

Varazdin Development and Entrepreneurship Agency and University North  
in cooperation with  
Azerbaijan State University of Economics (UNEC)  
Faculty of Management University of Warsaw  
Faculty of Law, Economics and Social Sciences Sale - Mohammed V University in Rabat  
Polytechnic of Medimurje in Cakovec



# Economic and Social Development

55<sup>th</sup> International Scientific Conference on Economic and Social Development Development

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Editors:

Altay Ismayilov, Khatai Aliyev, Manuel Benazic



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# MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING GREEN COMPETITIVENESS

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## ABSTRACT

*The article deals with green competitiveness advantages for companies. The green competitive development is considered to be an essential condition to provide a high level of sustainable social and economic development. The authors systematized scientific investigation of the key determinants of the green competitiveness according to the marketing, technological, innovative, communicative, stakeholders, qualitative, level, fiscal and ethic approaches. The primary purpose of the study is to analyse the preconditions for promotion the green competitiveness of enterprises and analyse the influence of the using marketing tools (ensuring the proper quality (environmental) of green goods and services, differentiation of pricing policy, creation of green commercial networks and platforms, promotion of eco-goods and green activity, interaction with the consumers) on a company's descriptive variables (market segment (sales volumes), green image, efficiency of companies activity, products competitiveness). The object of study is the companies from the food industry, agriculture, machinery-producing industry and production of building materials. The quantitative study employed a sample of 110 companies, for testing each competitive advantage dimension against the established green marketing tools and company descriptive variables using the method of logistic regressions. The obtained results showed the level of integration mix marketing tools for supporting the green competitive advantages. The highest level of integration is in the food industry, the lowest level – in the production of building materials. Provided evaluation gives the opportunity to suggest the system of marketing instruments for forming and strengthening the company's green competitive advantages.*

**Keywords:** *Green competitiveness, Green marketing tools, Companies' performance, Strategy*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Current development trends are characterized by the inclination of many countries to promote green strategies that will meet the goals of sustainable development, address global environmental problems, shape the green competitiveness of regions and the business sector. At the same time, a significant number of countries that favour green strategies of operation, while trying to solve global and regional environmental problems, are making significant progress. Focusing on sustainable development and ensuring companies green competitiveness causes a number of challenges, which include the following features: orientation to the rational use, protection and reproduction of natural resource potential; provision the resources and

production waste recycling; providing targeted green investment at different levels of the economy (for the national economy, for the regions, for individual companies and businesses); the necessity of using the different sources of financing eco-oriented activity of companies, the possibility of combining them in time and space, ensuring the implementation of differentiated investment objects of different forms and types; the need to take into account the features of natural ecosystems (assimilation potential), which may lose their original properties and the corresponding value under the influence of anthropogenic factors; the existence of differentiation in the forms of investment for enterprises of state, interstate, private, mixed forms of organization of economic activity; taking into account the specific natural properties of self-regulation and restoration of ecosystems with their individual components. It should be noted, that simultaneously with the economic and technological development, the fulfilment by countries the goals and objectives of the concept of sustainable development are spreading and scaling up the anthropogenic load on the environment on global and countries scale. Thus, it is relevant to study the theoretical and applied foundations of the formation of marketing and management strategies for promoting green competitiveness.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The modern tendencies in the implementation of sustainable development strategies analyzed by the domestic and foreign scientists [4, 7, 8, 11, 13, 16, 21-24, 27, 30]. They investigated the impacts of green economic instruments on indicators of national development. The paper [34] deals with the analysis of the green investment impact on the energy efficiency gap. The authors [37-39] considered that using the green economic instruments are the incentives for green entrepreneurship development. In works [35, 42, 43, 45] the authors demonstrate how green economic tools influence on countries economic indicators. They noted that there is a huge interconnection between economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Such investigation is based on the concept of the Environmental Kuznets Curve hypothesis, which describes the non-linear relationship between economic growth and environmental pollution. The authors [5] analyzed the main economic indicators which influenced on macroeconomic stability of countries. The authors in the papers [1, 6, 14, 18, 25, 26, 29, 31, 33, 44] recommend for companies seek ways of utilizing the competitive strategies for improving the organizational performance and which lead to a sustained competitive advantage over competitors. The research [2] is examining the impact for assigning the percentage of investment grades on the company's market share. Besides, the scientists in the papers [3, 15, 17, 19, 20, 32, 46] justified the implementation the marketing strategies for increasing the company's performance. The scientists [36] analyzed the basic definitions and models of the communication process, which reflect the elements in the process of communication and types of effects of D. Lasswell's model. The articles [9, 10, 12, 40, 41, 47] are analyzing the green marketing strategies and instruments for supporting sustainable development. The aim of the paper is to analyze the preconditions for promotion the green competitiveness of enterprises and analyze the influence of the using green marketing tools on a company's descriptive variables. As global experience demonstrates, countries benefit from green functioning strategies to address global and regional environmental problems. The main success factors of green enterprise competitiveness are production and technological potential of companies, market factors that characterize the main competitors and consumers, structure of business entities and their involvement in value chain communications, eco-innovation management and marketing, company's environment policy. The key determinants of the green competitiveness are investigated in the frame of marketing, technological, innovative, communicative, stakeholders, qualitative, level, fiscal and ethic approaches. Researches about the using of green eco-policy tools [48-50] indicates the feasibility of using green marketing tools to shape and strengthen the green competitive advantages of businesses.

### 3. METHODS

Therefore, it is necessary to evaluate the impact of the individual components of the mix marketing to ensure the green competitive advantages. The object of study is the companies from the food industry, agriculture, machinery-producing industry, and production of building materials. The quantitative study employed a sample of 110 companies, for testing each competitive advantage dimension against the established green marketing tools and company descriptive variables using the method of logistic regressions. The following indicators were selected as the basic indicators for determining the green competitive advantages: growth of the market segment (sales volumes), formation (strengthening) of the green image, increase of efficiency (environmental) of activity, increasing the products competitiveness. So, the next five hypotheses were formulated:

- H1. The formation of a system of strategies for ensuring the appropriate quality (environmental) of green goods and services will ensure the growth of sales (growth of market share of the company), to shape and strengthen the green image of companies, to increase the efficiency of enterprises, to increase the competitiveness of products.
- H2. Differentiation of pricing policy in order to stimulate the transition to consumption of environmentally friendly goods and services will provide: increase in sales volumes (increase of market share of the company), form and strengthen the green image of companies, increase the efficiency of enterprises, ensure the increase of competitiveness of products.
- H3. Creation of green commercial networks and platforms will provide: increase of sales volumes (increase of the market share of the company), to form and strengthen the green image of the companies, to increase efficiency of activity of the enterprises, to provide increase of competitiveness of production.
- H4. Promotion of eco-goods and green activity will provide: increase of sales volumes (growth of the market share of the company), to form and strengthen the green image of the companies, to increase efficiency of activity of the enterprises, to provide increase of competitiveness of production.
- H5. Interaction with the consumers will provide increase of sales volumes (increase of the market share of the company), to form and strengthen the green image of the companies, to increase efficiency of activity of the enterprises, to provide increase of competitiveness of production.

The generalization of the hypotheses is represented on table 1.

*Table 1: Hypotheses – mix marketing tools—green competitive advantages*

	Mix marketing components	Green competitiveness indicators
Managerial strategies are integrating	ensuring the proper quality (environmental) of green goods and services for:	sales growth (market share growth) green image efficiency of the enterprise activity product competitiveness
	differentiation of pricing policy for:	
	creation of green commercial networks and platforms for:	
	promotion of eco-goods and green activity	
	interaction with the consumers for:	

(Source: created by the authors)

The research methodology included a two-stage approach. At first the qualitative investigation was provided through the using of interviews by managers and marketing experts. Subsequently, based on the findings, a questionnaire was formed to be used in a next quantitative study. The assessment of the measured competitive advantages was provided using the logit regressions. The proposed for expert's questionnaire was drafted using by dichotomic scales (0/1) to evaluation the providing of the four green competitive advantages. In the sample was included the companies from the food industry, agriculture, machinery-producing industry and production of building materials. After verification and scrutinizing the questionnaires, 110 valid responses were obtained.

#### 4. RESULTS

For assessment the degree of integration of the marketing tools for strengthening the green competitive advantages was used the five-level approach, which includes such degrees of valuation: very high (5), high (4), neutral (3), low (2), very low (1). Data were collected from managers and marketing experts from the hugest companies of the food industry, agriculture, machinery-producing industry and production of building materials (table 2).

*Table 2: Industry descriptive statistics*

Industry	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Food industry	30	27,3	27,3	27,3
Agriculture production	30	27,3	27,3	54,6
Machinery industry	30	27,2	27,2	81,8
Production of building materials	20	18,2	18,2	100,0
	110	100	100	

*(Source: calculated by the authors)*

For estimation of the complexity and scale of using and implementing the mix marketing components into the company's activity was assessed the degree of their integration companies in the system of used marketing strategies (table 3).

*Table 3: Integration the mix marketing components*

	Ensuring the proper quality (environmental) of green goods and services	Differentiation of pricing policy	Creation of green commercial networks and platforms	Promotion of eco-goods and green activity	Interaction with the consumers
Valid	110	110	110	110	110
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Median	3,0	3,0	2,0	2,0	2,0
Mode	3	3	2	2	2

*(Source: calculated by the authors)*

Considering the median and mode indicators (table 3), two marketing tools are neutral integrated (ensuring the proper quality (environmental) of green goods and services, differentiation of pricing policy). At the same time, the creation of green commercial networks and platforms (with a median value of 1,0, assigned to the very low level). Two marketing tools (promotion of eco-goods and green activity and interaction with the consumers), have a median value of 2,0 (low integration).

Overall, it can be concluded that these components of mix marketing tools are low integrated in companies' activity. Measuring the impact of the mix marketing components (based on their integration represented in figure 1) and the influence of the descriptive variables on each green competitive advantage, two logit regressions were formed. The results of the assessment (figure 1) told, that hypotheses H1–H5 were partially confirmed with the amendment that one of marketing tool (ensuring the quality of green goods and services) was found to have an impact on three competitive advantage (sales growth, straightening the green image, efficiency of enterprise activity), another two tools (differentiation of pricing policy and interaction with the consumers) were found to impact on two dependent variables (sales growth, product competitiveness), another two marketing tools (creation of green commercial networks and platforms, promotion of eco-goods and green activity) were found to impact on one dependent variable separately (sales growth, straightening the green image). It is necessary to account for the sectoral features in the process of assessment. The use of marketing tools by the food industry for the formation of green competitive advantages is fairly uniform and is determined by the medium and low degree of their implementation. In agriculture sector we divided the measuring process for the sub-sectors, where the three sub-groups of enterprises are conditional on the use of marketing tools to developing green competitiveness:

- companies (large agro holdings) that are not significantly interested in positioning themselves on the market as environmentally oriented
- agricultural producers who are somewhat interested in shaping the green image and creating green competitive advantages and are only partially ready to use marketing tools to shape and promote green competitiveness
- agro-producers that are independent in decision-making (they are not within the structure of large agricultural holdings and associations). They are interested in developing a green image and green competitiveness through the use of marketing tools.

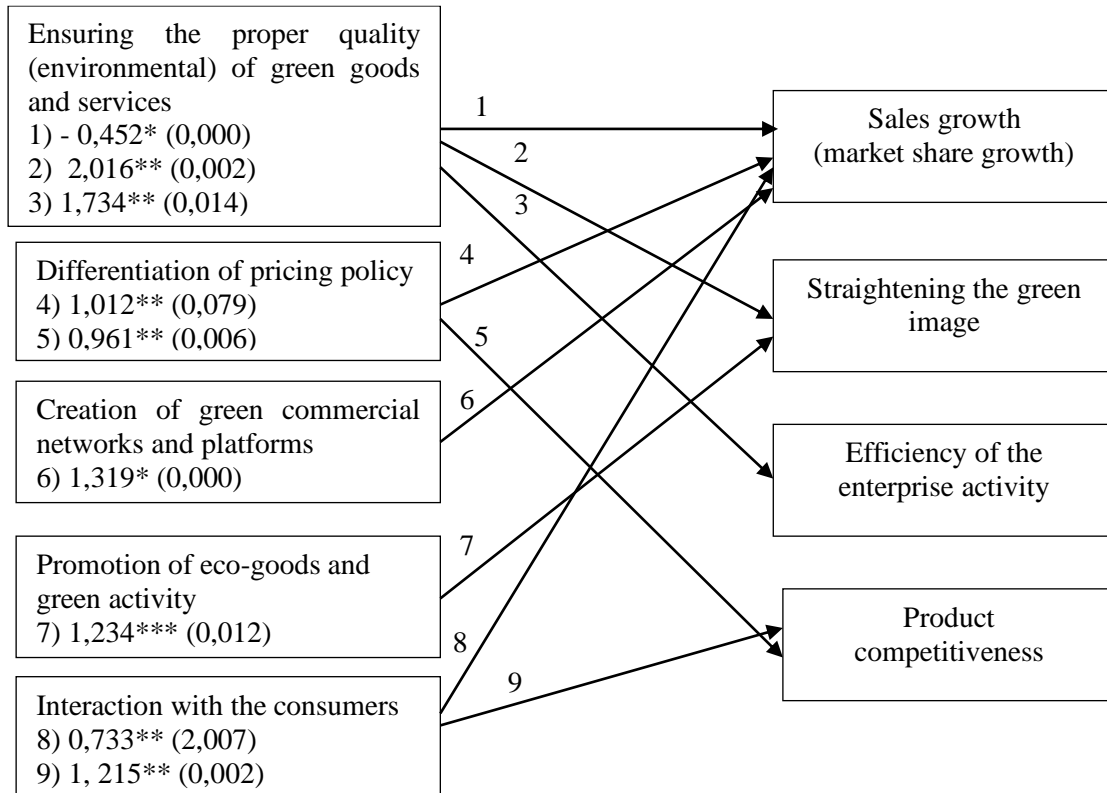
In the machinery industry due to industry specificity, the products of machine-building enterprises directly cannot be characterized as “green” (environmentally friendly).

However, this does not preclude the use of certain evaluation criteria to determine, as a whole, the specific nature of environmentally-friendly activities and the level of environmental safety of the economic activities of mechanical engineering enterprises. Accordingly, a number of determinants will be characterized: environmental safety of the production process; the level of waste generation, the extent of recycling; using resource-saving technologies; energy and material intensity of the production process; development of green infrastructure of the enterprise; implementation of environmental management and audit systems; environmental standardization and certification; environmental culture and ethics.

*Figure following on the next page*



Figure 1: Relationships between variables



\* -  $p < 0,01$ ; \*\* -  $p < 0,05$ ; \*\*\* -  $p < 0,1$ .

(Source: calculated by the authors)

Therefore, prioritization in assessing the feasibility of using marketing tools to shape the green competitive advantages of machine-building enterprises was conducted on the above-mentioned principles.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The obtained results showed the level of integration mix marketing tools for supporting the green competitive advantages. The highest level of integration is in the food industry, the lowest level - in the production of building materials. Provided evaluation gives the opportunity to suggest the system of marketing instruments for forming and strengthening the company's green competitive advantages. The such system has to include the next groups of marketing tools, connected with the basic categories.

- 1) Product. Formation a system of strategies for ensuring the appropriate quality (environmental characteristics) of green goods and services by: environmental standardization and certification; eco-labeling; product quality control; use of eco-friendly packaging; providing recycling; avoidance of greenwashing; formation of green brand and company image; branding of green products and services; information on the effects of green investment and prevented economic damage.
- 2) Price. Differentiation of pricing policies to stimulate the transition to consumption of environmentally friendly goods and services, tax rebates for eco-responsible companies, loyalty and compensation programs for green loans, obtaining additional economic, environmental and social effects from green competitive advantages.
- 3) Platform. Creation of commercial ecological networks, creation the specialized market platforms for green goods and services, crowdfunding platforms for support of eco-innovation, development of distribution networks (eco shops, eco services networks) and more.

- 4) Promotion. Promotion of green products and services and promotion of eco-activity, green business and entrepreneurship, creation of the green and social advertising, application of traditional and modern marketing communication tools.
- 5) Consumer. Consumer interaction, segmentation of the green goods and services market, identification and specification of the target audience, set of activities to prepare the target audience for the perception of the green innovation.

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