from so called Nordic School by critical attitude to classic marketing influenced the opinions of other scientists. Scandinavia is thought to be this conception place of birth. There are a lot of relationships marketing definitions, Leonard Berry says: "relationships marketing is the creation, maintaining and enriching of the relations with a customer. The purchasing of new customer is only the first step in the marketing process" [9].

The representative of Nordic School, ChGronroos presented the following definition: "relationship marketing is the creation, maintaining and enriching of relations with customers and their partners in such way to reach the goals of both sides by double-sided exchange and realisation the promises". This definition highlights the role of relations with customers and the importance to fulfill the promises in services. Another definition, created by J. Copulsky and M. Wolf, says that: "Relationships marketing is the process to create the data base about both present and potential customers and to move closer to them by means of different information, typical for every purchaser. The analysis of cost and maintaining the customer and long-term assessments of built relations should be carried out" [9]. In this definition the most important is the customer's data base as a crucial factor in building the relationships. The definition of relationships marketing which was called the modern one was presented by Ph. Kotler as well. According to the author opinion, the focus on mutual trust and understanding parts involved, which the base all actions in this conception. "The main aim of marketing is bigger and bigger grade to develop permanent relationships with people and organisations, which influence the success of marketing actions both directly and indirectly. Relationships marketing is to build mutual satisfying relations with key constituents in order to get and maintain business connections" [9]. The interactive character of modern media extorts the changing of relations between marketer and customer. These contacts are not one-time like in the case of traditional marketing, but they become more permanent and often. It is the process to supplement the mass marketing with product or service individualisation, what is the result of one-to-one marketing, modern or relative.

The conception based on the customer service management has been reflected in the development of CRM (Customer Relationship Management) which deals with creating,

maintaining and enriching of contacts with customer. The essential to proper functioning this conception in a company is efficient data-gathering and organizing system, what is possible only with using data bases and with modern IT systems in future.

To sum up, the relationships management in the new marketing age has got its source in IT and media revolution, what is defined by the following factors:

- marketing management based on data base (earlier the base was market research);
- interactive using of modern media instead of one-way advertisement;
- personal relationships management with particular, individual customers instead of section market management.

Profits, which are the customer's data base using consequence, are undeniable. They are the following:

- understanding of the customer;
- customer service management;
- understanding of the market;
- understanding of the competition;
- marketing companies management;
- selling process management;
- communication with the customer.

The building of relationships with customer is connected with loyalty which is described by the notion of loyalty ladder mentioned by A. Payne. The loyalty ladder is the rungs which the purchaser stands on in the involving process from an interested person, purchaser, customer, supporter, spokesman or partner. The purchasers' behaviour is determined by many factors: economical, demographical, social-cultural, etc. It should be highlighted that in the case of loyal and involved customers the marketing and promotion cost are decreased. Loyal customers buy more; the frequency of conducted transactions is bigger. They equate with a company, trying to be its spokesman. They recommend its products and services. Such a customer becomes very valuable for a company and this organisation should care about him, delight, surprise and support.

As a part of company actions which are aiming at building permanent relationships with customers and purchasing their loyalty, some forms of such actions can be distinguished:

- regular customer clubs, offering special profits and privileges;
- company magazines for customers, including information about company and services offered by it;
- company correspondence;
- regular customer card, entitling to discounts.

The loyalty is the notion, which includes the emotion sphere, is the synonym of faithfulness and partnership. That is why, in the case of partnership, to build loyalty is very often complicated, long-lasting and difficult process. The building of the partnership with a customer is gained particularly by using more and more common loyalty programmes. The idea of these programmes is to build customer's satisfaction with the contacts with company, its products and services in order to provoke the need for being the customer of given company as long as possible.

The effective loyalty programme should offer common values, help in building self-confidence, initiate continuously but not aggressively, contact with customers, award and build involvement, include customers in action to develop and improve the company. The customers involved and included effectively in the process of improving the company quality become loyal when they have profits from this improvement. In 2012 Loyalty Business Overview concerning the quality building was published. There were checked innovative tools

of quality building – cards, newsletters, mobile applications, geo-localisation and gamification. Gamification as the newest discovery of marketing is more and more popular in using by a lot of branches in order to build loyalty and relationships with customers management.

**Gamification.** The results of research show that more and more Polish people love playing games. The most favourite are on-line games. According to TNS OBOP in 2012 “even 77% of Polish users of the Internet declared that they have already played on-line games, but every fifth of them have played on-line more often than once a day” [9]. A year later, in 2013, according to the research carried out by Research.NK and presented during Game Industrial Trends, the amount of players increased by 85% [2; 3].

With the development of new technologies the amount of people who use mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets both in personal and professional life is increasing. Consumers like games and play them. That is why the marketers should use this fact and start to use games to manage the relationship with customers. “If these mechanisms work so good that about 20 million people plant virtual vegetables in Farm Ville every day,” so why do not use them in other boring but very important fields of life?” [1].

In this place it worth to bring the term of gamification closer. Gamification is the implementation of game structure and mechanism (points, decorations, levels, challenges, and rewards) to real world in order to arouse the involvement of users, changes in their behaviour and the solution of different problems [15]. Gamification is not only the promotion by introducing given brand to the game, but transferring of the mechanisms and involving solutions from the world of games to the real world in such a way that it could involve and influence more people. We can promote given brand, we can influence the target group and motivate to take particular actions [2]. Unfortunately, this term is often abused by the marketing experts. Gamification is not a typical loyalty programme where a producer encourages collecting stamps which can be exchanged for a reward. There must appear the following elements in the gamification: points, rewards, rankings, score tables, the communication system between players responsible for the involvement the players, plot. etc. “The work of this loop is very easy, even trite: customers who do for us very important things (buy), they take for us important decisions, they receive from us positive reinforcement (points, badges etc.) The purchasing of more points and badges is connected with further positive reinforcements (we give our customers more than they expect) so we motivate the customers to take another actions, important for us” [5].

On the base of successful projects analysis, based on the gamification, 3 pillars are determined. They guarantee success, i.e. strong and long-lasting involvement of competitors:

- *fun-satisfaction*, it doesn't have to be connected with something funny. Simply, it is momentary entertainment giving pleasure;
- *friends* – the possibility of fun in the community, inviting friends, meeting new people, cooperation or competition. To fulfill the human need of meeting people and belonging to the group is a key to social games success but also projects based on crowdsourcing [4];
- *feedback* – receiving fast information about taken actions [11].

Gamification is not either loyal programme or city game. There are all 3 elements (Fun, Friends, Feedback) but city game finishes very fast. In the case of gamification, it is about longlasting involvement of players.

According to Gartner (analytical company deals with IT market), “to 2015 50% of organisations would have been somehow involved in gamification. It is supposed that to 2012 gamificational marketing services will have become as popular as Facebook, eBay or Amazon, and over 70% of 2000 the biggest world companies will have at least one application on the base of gamification conception” [7]. The author of the first and only one book about

gamification in Poland – Paweł Tkaczyk writes that “Harvard Business Review has placed gamification on the list of trends, which cannot be ignored in the nearest future, naming it “one of the most decisive marketing conceptions of present time” [12].

***The examples of using games in marketing actions.*** Among fields to use the gamification in the marketing actions we can mention: using games in staff management as part of internal management., market research and relationships marketing. TNS Polska, the leader and the most experienced research in the field of custom on the Polish market company informs about new attitude towards on-line survey forms. “Instead of survey we offer our respondent visually attractive 15 minute long travel in the world of given category. We have worked out each detail, from the person leading through a survey to progress bar referring to the topic of survey. The character, depended on the need, invites to survey, asking further questions. The questions in the form of drag&drop, challenges, illustrated with interesting icons or spiced up with funny comment of given character. At the end, there is a reward for a respondent (its form is dependent on the topic of survey). All these elements are not to make a respondent bored and to get more results. The analysis of research, carried out by THS Polska, says that gamificational survey gives a lot of profits: both for the respondent, researcher and customer” [13]. (Unfortunately, the results of this research have not been published-the Author reminds). The example of gamification may be to reward drivers for driving in the way of using less petrol. This way to involvement ecology is used by the producer of Honda Inside. The driver of this car is rewarded by green leaves (budges) appearing on the control panel. The solutions force us to think like a player, they use geolocation – repeated check in in particular places (some cafés of particular chain) can be rewarded by free bonus. The passing different sections – buying or logging out gives us the possibility to get special badges [10]. Slovak creators of TrashOut start-up have decided to solve a problem, which (as we can see) concerns not only Poland – illegal dumps, which are visible near forests. Mechanism of gamification and technology helps in this situation. By means of mobile application TrashOut people can inform about places where they come across illegal dumps. The users of application get special budge for placing such place (with photo and description) on TrashMap, but they can get more if they find the solution how to get rid of it, they organise people who can clean this place or inform the local authorities about it, for instance [8]. It has been already released Polish version of this application.

Another example to use gamification in the ecology is web page which encourages Internet users to recycle different types of materials, in the same time urging them to buy some products and offering advertisers possibility to promote by some actions on portal. In RecycleBank users can collect points for 4 main actions:

- recyclable waste recycling and reporting it by means of mobile application;
- buying of products with logo RecycleBank;
- lifestyle with balanced development standards (making some “promises”on website);
- solving of interactive quiz and tasks helping in increasing social ecological awareness.

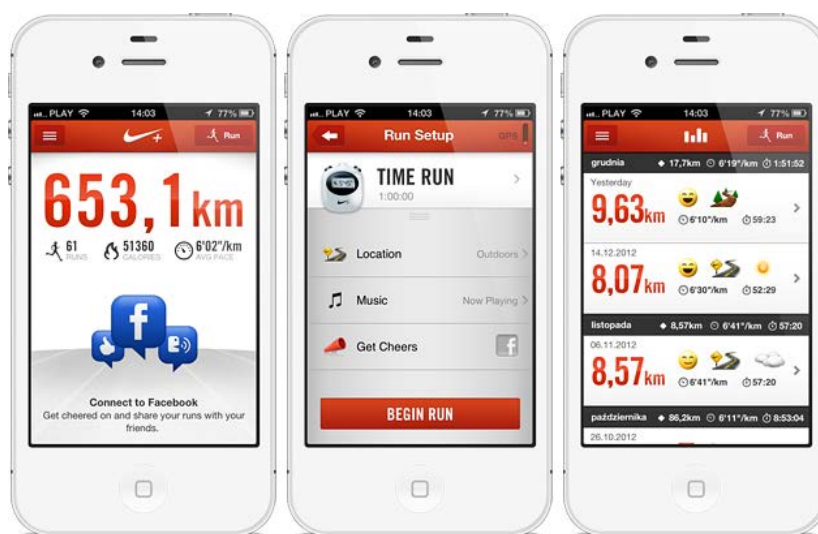
In exchange for taking such actions, users are promised to have awards, points which are changeable for discounts, etc.

For some people “playing in recycling” points are valueable as well, because of the fact that they are base to compare with the others.

The simple gamificational mechanism (only points for effective actions and mini-games available on www, are used in this case) makes this portal very popular, what has got its reflection in real profits for the company [16].

Another example of gamification system is Nike Company, the producer of sport shoes and clothes with its mobile application Nike Plus. “Nike Company has decided to have a secondary goal at buying products and we have focused on the promotion of running. The

application is complex step counter and offers runners a lot of challenges, thanks to which they can compete with themselves and other runners. The runners are encouraged to connect with Facebook and inform about their results on their Facebook boards. When a player starts running, his friends are informed about it and asked to support him. Every time when somebody clicks “Like” the application plays the sound of applause which is the information about support of the others. This social loop increases the player motivation and confirms him in using this programme” [15], Figure 1.



*Figure 1 – Nike Plus application [1]*

At the end the example from Scandinavia will be presented. Creators of game with Highway Code in the background have thought how to tame drivers and even drag them into this game. The radar which took photo of every car was installed. Additionally every driver got feedback information (with sing of Facebook like and dislike). Thanks to it the drivers knew if they were driving properly or not. “The last and the most important element of Swedish innovation was a reward. Drivers who drive against the Highway Code get speeding ticket. It costs a lot in Sweden. The driver who drives properly gets information that he takes part in a lottery and he can win a lot of money. This money is from speeding tickets” [12]. This lottery is the idea, given by Volkswagen Company.

It is worth to present the results of research carried out by Recyclebank on the subject to introduce elements of gamification in marketing strategy, which show the way of reaction to games elements. “As many as 97% of respondents have admitted that they have increased their knowledge in environment protection, what is proved by more behavioural indications. In comparison with the state before starting the programme, its participants have started to care about the ecological lifestyle: the number of people who take care about switching the lights off has been increased by 44% , the number of people who use ecological light bulbs by 36%, the habit to save the energy was reported by 35% of more respondents. The first time some of them have started to buy local products (14%) and wash in cold water (7%). Thanks to use of the gamification strategy Recyclebank website has noticed very spectacular popularity. In comparison with data from previous month, the number of unique users has

been increased by 71% and the number of new users by 112%, but the number of people recommended by friend by 81%” [16].

**Conclusions and directions of further researches.** The results of research show that Polish customers more often choose games as a form of entertainment. That is why the marketing specialists should use this trend and include the gamification in marketing strategies. The use of gamification in company marketing actions requires from marketers not only proper planning and introducing but a lot of creativity and innovation. An interesting and involving idea, engaging plot and gradual rewards can help to promote brand, engage a lot of people and manage the relations with customers properly. The crucial elements, distinguishing gamification from other tools using games in marketing (advertisement in games, competition) is involvement and durability. We care about relations with customer and maintain him for a long time.

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**A. Видавска-Станиш. Гейміфікація як новий тренд у маркетингу**

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**Гейміфікація як новий тренд у маркетингу**

*У статті автор досліджує особливості гейміфікації як нового тренду в маркетингу та наводить приклади його використання. Зазначається, що використання принципів гейміфікації в компанії вимагає від маркетологів не лише належного планування і впровадження, а й творчості та інноваційного підходу. Автором обґрунтовано, що гейміфікація є інструментом підвищення конкурентоспроможності компанії.*

Ключові слова: маркетинг, гейміфікація, відносини з клієнтами, маркетинг відносин, управління.

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**Геймификация как новый тренд в маркетинге**

*В статье автор исследует особенности геймификации как нового тренда в маркетинге и приводит примеры его использования. Указывается, что использование принципов геймификации в компании требует от маркетологов не только соответственного планирования и внедрения, но и творчества и инновационного подхода. Автором обосновано, что геймификация является инструментом повышения конкурентоспособности компании.*

Ключевые слова: маркетинг, геймификация, отношения с клиентами, маркетинг отношений, управление.

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