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INTERNAL WEBSITE PRESENTATIONS OF CZECH LUXURY FASHION BUSINESSES IN THE COVID-19 ERA

Abstract. *This paper summarizes the arguments and counterarguments within the scientific discussion on the issue of tools boosting marketing, management, and innovations via digital platforms, such as internal websites of the top Czech luxury fashion businesses in the COVID-19 era. The main purpose of the research is to perform a case study about how these websites address COVID-19, innovations, sustainability, and corporate social responsibility. Systematization of the scientific sources and approaches for solving the problem indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic has heavily impacted industries that are dispensable and, at the same time, costly. The relevance of this scientific problem's decision matters theory and practice since the COVID-19 crisis is rather a negative challenge than a positive opportunity for businesses, which often ends up paying the ultimate price – falling into bankruptcy. A battery of employed methodological tools includes a simplified Delphi method with data processing by a panel of experts, the meta-analysis and content analysis, and teleological interpretations instruments. The research object is the Summer 2021 version of the internal websites of the top 20 Czech luxury fashion businesses based on their pre-COVID-19 turnover in 2018. The paper presents an empirical analysis based on this case study and juxtaposes it to prior academic findings. The research empirically confirmed and theoretically proved the underplayed potential of the websites of luxury fashion businesses. The research results could be helpful for theory adjustments and have practical implications and offer recommendations for businesses. They lead to propositions about the internal perspective and digital readiness to inform about it and a general attitude to the marketing, management, and innovations during crises.*

Keywords: corporate social responsibility, covid pandemic, digital marketing, high-end slow fashion, webpage.

Introduction. Competitiveness demands, sustainability concerns (Pelikanova, 2017), and digitalization via the use of information systems and information technology (IS/IT) have been heavily shaping the post-modern global society (Pelikanova, 2019). A successful business is expected to be effective and efficient while being inventive (Roszkowska-Menkes, 2017). It creates and brings value to various stakeholders (Zollo et al., 2018). However, all these efforts would be futile without, simultaneously, proper promotion of their efforts. For competitiveness, businesses need to take advantage of the multi-stakeholder model towards sustainability and/or IS/IT and other innovations models (Van Tulder et al., 2016; Van Tulder and Keen, 2018). Therefore, the EU businesses have to generate profits and increase their own resources (Tasaryova and Paksiova, 2021). At the same time, it is necessary to support financially, and/or otherwise, innovations via R&D (Polanski, 2015) and sustainability via their Corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Bali Swain and Yang-Wallentin, 2019) and voluntary report about it (Pelikanova and MacGregor, 2020).

Within the EU, this expectation to reconcile the interests of various stakeholders, perhaps a duty, is even further reinforced concerning specific industries, such as tainted industries (alcohol, tobacco), strategic industries (power, energy, gas, agriculture, etc.), or lavish industries (luxury fashion, luxury cars, luxury jewelry, etc.). A further magnification occurs in the context of crises. Thus, during a crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, luxury fashion businesses' expectations for innovations and sustainability increase. That builds their reputations on lavish extravagance, exclusivity, and opulence (Cerchia and

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Piccolo, 2019). It leads to an inevitable challenge. The COVID-19 pandemic has heavily impacted global society, including European businesses. Serious consequences have been borne by industries that are both dispensable and at the same time opulent and costly, such as the Czech luxury fashion industry. Investors and customers have partially lost their drive and interest to spend on unnecessary, expensive, non-durable products, such as leather bags, dresses, shoes, etc. It led to a dramatic drop in the turnover and profits of such businesses. At the same time, these businesses are expected to be pro-sustainability leaders, spending lavishly not only for self-indulgence but also for the needs implied by dramatic events – innovations and sustainability. It makes the COVID-19 crisis is rather a negative challenge than a positive opportunity for Czech luxury fashion businesses, which often end up paying the ultimate price – falling into bankruptcy. However, is it inevitable? Could not a proper self-presentation, advancing one's commitment to innovations and CSR, avoid that? Undoubtedly, in such a context, it is crucial to use effective and efficient tools boosting marketing, management, and innovations while taking advantage of current digital platforms (Tureckova and Nevima, 2020).

The modern customer journey is a cycle of four moments: connect, explore, buy and use, which occurs in the universe where the boundaries between physical and digital blur (Mele et al., 2021). In particular, Czech luxury fashion businesses should pursue innovations and CSR and strongly report about their efforts via their traditional physical sites such as the Fifth Avenue or Champs-Élysées boulevard or Parízska Street as well as their own Internet platforms, i.e., their Internet domains with websites. Therefore, it is highly relevant to perform a case study about the internal websites of the top Czech luxury fashion businesses while assessing how they address, or at least mention, COVID-19, innovations, and other marketing and management aspects, including sustainability and CSR. This research aims to perform a case study while paying individual attention to the websites in the Summer of 2021 of each of the top 20 Czech luxury fashion businesses based on their pre-COVID-19 turnover in 2018, while finding, selecting, and processing the data by a panel of experts. Hence, after such an Introduction section, there needs to be a Literature review section, addressing the theoretical and conceptual foundations and aspects in more depth. Then the Methodology section needs to explain the employed case study, particularly the collected and processed data and the battery of methodological tools involved. That implies outcomes and arguments to be covered by the Results and culminating in the Conclusion section.

Literature Review. Western modern civilization is marked by competitiveness (Kiselačková et al. 2019), advanced usage of innovations and IS/IT (Pickard et al., 2019), its move from the post-industrial stage, and deep conflicts (Balcerzak and Pelikanova, 2020). In 2021, it stays on the intersection and attempts to balance a myriad of conflicting priorities and demands (Pelikanova, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic makes even more apparent how challenging can be the reconciliation of available and often diminishing resources with the requirements of the constantly increasing and demanding world population (Meadows, 1972). Consequently, businesses are expected to be profitable, innovative, and altruistic, i.e., exploring all economic, environmental, and social sustainability pillars (Pelikanova, 2017).

According to Joseph Schumpeter, economic life consists of the circular flow and spontaneous innovation changes (Schumpeter, 1934). Peter Drucker went even further by writing in 1973, «Because the purpose of any business is to create a customer, the business has two – and only two – basic functions: innovation and marketing. Marketing and Innovation produce results. All the rest are costs» (Drucker, 1973). Later on, he added that the fundamentals of management are innovations linked to marketing (Drucker, 2014). Innovation means developing a new idea and putting it into practice, or even better, in a profit-generating business. Namely, it leads to more effective and efficient or even brand new products (Terzic, 2017). At the same time, innovation should not be perceived statically and in a one-way format because innovativeness is a rare concept directly related to consumer behavior (Hirschman, 1980). For putting it differently, innovativeness is about the positive reception of new ideas (Yildirim et al., 2021), and boldly, each innovation needs its creator, its practice promoter, and an open-minded and aware public.

Since uncertainty poses a significant risk for innovations (Yildirim et al., 2021), disseminating information hand-in-hand with proper marketing is critical. And basically, the same applies to CSR (Pelikanova et al., 2021). Innovations and CSR exploring values are vital for the competitiveness of European businesses in the 21st century (Pelikanova, 2019). Innovations are neither easy nor automatic, nor cheap. For developing a new idea, such as an invention, acquiring a patent for it along with state approvals, and commercializing it, working hard and spending on R&D is indispensable (Billon et al., 2017). Much effort must be expended, various hurdles overcome, even though it is rarely certain that the process will result in a businesswise, successful innovation (Damijan et al., 2017). Even worse, businesses need to be internal, vis-à-vis their shareholders and employees, as well as externally, vis-à-vis their other stakeholders, responsible (Schüz, 2012). Such CSR logically demands up-front costs does not translate per se automatically into a more effective and efficient product. Hence, the direct or indirect support by a broad pool of stakeholders is vital, and the multi-stakeholder model and approach are highly relevant (Van Tulder et al., 2016; Van Tulder and Keen, 2018). Besides, it is essential to get support from state tax systems (Jancickova and Paksiova, 2021). The absolute pre-requirement of its relevant operation is the dissemination of such information to the public at large.

To put it differently, employees, investors, customers, and other stakeholders must be aware of such endeavors, particularly investments in R&D and CSR, to make an educated decision. They should support it by working for it, investing in it, and/or paying a (circular) premium (the CSR bonus) for products of such a business (D'Adamo and Lupi, 2021). Once aware, one can apply the well-established premise about the business support by stakeholders, e.g., a well-communicated inventiveness boosts consumers' purchasing intention (Al-Jundi et al., 2019). Logically, the platform par excellence in doing so is the Internet domain of each involved business. This digital setting is immune regarding health and other crises such as COVID-19 and available to all businesses, especially those emphasizing their extraordinary resources and intellectual property, i.e., luxury fashion businesses. The world's biggest manufacturing industries are automotive, technologies, and fashion (Zhang et al., 2021). The world's biggest industrial polluters are the energy, transport, agriculture, and fashion industries (Zhang et al., 2021). However, in addition to the fast fashion segment, the fashion industry includes rather a quantity than quality at a low cost, and the segment of luxury fashion, stressing quality regardless of expenses. European luxury fashion businesses are known for their pro-sustainability declarations (Cerchia and Piccolo, 2019). Luxury fashion is closely linked to the past, elites, and values (Pelikanova et al., 2021). It rests on uniqueness, value, and exclusivity Pelikanova et al. (2021) as well as lavishness, vanity, opulence, and arrogance (Cerchia and Piccolo, 2019). Several recent empirical studies have confirmed that (MacGregor et al., 2020; Pelikanova et al., 2021) it meets the expectations of their customers (Olsanova et al., 2018) and other stakeholders (Pelikanova and MacGregor, 2020). Further, the luxury fashion industry is a place where a reckless drive for «cost reduction at any cost» and for cheap. Environment damaging production (Niinimäki et al., 2020) is out, if not taboo (Pelikanova et al., 2021). Previously, it has already been established that the concept of competitive advantage with a competitive target and an engaging in «capturing the core and broadening without diluting» (Moon et al., 2014) should be fully compatible with the concept of sustainability and CSR for luxury fashion businesses (MacGregor et al., 2020).

Since Czech luxury fashion businesses are not isolated, they are exposed to new IS/IT trends and a sustainability command. That is most recently expressed by the United Nations resolution called Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development (UN Agenda 2030), issued in 2015 (Pelikanova et al., 2021). The UN Agenda 2030 declares 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 associated targets (Pelikanova and MacGregor, 2020). They include innovations, IS/IT, and particular sustainability and CSR aspects (Balcerzak and Pelikanova, 2020). Naturally, different approaches can be detected between industries and businesses concerning the endorsement and reporting regarding innovations and CSR (Sroka and Szanto, 2018). However, the luxury fashion industry, as reputable for

financial strength and commitment to ethics and values (Cerchia and Piccolo, 2019), should go for innovations and CSR while engaging various stakeholders (MacGregor et al., 2020). The information about it should be easily and smoothly communicated to their customers (Olsanova et al., 2018), as well as their investors and other stakeholders (Pelikanova and MacGregor, 2020). A crisis is perceived as a time of intense difficulty, danger, and turning point. It challenges the prior setting, destabilizes it, and pushes for a change, often a bouleversement. Businesses facing a crisis need to (re)consider and re(state) their identity, priorities, and self-presentation (Kovoor-Misra, 2009). According to Albert Einstein, crises have a critical role in humanity's progress because they stimulate inventiveness and innovations (D'Adamo and Lupi, 2021). There would not be a call for otherwise. Undoubtedly, the COVID-19 pandemic is a massive global crisis that heavily impacted the Czech fashion industry – sales and public trust dropped, numbers became red, cash flows were insufficient, and indebtedness appeared (Pelikanova, 2021). Coronaviruses are a group of related RNA viruses that cause diseases in mammals and birds (Jones and Comfort, 2020). They cause respiratory tract infections that can range from mild to lethal, causing Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), and COVID-19. The mutations went through an evolution causing SARS since 2002 (Abdul-Rasool and Fielding, 2010), then MERS since 2012 (Jones and Comfort, 2020), and ultimately COVID-19 since 2020 (Armani et al., 2020). Namely, COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by SARS-CoV-2, a coronavirus form discovered in 2020 and causing a global pandemic (Manojkrishnan and Aravind, 2020) and the largest global economic downturn since the 19th century (Pelikanova et al., 2021). Previous differences have expanded (Ashford et al., 2020). Most businesses were not prepared and ultimately suffered serious consequences (McMaster et al., 2020).

Although COVID-19 has caused a crisis with the potential for a devastating impact on the whole world (Jones and Comfort, 2020), there were some industries and businesses perceiving COVID-19 rather as an opportunity than a threat (Jindrichovska and Uğurlu, 2021), i.e., as a call for openness and a willingness to change (Kovoor-Misra, 2009). In other words, to become an appreciated, modern business advances innovations, follows pro-CSR, and proudly proclaims about it. Considering the Czech luxury fashion industry, the mentioned above of innovation and CSR commands (Bali Swain and Yang-Wallentin, 2019), and the impact of COVID-19, it might be argued that such a crisis can be an outstanding impulse for a new, digital period of slow fashion based on values and principles.

Namely, it might be assumed the largest Czech luxury fashion businesses would take advantage of such a type of self-promotion in their marketing and advertising. In other words, their Internet domain would become populated by websites discussing not only COVID-19 but as well fresh innovations, new impulses, and great values denoting luxury fashion as eternal, unconquerable, and endorsing the foundation of Western civilization based upon Christianity (Pelikanova, 2017). After all, it can be strongly argued that businesses, and in particular businesses from such industries as luxury fashion, cannot reduce themselves to merely maximizing profits and dividends for shareholders. Indeed, they have a responsibility towards the entire society and especially to society during a crisis because they touch the lives of all (Carroll, 2016). Hence the traditional perspective of Milton Friedman (Friedman, 2007) should be updated and conveyed to all stakeholders. During the COVID-19 and the critical distancing, there is absolutely no doubt that the right platform to do so is via the Internet domain with websites of the 20 Czech luxury fashion businesses. Well, the pioneering case study about it brings forth a set of rather unexpected propositions.

Methodology and research methods. The research aims to perform a case study paying individual attention to the websites in the Summer of 2021 of each of the top 20 Czech luxury fashion businesses based on their pre-COVID-19 turnover in 2018 and this while finding, selecting, and processing the data by a panel of experts. To properly address the main purpose and perform an academically sufficiently robust case study, the mentioned websites need to be explored and assessed by a battery of methodological tools. The collection and processing of data are done while employing a simplified Delphi

method, the Meta-Analysis, and content analysis while heavily relying on the interpretation using the teleological approach. Particular attention is paid to whether and how these Czech luxury fashion businesses use their own websites to boost marketing, management, and innovations during and despite (or despite) COVID-19 while taking advantage of current digital platforms.

In particular, Czech luxury fashion businesses should go for innovations and CSR and strongly report it via their own Internet platforms, i.e., their Internet domains with websites. Therefore, it is highly relevant to perform a case study of the Internal websites of the top Czech luxury fashion businesses while assessing how they address, or at least mention, COVID-19, innovations, and other marketing and management aspects, including CSR.

The pool determination is obvious. The Czech luxury fashion industry entails a rather modest number of businesses. Naturally, these businesses are expected to offer expensive products and achieve a high monetary volume in sales. Therefore, the following 20 Czech luxury fashion businesses are covered by the case study. Since it is about their internal presentation, then in July 2021, the platform to study are these businesses' own Internet domains with websites (Table1).

Table 1. Case study – Twenty Czech luxury fashion businesses and their key parameters

Business	Type	Origin	Turnover in million CZK	Domain
Alpine Pro	Top outdoor	1994, Brno	735	Alpinepro.cz
Bandi Vamos	Mens formal	2012, Ostrava	320	Bandi.cz
Blazek Praha	Mens formal	1997, Praha	564	Blazek.cz
E Daniely	Formal	1991, Praha	less than 40	Edaniely.cz
E.L. fashion design	Womens formal	2000, Praha	42	Elodevysperky.cz
Evona	Underwear	1992, Chrudim	147	Evona.cz
Kama	Knitwear	1989, Praha	40	Kama.cz
Kara Trutnov	Formal leather	1997, Trutnov	351	Kara.cz
Koutný Prostějov	Mens formal	1995, Prostějov	435	Koutny.cz
Litex	Sportwear	1991, Litomyšl	Less than 40	Litex.cz
Modestia	Formal	1996, Praha	Less than 40	Modestia.cz
Moira	Underwear	2001, Praha	97	Moira.cz
Pietro Filipi	General fashion	1998, Praha	431	Pietro-filipi.com
Pleas	Underwear	1994, Havlíčkův Brod	1 059	Pleas.cz
Styx	Underwear	1996, Praha	12	Styx-underwear.cz
Timo	Underwear	1992, Praha	120	timo.cz
Tonak	Hats	1990, Nový Jicín	436	tonak.cz
Triola	Underwear	1994, Praha	138	Triola.cz
Verino	Formal	1996, Brno	less than 40	Verino.cz
Volansky Fashion	Formal	1996, Hodonín	55	volansky.cz

Sources: developed by the author.

The information posted on these domains via Internet websites was collected and analyzed in July of 2021 while assessing how they address, or at least mention COVID-19, innovations and other marketing and management aspects, including CSR. The obvious pre-set four aspects were «COVID/coronavirus», «innovations/inovace», «sustainability/udržitelnost», «CSR/spolecenska odpovědnost» and their contextual synonyms were used. Due to the linguistic particularities, Czech and English versions of websites were explored, and the mentioned English/Czech keywords duality was observed.

A panel was used to select and process the data of three experts on Internet websites who have a strong background in law and economics (RKM, EDC, LM), one male and two females. Such a panel used the simplified Delphi method, focused on the mentioned dual key aspects and words and related information, and scored the information while using the five-level Likert scale (Allen and Seaman, 2007) and consequently grading (--), (-), (0), (+) and (++). They followed guidelines prepared by the authors and generally accepted instructions for scoring based on the (lack of) capacity to be verified, concrete and actionable (Van Tulder et al., 2016). They conducted the advanced content analysis (Kuckartz, 2014), working more on qualitative than quantitative aspects, i.e., they did personal, contextual reading with synonym recognition and not automatic word scanning. Their scoring of such information met the expertise expectations, and possible heuristic shortcomings were overcome after cleaning scoring discrepancies in the first and second rounds. After the advanced content analysis and teleological interpretation, Meta-Analysis was employed, its prime analysis entailing knowledge not yet realized (Silverman, 2013). It is founded upon the conviction that more information is available than conventionally admitted and realized (Schmidt and Hunter, 2014), especially considering the scientific model of direct and indirect causality (Heckman, 2005). Therefore, it fits perfectly in the case study. In addition, the meta-analysis was a foundation for critical glossing (Hyland, 2007) and Socratic questioning (Areeda, 1995), especially while considering the context. In sum, the selected advanced text analysis with a manual Delphi and Likert scoring by a panel of three experts is used to arrange for the possibility of synthesizing heterogeneous and otherwise hardly reconcilable data. Hence, the automatic word scanning and other «simplification» instruments are rejected because they would be misleading for such a case study and would reduce its academic robustness.

Results. Peter Drucker calls for innovation and marketing (Drucker, 1973) while recently strong voices have added the sustainability concern (Jindrichovska et al., 2020; Sroka and Szanto, 2018). The resulting call is even louder during a crisis (D'Adamo and Lupi, 2021). The current crisis strongly induces digital communications due to the necessary physical distancing and also diminishes the luxury fashion sales in the Czech «Fifth Avenue» (MacGregor et al., 2020). Each Czech luxury fashion business has an Internet domain with websites for its self-presentation and marketing of its products. So, are these websites used in the Summer of 2021 by the top 20 Czech luxury fashion businesses to show how they address (1) COVID-19, (2) innovations, and other marketing and management aspects, including sustainability (3) and CSR (4)? To put it differently, the case study was performed to see what message these websites convey during the COVID-19 epidemic – is COVID-19 an opportunity or a challenge for the innovation, sustainability, and CSR for Czech luxury fashion businesses?

Before presenting and discussing the data extracted from these websites in detail, one general comment needs to be emphasized. Like American organizations and their reluctance to engage in a crisis explanation and apologize for the crises inconveniences (Lim, 2020), the top Czech luxury fashion businesses, except two (Evona, Triola), were rather passive vis-à-vis COVID-19 in 2020 as well as in 2021. Even three feared the worst without declaring any survival strategies (Blazek, Kara, Pietro Filipi) (Pelikanova, 2021). Although the general setting was still grim in July of 2021, each of these businesses could attempt to raise its head and push a pro-active and optimistic approach towards innovation, sustainability, and CSR. Table 2 shows that this is rather a pipe dream than business reality.

Table 2. Case study – Website information (4 key aspects) of the top Czech luxury fashion businesses – Likert scale by a panel via a simplified Delphi

Business	COVID Coronavirus	Innovation Inovace	Sustainability Udrzitelnost	CSR Spolec.Odpov.
Alpine Pro	+	+	0	0
Bandi Vamos	0	0	0	0
Blazek Praha	0	0	0	0
E Daniely	0	0	0	0
E.L. fashion design	++	++	0	0
Evona	++	++	0	0
Kama	0	0	0	0
Kara Trutnov	0	0	0	0
Koutný Prostějov	0	0	0	0
Litex	+	+	0	0
Modestia	0	0	0	0
Moira	0	0	0	0
Pietro Filipi	-	-	-	-
Pleas	+	+	0	0
Styx	+	+	0	0
Timo	+	+	0	0
Tonak	0	0	0	0
Triola	+++	+++	+	+
Verino	0	0	0	0
Volansky Fashion	0	0	0	0

Sources: developed by the author.

Indeed, Table 2 provides a generally grim picture suggesting strong neglect of marketing, innovation, and sustainability potential and a denial of the reality, pretending that COVID is not around. Here, the quantitative approach needs to be underplayed. The priority must go to the qualitative approach advancing the teleological and contextual interpretation along with glossing, as summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Case study – Website information (4 key aspects) of the top Czech luxury fashion businesses – Citing and glossing by a panel via a simplified Delphi

Business	COVID, Innovation, Sustainability, CSR	Leading feature of the Website
1	2	3
Alpine Pro	Offering COVID disinfection	Olympic Games
Bandi Vamos	0	New Dancing Classes Season
Blazek Praha	0	Seasonal sales up 70%
E Daniely	0	Top female brand, fashion shows
E.L. fashion design	Offering a collection of 100% double cotton design face masks per CZK 270	New Dancing Classes Season, coupons (sales) 20%
Evona	Bulk sales of respirators with price reductions (FFP2)	Respirators on sales (FFP2)
Kama	0	Winter season
Kara Trutnov	0	Recovery thanks to Zdeněk Rith

Continued Table 3

1	2	3
Koutný Prostějov	0	New Collection Fall/Winter 2021
Litex	Offering two types of cotton facial masks, each per CZK 99	Litex Swimmer New Collection
Modestia	0	Vouchers for CZK 500 or 1 000
Moira	0	New Collections X-Compact, etc.
Pietro Filipi	N/A	N/A
Pleas	Offering three sets of 5 cotton facial masks, each set for CZK 250	Sales 70%
Styx	Offering seven sets of 4 cotton facial masks, each set for CZK 299	Czech origin sets well priced
Timo	Neckcloth functioning as a face mask for CZK 199	Timo-meter to select bras
Tonak	0	Summer collection
Triola	Nano Med Clean Filter catching 99.99% (COVID, innovation) ECO fibers for production (sustainability)	Summer sales
Verino	0	Wedding dresses
Volansky Fashion	0	Summer collection

Sources: developed by the author.

Table 3 lifts the veil and reveals that only one single Czech luxury fashion business pro-actively uses its Website to proclaim and inform the public about its addressing of COVID-19, its engagement in innovation, and support of sustainability and CSR. All this was done synergetically via two products, Triola Nano Medical Cleaning Filters and Triola ECO fibers. Hence Triola is the only business taking care of COVID and all three pillars of sustainability and using that as a marketing tool to be explored in the digital setting via its own Website.

Two businesses, at least, strongly and proactively provided information, via their websites, about COVID and their innovation in a synergetic manner (EL with a whole line of new products – design fashion masks, Evona with massive sales of respirators). Five businesses provided information about COVID on their websites as a moderate economic opportunity to sell disinfection products or masks (Alpine Pro, Litex, Pleas, Styx, Timo). The websites of the remaining 12 businesses ignored COVID, innovation, sustainability, and CSR. They predominantly focussed on sales or new collections. Table 4 provides an overview of that.

As mentioned above, three businesses are facing bankruptcy. They all belong to the last group of «total ignorance and denial». Of these three, only one admitted the bankruptcy issue on its Website, along with information about its strategy about how to get back in black numbers (Kara). The remaining two have not done so. One has the website focused on sales of products *stricto sensu* (Blazek). Another does even worse – has no operational websites. That is an apparent taboo in the B2B and B2C digital universe (Pietro Filipi). In sum, internal websites of the top Czech luxury fashion businesses address weakly, if at all, COVID-19, innovation, sustainability, CSR, and indices about effective and efficient marketing in this respect can be detected strongly only by one business. At the same time, three businesses threatened

with bankruptcy do not use their websites to improve their image in this respect. Even one of them (Pietro Filipi) gave up totally on its Internet presence and is «digitally dead».

Table 4. Case study – Website information (4 key aspects) of the top Czech luxury fashion businesses – Overview

Internal Websites Addressing	Number of businesses	Businesses
strongly all	1	Triola
strongly COVID and innovation	2	EL fashion, Evona
moderately COVID and innovation	5	Alpine Pro, Litex, Pleas, Styx, Timo
Total ignorance, denial	12	Bandi Vamos, Blazek Praha, E Daniely, Kama, Kara, Koutný, Modestia, Moira, Pietro Filipi, Tonak, Verino, Volansky fashion

Sources: developed by the author.

Conclusions. The performed case study based on the conceptual foundation and literature overview reveals underemployment of the internal websites of the top Czech luxury fashion businesses to address COVID-19, innovations, sustainability, CSR, and make them marketing accelerators. The general message is that websites are used as e-shop catalogs. Only the minority of them bring information about new products that emerged due to COVID, innovations, or sustainability. Besides, only one business fully turns the current situation into a multi-spectral opportunity (Triola). In turn, two businesses do so in a partial manner (EL fashion, Evona) and five in an even more moderated manner (Alpine Pro, Litex, Pleas, Styx, Timo). The remaining 12 reduced themselves to passively suffering negative consequences and gave up on pro-active website presentations. Three of them became «COVID-19» victims staring at bankruptcy and surrendering in their battle in the digital universe, while two websites only do the e-shops (Kara, Blazek). One business no longer has a functional website on its domain (Pietro Filipi). It reveals three new phenomena. Firstly, Czech luxury fashion businesses neither effectively nor efficiently use their websites to support modern multi-spectral marketing truly. Secondly, in the main, they are passive and resigned to silently suffer the impact of COVID-19, which can be fatal. Thirdly, there are still businesses actively facing current events, turning them around from challenges into opportunities and properly informing others about it via their websites.

On the theoretical level, it can be summarized that these three revelations are basically in line with prior academic analyses and empirical studies about the impact of crises and the crucial importance of the openness and willingness of businesses to develop and to communicate, i.e., advertise their changes.

On the practical level, it can be summarized that Czech luxury fashion businesses are still inclined to use their websites only for e-commerce. They do not go for a broad e-business. It is rather surprising in the second decade of the 21st century. Even more surprising is a tendency to keep their eyes closed and pretend that nothing major happened during the last two years.

Naturally, all these propositions and underlying three revelations have inherent limitations due to the type and size of the sample. For offsetting that, websites of more businesses from various industries and jurisdictions should be included. Besides, their content should be monitored over time (a longitudinal study) while double-checking the presented information with reality. Despite the actual limitation to only a one-time slot (July 2021), one jurisdiction (The Czech Republic), one industry (luxury fashion), and twenty businesses, it can be stated that the above-mentioned propositions and revelations are academically sufficient. They present a solid foundation for further studies. It is undoubtedly highly relevant and

important on both the theoretical and academic levels. An effective and efficient internal website presentation should be the keystone for a competitive advantage, especially during crises such as the COVID-19 post-COVID-19 era.

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Трансформація корпоративних веб-сайтів чеських компаній індустрії моди під час COVID-19

У статті систематизовано аргументи та контраргументи щодо напрямів удосконалення маркетингової, управлінської та інноваційної діяльності провідних компаній індустрії моди у Чехії під час світової пандемії COVID-19. Автором наголошено, що світова пандемія корона вірусу спричинила стрімкий розвиток цифрових технологій та актуалізувала проблематику представлення діяльності компаній в інтернет-середовищі, наповнення актуальним контентом їх корпоративні веб-сайти. Основною метою статті є оцінювання ступеня висвітлення на офіційних веб-сторінках компаній індустрії моди питань щодо їх функціонування під час пандемії COVID-19, впровадження ними інновацій, дотримання принципів сталого розвитку та корпоративної соціальної відповідальності. Результати систематизації наукових джерел та підходів до вирішення означеної проблематики засвідчили, що світова пандемія COVID-19 значно вплинула на галузь виробництва непродовольчих та високовартісних товарів, зокрема індустрії моди. Актуальність даної тематики має теоретичне та практичне значення, оскільки світова криза COVID-19 є більше негативним викликом, ніж позитивною можливістю для бізнесу, що, як наслідок, може спричинити банкрутство. Методологічною основою дослідження є спрощений метод експертних оцінок Дельфі, мета-та контент-аналізи, а також інструментарій телеологічного методу. Об'єктом дослідження є корпоративні веб-сайти ТОП-20 чеських компаній індустрії моди в Чехії станом на літо 2021 року. У статті емпірично підтверджено та теоретично доведено, що потенціал досліджуваних веб-сайтів не повністю розкрито. Результати дослідження мають теоретичну та практичну цінність для бізнесу. Автором надано низку рекомендацій щодо підвищення рівня представлення компаній високої моди в Інтернет-середовищі, наповнення їх веб-сайтів релевантним контентом тощо. На основі отриманих результатів автором сформовано напрями удосконалення маркетингової, управлінської та інноваційної діяльності компаній високої моди під час світової пандемії COVID-19.

Ключові слова: корпоративна соціальна відповідальність, пандемія, корона вірус, цифровий маркетинг, висока мода, веб-сторінка.