

CHALLENGES FOR MANAGERS IN THE CORPORATE MARKETING ENVIRONMENT

Milan Mihajlović¹, Nataša Novaković Božić², Bojana Čavić³, Nikola Vujanović⁴, Đorđe Dabetić⁵

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Pregledni nučni rad

Abstract

In an environment characterized by rapid market transformations and technological advancements, marketing managers face increasingly complex challenges in adapting to consumer expectations. This paper aims to present an overview of current theoretical concepts and contemporary research findings related to the role, tasks and responsibilities of marketing managers in the context of global competition, digitalized processes and comprehensive business transformation. Special attention is paid to identifying key contemporary challenges, including managing digital communication channels, building and maintaining brand reputation, implementing sustainable marketing practices and resolving ethical dilemmas in the decision-making process. Based on the analysis of relevant sources, the paper provides a consolidated overview of the most important current findings and formulates recommendations for improving managerial activities in the field of corporate marketing. The findings indicate the importance of developing flexible organizational models, strengthening digital skills and applying a strategic approach to rapid market transformations.

Keywords: management, marketing environment, challenges, corporation, digital transformation, strategies, sustainable marketing.

JEL: M31, M14, M10

Introduction

Technological progress, market globalization, increased competition and increasingly complex consumer expectations shape the modern business environment and require managers to have a high level of adaptability and strategic thinking. Therefore, marketing managers are required to constantly adapt, think strategically and act proactively. In today's marketing environment, a manager is no longer just an operational executor of promotional activities or traditional sales campaigns, but is seen as a key strategic actor who manages market information, manages brand reputation and leads innovation processes in line with corporate development goals. He is expected to be able to anticipate changes, connect and integrate digital technologies into organizational processes and develop long-term, sustainable relationships with consumers, partners and other stakeholders. The role of a modern marketing manager cannot be isolated from the overall business dynamics, because marketing has become an inseparable part of the broader corporate strategy. Both global and national companies that

¹ PhD Milan Mihajlović, Assistant Professor, Military Academy, University of Defence, Belgrade, Serbia, Email: milan.mih83@gmail.com, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7949-2631>

² PhD Nataša Novaković Božić, lecturer, Academy of Vocational Studies South Serbia - Blace, Serbia email: natanovanovic@vpskp.edu.rs, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-2863-272X>

³ PhD Bojana Čavić, professor of vocational studies, Belgrade Business and Arts Academy of Applied Studies, Belgrade, Serbia, Email: bojana.cavic@bpa.edu.rs, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-6945-6724>

⁴ PhD Nikola Vujanović, professor of vocational studies, Belgrade Business and Arts Academy of Applied Studies, Belgrade, Serbia Email: nikola.vujanovic@bpa.edu.rs, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7956-767X>

⁵ PhD Đorđe Dabetić, professor of vocational studies, Belgrade Business and Arts Academy of Applied Studies, Belgrade, Serbia, Email: djordje.dabetic@bpa.edu.rs, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9750-4090>

want to expand their business are increasingly realizing that long-term competitive advantage is strongly linked to the quality of managerial decisions in the field of marketing. Such decisions include the selection and definition of target market segments, strategic product positioning, management of communication channels, as well as building an organizational culture that supports innovation, creativity and consistent customer satisfaction.

Marketing managers are faced with a whole range of complex challenges, arising from the transformation of the market under the influence of digital technologies, the rapid expansion of social networks and changes in the value priorities of modern consumers. A modern marketing manager must simultaneously connect analytical and creative thinking, understand and correctly interpret large amounts of data (big data) originating from digital platforms and, based on these insights, make strategic decisions that support the sustainable growth and development of the company. His responsibilities include the coordination of multiple organizational functions — sales, public relations, product development, finance and others — which requires strong communication and team leadership skills. In the digital economy, managers become the main carriers of innovation processes. They actively adopt and apply new technologies, including artificial intelligence and automation of marketing activities, in order to more precisely target consumers and optimally manage resources. In addition, ethical issues and sustainability requirements are gaining importance, expanding the responsibilities and expectations placed on modern marketing leaders. In this way, the role of the manager goes beyond the framework of traditional marketing and becomes a multidisciplinary field that relies on knowledge from organizational behavior, information technology and corporate social responsibility.

Marketing management decisions have a direct and profound impact on corporate competitiveness, as they shape the perception of a brand, its market image, level of recognition and consumer trust. Strategic choices related to brand positioning, communication approach and choice of distribution channels determine how the market will perceive the organization in relation to its competitors. In a highly competitive market, the speed of response and the quality of decisions made are key factors of differentiation. According to relevant modern research in the field of management and marketing (Kotler, 2020; Keller & Kotler, 2022; Armstrong et al., 2022; Cunningham et al., 2022), organizations that successfully integrate marketing strategy with overall business objectives achieve a higher level of market resilience, innovation and long-term stability. Effective management of marketing resources enables the creation of added value through greater consumer loyalty, a stronger reputation and a clearer brand identity. Therefore, competent managers not only influence the optimization of promotional activities, but also the shaping of the strategic direction of the company as a whole.

The subject of research in this paper is the identification and analysis of key challenges faced by managers in the marketing environment of modern corporations. The focus is on theoretical approaches and relevant empirical findings that explain the nature of marketing decisions, their connection with corporate strategy and the impact on the overall competitiveness of the organization. The aim of the paper is to provide a comprehensive overview of contemporary theoretical and practical insights in the field of marketing management, with a special emphasis on the challenges created by globalization, digitalization and the growing complexity of market processes. Based on insights from relevant contemporary literature, the paper seeks to systematize the most important problems and highlight recommendations that can contribute to the improvement of managerial decisions in the corporate environment. The significance of the paper stems from the fact that marketing managers play a key role in maintaining the competitiveness of companies, their innovativeness and long-term development. The ability of managers to recognize changes in the environment and make appropriate decisions affects market success, building a positive image and the company's relations with society.

This paper is based on the analysis of secondary sources — academic literature, professional papers, books and relevant reports. The primary method used was content analysis, which allows for the identification of key trends and challenges in contemporary marketing management, as well as the method of comparative analysis of various contemporary theoretical approaches. The aim of such a

methodological framework is to identify and synthesize, based on existing scientific knowledge, the key factors of successful marketing management in a corporate environment. Since the work is not based on empirical research, it does not process primary data, but focuses on theoretical analysis and integration of contemporary results. Such an approach allows for the formulation of general conclusions and recommendations that can serve as a basis for future research in this scientific field.

The concept of marketing management in a corporate context

Planning, implementing and controlling activities aimed at creating, transferring and delivering value to customers constitute the essential process of marketing management. Within the framework of modern corporate management, marketing management is not limited to advertising and sales, but represents a broadly set strategic framework that connects all business functions with market demands and long-term plans of the organization (Solomon & Mathias, 2020). This concept is based on an integrated approach to the market, which includes a detailed analysis of consumer needs, shaping competitive advantages and constant adaptability to environmental changes. Its importance is particularly reflected in the ability to connect internal company resources with external market opportunities and thus enable stable and long-term development. Armstrong et al. (2022) emphasize that modern marketing management is also aimed at shaping the consumer experience, because today's customers are increasingly sensitive to the emotional, social and digital aspects of interaction with the brand. Thus, marketing management becomes a key strategic instrument for building reputation, encouraging loyalty and strengthening resilience in a turbulent market. In global corporations, this process takes on additional weight because it requires the coordination of marketing activities in different markets while consistently maintaining a recognizable brand identity (Rashid & Ratten, 2021). Such coordination requires a balance between universal brand standardization and flexibility according to local specificities. The role of marketing managers in modern corporations goes far beyond traditional advertising and promotion tasks. Today, they participate in strategic decision-making on product positioning, market segmentation, developing customer relationships, and implementing innovations. Cimperman (2023) defines marketing managers as coordinators of processes that connect consumers, clients, partners, and society through the creation, communication, and exchange of offers that have value for all parties involved. Their basic functions include:

- Analytical function, which refers to the interpretation of market trends, customer behavior and competitive activities in order to make data-based decisions.
- Strategic function, through which long-term marketing plans are formulated in line with overall corporate goals.
- Operational function, which includes the implementation of campaigns, communication management and implementation of marketing programs.
- Control function, focused on assessing the success of activities using indicators such as ROI, customer loyalty and market share.

Marketing managers in a modern business environment must possess a wide range of knowledge, including financial understanding, digital competencies, knowledge of consumer psychology and principles of sustainable development (Wikansari et al., 2023). Their role is also educational, as they connect different sectors within the corporation, encourage innovation and build an organizational culture based on market orientation.

Marketing strategy in corporations must be fully integrated into the overall business strategy, since marketing forms the basis of the organization's identity and its competitive position. Wichmann et al. (2022) emphasize that competitive advantage stems from the ability of a company to shape unique value for consumers, and marketing is precisely the mechanism that discovers, forms and transmits this value. Integrating marketing strategy with corporate strategy includes several key aspects (Savić et al., 2025a):

- Strategic alignment of goals, so that marketing goals follow the mission, vision and long-term plans of the organization.

- Coordination between functional units, where marketing must be linked to research, finance, sales and human resources.
- Basing decisions on analytics, which allows for more accurate prediction of market trends and more rational use of resources.
- Compliance with the principles of sustainability and social responsibility, which contributes to reputational advantage and long-term customer loyalty.

Effective integration is most often achieved through the concept of strategic marketing, where marketing is included in the highest levels of corporate decision-making. In this context, marketing ceases to be an operational function and becomes an integral part of the strategic structure of the organization.

Leadership in marketing management plays a crucial role in creating a vision, motivating employees, and directing the organization towards innovation and market orientation. Dwivedi et al. (2021) state that leadership in corporations includes the ability of managers to inspire teams to jointly create value for customers and the company. Marketing leaders must possess emotional intelligence, communication skills, and the ability to make decisions under uncertainty. Organizational culture is a set of values, norms, and behaviors that shape the way an organization works and functions. A market-oriented culture implies openness, constant learning, and a willingness to change, which is a necessary condition for successful marketing management (Savić et al., 2025b). In such corporations, marketing is permeated through all processes – from new product development to customer relationship management. Effective leadership in marketing also includes ethical responsibility, because managers shape standards of behavior and balance between economic goals and social values. Therefore, marketing managers have a dual obligation: to increase market performance and at the same time build public trust through transparency, sustainable practices, and responsible communication (Sciarelli et al., 2021).

Dynamics of the marketing environment

Deep, long-lasting and ever-present changes, resulting from the processes of globalization, digital transformation, intensive technological progress and the accelerated evolution of the needs and expectations of modern consumers, characterize today's marketing environment. Managers working in corporate marketing structures today operate in business conditions that require continuous adaptability, a high degree of strategic flexibility and the ability to quickly react to various types of changes in the exterior. According to Godfrey et al. (2009), marketing can no longer be viewed as a static set of predefined activities, but as a dynamic and complex system that simultaneously develops and transforms along with social, technological and economic changes in the global environment.

This chapter discusses and analyzes the key dimensions of the modern marketing environment: the processes of globalization and digital transformation of the market, changes in the structure and logic of consumer behavior, the growing importance of personalization of the offer, the impact of new and disruptive technologies, as well as regulatory and ethical challenges that shape the contemporary practice of marketing managers.

Globalization has fundamentally transformed the ways in which corporations plan, organize, and execute their marketing activities. The opening of world markets, the liberalization of foreign trade regimes, and the development of communication technologies have led to the creation of a highly competitive global environment in which companies must simultaneously operate in multiple geographical and cultural markets. According to Vuković (2024), managers are forced to develop the ability to combine a unique global marketing strategy with specific local preferences and consumer demands, which requires a balance between standardization and customization of products, messages, and communication processes. Digital transformation has further accelerated and intensified this development. Digital platforms have enabled companies to communicate directly and interactively with customers, reduced distribution costs, and accelerated the flow of information. Modern managers manage complex omnichannel systems in which digital and traditional communication channels are

combined to achieve maximum visibility and market engagement (Penjišević et al., 2024; Trifunović et al., 2023). Global connectivity simultaneously increases competition and accelerates the pressure for innovation. Brands are under constant surveillance and evaluation by consumers in real time, making reputation a key strategic resource that must be carefully managed.

The behavior of modern consumers in the digital era has become more complex, dynamic and significantly less predictable. Consumers are more informed, more interconnected and more demanding than ever before. Their purchasing decisions are no longer based solely on the objective and functional characteristics of products, but on the values, experiences and identity messages that brands communicate. According to Capelli et al. (2021), the emotional and symbolic elements of shopping play an increasingly important role in forming consumer loyalty. One of the most prominent contemporary trends is the personalization of offers. Companies use advanced analytical methods to monitor the individual needs and habits of users, developing products and marketing messages tailored to specific market segments. Personalization, however, also implies the necessity of establishing a balance between optimizing the user experience and protecting privacy. Although consumers expect relevant and tailored content, at the same time their concerns about possible misuse of personal data are growing (Savić et al., 2023). Therefore, managers are faced with the need to develop “empathetic marketing”, an approach that insists on the responsible and ethical use of data, while creating additional value for consumers.

Technological developments in the past decade have completely reshaped the logic of marketing management. Artificial intelligence (AI), big data analysis and social networks are the most significant drivers of the transformation of the marketing process. AI enables decision automation, predictive analysis and the development of highly personalized marketing campaigns. According to Zollinger (2009), managers who successfully integrate AI into their processes achieve greater efficiency in resource allocation, market segmentation and customer relationship management (CRM). Processing large amounts of data provides deeper insight into consumer behavior patterns, market trends and changes that occur in real time. Algorithms enable the prediction of consumer needs and timely optimization of the offer. However, the complexity of data interpretation requires multidisciplinary knowledge that connects management, statistics and information technology. Social networks, on the other hand, have become the leading channel of communication and building brand identity. Their interactivity enables two-way communication between companies and users, which strongly influences the formation of brand perception and the management of reputational risks (Adams et al., 2016). The role of a modern manager is to create strategies that encourage consumer engagement, but also minimize potential negative public reactions.

Regulation and ethics are increasingly shaping the field of corporate marketing activities. The development of the digital economy opens up new and complex issues related to privacy protection, advertising transparency and responsible data management. The European Union, through the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), has defined strict and binding standards for the collection, processing and storage of personal information, which directly affects the marketing practices of companies operating in the international market (Golubović & Janković, 2023). However, the ethical dimension of marketing goes beyond legal obligations and includes moral responsibility towards consumers, the community and society as a whole. In this context, sustainable marketing is gaining increasing importance, as it combines economic goals with social responsibility and environmental protection (Milenković et al., 2023). Today's managers are called upon to build trust based on transparent, authentic and socially responsible communication, as modern consumers increasingly value ethical behavior from companies. Ethics is becoming a strategic advantage and resource that strengthens reputation and contributes to the long-term success of the organization.

Key challenges for managers in the corporate marketing environment

Modern managers face a marketing environment that is constantly influenced by changes, intense competition and the rapid development of digital technologies, which requires them to have a high

level of flexibility, strategic thinking and the ability to manage complex systems of communication, reputation and innovation. The role of a manager is no longer limited to traditional planning and implementation of marketing activities, but also includes proactively identifying potential risks, managing crisis situations, implementing the principles of sustainable business and strengthening organizational resilience (Ilić & Tasić, 2021). The following is a detailed description of the most important challenges that determine the modern role of managers in the corporate marketing environment. The digital transformation of large business systems has led to a complete paradigm shift in the way of communicating with the market. Traditional forms of advertising are increasingly giving way to diverse digital platforms that enable direct, two-way and personalized relationships with users (Berrone et al., 2010). Today, managers must integrate social networks, email marketing, blog content, podcasts and video formats into a single brand communication architecture. A key challenge is maintaining consistent messaging in an information-saturated environment, where audiences expect authenticity, accuracy, and responsiveness (Porter & Kramer, 2019). Additional complexity is created by constant algorithm changes on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, making it difficult to predict campaign performance. Successful management of digital channels requires advanced digital literacy, knowledge of analytics, and the ability to make decisions based on real-time data. Managers are balancing a creative approach with the use of artificial intelligence in content creation, with ethical issues—such as transparency and privacy—becoming increasingly important (Žikić et al., 2024).

Brand reputation is one of the most important intangible resources of any corporation. However, in the digital age, the risk of reputational crises is significantly higher because negative information spreads extremely quickly and often escapes the immediate control of management (Carroll, 2021). Marketing managers must be prepared for a wide range of crises – from dissatisfied consumers, public boycotts and viral negative posts, to serious ethical scandals and cyber incidents. Crisis management involves timely response, complete transparency and continuous building of public trust. It is necessary to develop predefined crisis protocols, form teams responsible for reputational risks and design clear communication procedures. Success depends on the ability of managers to align defensive measures – aimed at reducing damage – with proactive measures that strengthen reputational capital (Ilić, 2022). The professionalism of marketing managers today is measured by the ability to strategic crisis communication based on empathy, speed and trust.

Today's consumers increasingly value the ethics and sustainability of companies' operations. Sustainable marketing includes not only environmentally responsible advertising, but also the integration of social and ethical standards into all segments of the marketing strategy - from conceptual product development, through business methods, to communication with the target market (Neševski & Bojičić, 2024). The concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) has become an indispensable part of marketing management. Managers are increasingly in a position to balance economic goals and social expectations. Connecting the principles of sustainability with the need to achieve competitive advantage requires long-term thinking and strategic alignment (Camilleri, 2021). A particular challenge is to avoid "greenwashing", i.e. the practice of pretending to be sustainable for the sake of brand promotion, because modern consumers easily recognize such attempts, which can significantly damage the credibility of the company (Shi et al., 2019). Therefore, marketing managers must build a culture of integrity and connect marketing activities with real, measurable positive effects.

Global corporations operate in a context that involves the interaction of multicultural teams, geographically distant employees, and different communication practices. Marketing managers must develop intercultural skills, as well as the ability to motivate and coordinate people in virtual teams (Milanović & Gojkov, 2024). Managing innovation in such a system requires finding a balance between centralization – which enables brand consistency – and decentralization, which encourages creativity and local adaptation. A key challenge is to encourage two-way exchange of knowledge and innovation within a complex corporate structure (Obrić & Majstorović, 2023). Managers must stimulate experimentation and creative thinking, but must not set restrictive metrics that stifle

innovation. A culture of trust, open communication, and informal leadership has proven to be one of the basic prerequisites for the effective functioning of global teams (Rimkeviciene et al., 2027). One of the key and most demanding challenges in modern marketing management is the alignment of short-term financial goals with the long-term interests of the brand. The pressure to achieve results quickly often encourages managers to use aggressive sales tactics, deep discounts or communication approaches that increase revenue in the short term, but erode consumer trust in the long term (de Leeuw et al., 2019). Balancing profit and reputation requires a strategic approach and clear support from top management. Companies that build strong brand equity achieve greater resilience to market shocks and crises (Ahmad et al., 2016). The task of managers is to emphasize that stable consumer trust is the foundation of sustainable growth through transparent communication and responsible management of investor expectations. In today's information economy, ethics, transparency and consistency are becoming indispensable pillars of corporate reputation.

Overview of contemporary research and theoretical approaches

In today's dynamic business environment, the success of companies largely depends on the ability of their management to respond quickly and effectively to changes in market conditions, technological innovations and regulatory frameworks. For management practices to be effective, it is necessary for leaders to develop a high level of flexibility and innovation, as well as the ability to adapt to new challenges. This chapter provides an overview of key recommendations for improving management in companies, focusing on several key aspects: strengthening the adaptability of the organization, implementing digital solutions, continuous development of managerial and professional competencies, as well as effective team management. The implementation of these recommendations can contribute to better preparedness of companies for market turbulence and increase overall competitiveness. Adaptability is one of the key competencies of modern organizations because it enables quick and effective adaptation to changes in the business environment. Organizations that develop the ability to adapt through flexible management practices often achieve significant competitive advantage, but also greater long-term sustainability in the market (Santos-Vijande et al., 2021). In the modern business environment, where market conditions, technologies and consumer preferences are constantly changing, the ability to react in a timely manner becomes crucial for the success of a company. There are several strategies that can significantly contribute to increasing the adaptability of a company:

- Application of agile management methods – Agile approaches, which were originally developed in the IT sector, can be successfully applied in various industries, especially in organizations working on projects or in dynamic environments. These approaches enable flexible planning, rapid response to changes and continuous learning within teams, thus increasing the organization's ability to effectively adapt to new challenges (Rodrigo & Palacios, 2021).
- Development of organizational flexibility – Structures characterized by a smaller hierarchy and decentralized decision-making enable faster adaptation to market changes. Companies are recommended to apply matrix or network organizational structures, as they encourage cooperation between departments and facilitate faster information exchange, which directly affects adaptability (Savić et al., 2023).
- Continuous monitoring of market trends – Management should establish mechanisms for systematically monitoring changes in consumer behavior, technological innovations and the regulatory framework. Regular collection and analysis of this information enables proactive adaptation of company strategies, rather than a reactive approach, thereby increasing the organization's ability to respond to unexpected challenges (Vuković, 2024).

These strategies, when applied in combination, enable companies to not only survive in a dynamic business environment, but also to create a sustainable competitive advantage through rapid adaptability and innovation.

In the modern business environment, digitalization and technological innovation are key factors for gaining and maintaining competitive advantage. It is essential for management to not only embrace

new technologies, but also actively integrate them into their core business processes, thereby improving efficiency, flexibility, and the ability to quickly adapt to market changes. Recommendations for implementation:

- Developing a digital strategy – Companies should formulate a comprehensive digitalization strategy that includes the implementation of advanced software solutions, business process automation, and the systematic use of data for informed decision-making. This approach allows not only the optimization of existing processes, but also the creation of new business models adapted to the digital age (Haerani et al., 2020).
- Encouraging an innovative culture – Organizations that foster a culture of innovation and continuous experimentation with new ideas and solutions have a greater ability to adapt and create innovative products and services. Actively involving employees in the creation and testing of new approaches strengthens the creative potential of the company and encourages proactive problem solving (Akob et al., 2020).
- Investing in digital tools and infrastructure – Investments in modern digital tools, such as project management software, data analytics systems and digital communication platforms, enable better planning, monitoring and control of business activities. The effective application of these technologies contributes to reducing operational risks, accelerating decision-making and improving collaboration within the organization (Albort-Morant et al., 2017).

The integration of digital technologies and innovations into all aspects of business is no longer an option, but a necessity for organizations that want to remain competitive and successfully respond to dynamic market challenges.

The success of a company largely depends on the capabilities and quality of management. Modern managers face challenging and rapid changes in the business environment, which is why it is necessary to possess a combination of technical, analytical and interpersonal skills. Effective management of an organization requires managers not only to make strategic decisions, but also to communicate successfully, motivate teams and adapt to changes. Recommendations for the development of management skills:

- Continuous professional development – Managers should regularly participate in training and education programs that cover key areas, such as strategic planning, digital transformation, leadership and change management. These programs allow managers to stay up to date with modern trends and practices in management (Mitrović et al., 2024).
- Improving emotional intelligence – Developing the ability to recognize and manage one's own emotions, as well as those of team members, significantly contributes to better communication, conflict resolution and employee motivation (Bekk et al., 2016).
- Mentoring and coaching – Introducing mentoring and coaching programs within the organization enables the transfer of experience and knowledge from more experienced to less experienced managers, supports the development of future leaders and contributes to strengthening managerial capacities within the company (Golazzo-Yelpo & Kubelka, 2019).

In the modern business environment, the success of a company largely depends on the ability of management to establish effective teams and optimized organizational processes. This involves coordinating human resources, technology, and procedures within an organization to achieve strategic goals. Managers should create a work environment in which employees actively participate in decision-making processes and where organizational processes are clear, simple, and adaptable to change. Recommended strategies:

- Team and participatory leadership – Involving employees in decision-making contributes to greater motivation, creativity and the quality of the solutions reached. Active involvement of team members creates a sense of responsibility and strengthens commitment to common goals (Sellitto et al., 2020).
- Business process optimization – Applying a process approach allows for the identification of weak points and the elimination of inefficiencies. This reduces costs, improves productivity and increases the company's ability to respond to market challenges (Tu & Wu, 2020).

- Use of digital collaboration tools – Using platforms for collaboration, communication and project management allows teams to better coordinate, especially in situations where employees work remotely or in hybrid work models (Han et al., 2020).

Therefore, in order for companies to remain competitive in a dynamic business environment, management must apply an integrated approach that combines agile methods, innovation, continuous development of competencies and effective management of teams and business processes. The implementation of the proposed strategies helps organizations to respond faster to changes, improve internal processes and ensure long-term sustainable development.

In the latest literature in the field of management and marketing, especially in the period between 2018 and 2025, it is clearly visible the continuous and intense interest of researchers in the ways in which managers respond to the challenges arising from the modern and very dynamic marketing environment. Changes in consumer behavior, digital transformation processes, the increasing importance of sustainability, but also the growth of ethical dilemmas, represent key thematic areas that shape the modern theoretical and practical framework of marketing management. In such circumstances, the focus of researchers is largely shifting from traditional marketing functions to a systemic view of marketing as an integrated process that combines innovation, modern technologies and the growing role of corporate social responsibility.

After 2018, research papers increasingly clearly indicate that the dominant interest has shifted towards digital marketing and the challenges that arise in the conditions of accelerated technological development and digitalization. According to the findings of Tomczyk et al. (2022), managers are faced with the increasing complexity of various digital channels and the necessity of processing and managing data in real time. Similarly, Viverit et al. (2023) emphasize that the ability to effectively integrate marketing technologies (MarTech) and artificial intelligence is becoming crucial for achieving long-term competitive advantage. At the same time, a growing number of authors emphasize the increasing importance of sustainable and ethical marketing. Studies such as the one conducted by Savić et al. (2024) show that the growing pressure on companies to align their marketing strategies with the principles of sustainable development and social responsibility has become one of the central elements of management. Research published in the *Journal of Business Research*, confirms that consumers today increasingly insist on transparency, authenticity, and social engagement of brands, which puts managers in a situation where they have to balance between increasingly stringent market and ethical demands.

Within the framework of modern theoretical models of management and marketing, several concepts that dominate the scientific literature are often highlighted (Mariani et al., 2022):

- Dynamic Capabilities Theory emphasizes the importance of an organization's ability to identify, integrate and recombine resources in an unstable and changing environment, with these capabilities being a source of competitive advantage. This model is particularly useful for understanding managerial decisions in the process of digital transformation of marketing functions.
- The Resource-Based View (RBV) indicates that the modern success of marketing management depends to a significant extent on the ability of managers to develop intangible resources such as knowledge, brand reputation and the quality of customer relationships.
- The Integrated Marketing Management Model emphasizes that marketing management is no longer a separate and isolated function, but a strategic pillar of company management, which connects innovation, advanced technologies, human capital and sustainability principles.
- Stakeholder theory and the Triple Bottom Line concept emphasize the need for managers to align economic, social and environmental goals in their decisions, which is particularly evident in marketing strategies focused on the social responsibility of organizations.

These models collectively suggest that managers in the modern marketing environment can no longer successfully manage using only traditional planning and promotion tools. Instead, they need to possess

integrated and multidisciplinary knowledge that includes digital analytics, change management, sustainability, and a strategic understanding of consumer behavior.

A review of the most recent research allows the identification of several dominant challenges. Studies by Cheng & Jiang (2022) and Savić et al. (2023) highlight that one of the most prominent challenges for marketing managers is the ability to manage rapid and frequent changes in market trends. Research findings by Mneimneh et al. (2023) show that digital disruption imposes the need to redefine traditional managerial roles and build agile and flexible organizational structures. A study by Liu et al. (2024) indicates that maintaining a stable and consistent customer experience in a multi-channel environment is one of the most critical challenges. On the other hand, the results of Daugaard & Ding (2022) reveal that managers are increasingly experiencing “analytical overload” due to the enormous volume of available data, which makes it difficult to make quick, efficient and reliable decisions. In the area of sustainability, recent research (Mihajlović et al., 2025) highlights the growing importance of the role of marketing managers in the development of green products, communication campaigns that emphasize environmental commitment and in adapting organizational values to the demands of society. Overall, most authors conclude that modern managers must possess the ability to continuously learn, adapt quickly and think innovatively in an environment of high uncertainty.

An analytical review of the literature shows that there is a broad consensus on the necessity of redefining the role of marketing managers – from the traditional creator of promotional campaigns to a strategic leader who combines technology, innovation, change management and social responsibility. However, certain gaps are observed in modern research. First, most of the work emphasizes technological and digital aspects, while human factors such as motivation, emotional intelligence, leadership styles and organizational behavior are insufficiently researched. Second, there are very few studies that focus on specific sectoral challenges of marketing management in areas such as finance, defense or the public sector. Third, most of the conclusions come from research conducted in developed markets, which reduces the possibility of a wider application of the findings to developing countries. Despite these limitations, contemporary research confirms that the theoretical framework of marketing management is increasingly clearly moving towards an interdisciplinary approach that connects economics, psychology, information technology and the fields of ethical decision-making. Future work should be focused on creating sophisticated models of managerial competencies that enable responsible, sustainable and ethically based management in a digitalized business environment. This opens up significant space for further theoretical and practical progress of the discipline, with an emphasis on the development of organizations that are more resilient, agile and socially responsible.

Recommendations for managers in the marketing environment

Intensive and accelerated technological changes, market instability and growing consumer expectations impose on management the need to revise and improve conventional management methods. Managers today are not only planners and controllers, but also strategic leaders who simultaneously connect digital technologies, data and human resources to build a stable and sustainable competitive advantage. A review of current literature indicates that their actions in the corporate marketing environment can be grouped into four key directions: establishing agile and adaptive organizational structures, continuous investment in digital skills and data analytics, strengthening ethical management and sustainable business, and developing the ability to anticipate future market trends.

Organizational agility has become a crucial condition for survival in a business environment that is changing extremely quickly and unpredictably. Traditional management models, based on strict hierarchy and rigid chains of command, have proven inadequate in situations where it is necessary to react almost immediately (Aguilera et al., 2021). Adaptive organizational structures enable more efficient resource allocation, faster decision-making, and stronger interconnection between different sectors. The role of managers is to actively build a culture that encourages innovation, experimentation, collaboration, and open communication. The formation of cross-functional teams, as well as the

application of agile methodologies such as Scrum, Kanban, and the Design Thinking approach, contribute to companies responding more easily to market challenges and applying feedback more quickly (Lerga, 2024). Agility is not seen as a goal, but as a means that enables continuous organizational learning and accelerated implementation of innovations. Companies that have adopted this model report faster product development, faster innovation launches, and higher levels of customer satisfaction. Therefore, it is necessary for managers to continuously invest in the development of employee competencies and their own abilities that support decentralization of decision-making and adaptive behavior.

Digital transformation has significantly changed the nature and logic of marketing, as an increasing number of managerial and marketing decisions are based on the collection, processing and interpretation of large data sets (big data). The success of managers is increasingly measured by their ability to transform this data into useful strategic insights that improve business efficiency (Pešić, 2025). In this context, digital competencies are becoming not only a professional advantage, but also a basic condition for the competitiveness of modern marketing teams. Managers are expected to understand how digital platforms, recommendation algorithms, automated advertising systems and consumer behavior analytics work. The use of advanced tools such as predictive analytics, machine learning and decision-making systems based on artificial intelligence enables more precise targeting, budget optimization and personalized communication (Zimonjić, 2024). In addition to technical knowledge, digital transformation also requires building a data-driven mindset — making decisions based on facts, not intuition. This includes strengthening collaboration between marketing, IT and analytics, as well as continuous employee development through courses, certifications and interactive digital academies.

Marketing today is not only defined by technological challenges, but also by a strong ethical responsibility. Issues of privacy protection, transparent advertising and responsible consumption are increasingly coming to the forefront of companies and regulatory authorities. Managers often face dilemmas in which short-term financial interests conflict with long-term ethical norms and principles of social responsibility (Yeghiazarian et al., 2021). Strengthening ethical decision-making therefore involves formulating internal policies, codes of conduct and monitoring systems that ensure adherence to the principles of responsible management. Sustainable marketing is no longer just a voluntary effort by companies, but a necessary element of competitiveness in an environment where customers prefer brands that take into account the social and environmental consequences of their business. Organizations that invest in eco-innovation, responsible supply chains and support for local communities achieve long-term benefits in the form of greater customer loyalty and a stronger reputation (Nambiar et al., 2020). The role of managers is to be the bearers of ethical transformation, to demonstrate their commitment to sustainability through example and to foster a culture of trust and transparency.

Today's markets are characterized by exceptional volatility, which is why managers must develop a proactive approach to monitoring and understanding future trends. Predicting market changes no longer relies solely on intuition and past experience, but on continuous analysis of data, macroeconomic indicators and consumer behavior signals in real time (Lee et al., 2019). In this sense, managers are expected to develop the ability of strategic foresight, i.e. a long-term view of different possible market development scenarios. The use of trend intelligence tools, analysis of interactions on social networks and the application of scenario planning methods can significantly improve the quality of managerial decisions (Bassen, 2019). In modern marketing management, trend forecasting is increasingly associated with creativity - it is necessary to combine analytical tools with an intuitive understanding of signals from the environment. Companies that succeed in this become change leaders, create new standards and proactively shape the market instead of just reacting to changes.

Conclusion

Today's corporate environment is dominated by constant and rapid changes, intensive technological progress, increasing competition and increasingly demanding consumers. In such an environment, managers working in the field of marketing face complex and multidimensional challenges, which can no longer be viewed through the traditional framework of classic managerial functions. An analysis of relevant sources from the literature shows that successful marketing management today involves combining strategic, communication and digital skills, as well as the ability to quickly adapt to dynamic changes in the market and predict future trends. The overall synthesis of theoretical knowledge indicates that the contemporary challenges of marketing managers are highly interconnected and multifaceted.

Digital transformation has completely changed the ways in which organizations address consumers, while social networks and data processing and analysis tools have enabled more precise audience targeting, but at the same time have opened up a number of new ethical and regulatory dilemmas, especially regarding data privacy. Market globalization, accompanied by unstable and changing consumer preferences, further complicates the decision-making process. In such an environment, managers must demonstrate a high level of agility, strategic thinking and a willingness to encourage innovative behavior within their organizations.

The importance of appropriate managerial competencies is becoming a key factor in creating and maintaining long-term competitive advantages of corporations. Today's marketing managers must combine analytical skills, creativity, knowledge of modern digital technologies, as well as developed emotional and communication skills. Managing teams working in a virtual and multicultural environment requires a high level of flexibility and the ability to inspire and motivate employees through clear values and meaning of work. In addition, the concept of ethical and sustainable marketing is becoming increasingly important, which involves aligning financial goals with social responsibility and environmental care. It is precisely the skill of managers to unite these elements that becomes the foundation of the long-term stability and reputation of a corporation.

Theoretical reviews also indicate that the success of marketing management depends on the use of data-driven decision making, as well as a proactive approach to innovation. Organizations that recognize the importance of continuous development of managers achieve a higher level of adaptability and resilience to external changes. The role of managers thus becomes strategic and transformative: they do not only manage operations, but also become carriers of change and drivers of organizational transformations. However, there are certain limitations in the theory, because most research deals with individual aspects of marketing, while an integrative approach is rarely applied. In addition, rapid changes in technology and consumer behavior make models quickly obsolete.

Future research should be focused on identifying new competencies needed by managers in order to successfully respond to the challenges of artificial intelligence, automation and sustainable business. It is necessary to study the relationship between managerial decisions and corporate reputation, as well as new ethical dilemmas that arise from the application of advanced digital technologies. Comparative studies of different sectors and markets could deepen the understanding of the differences in challenges and practices between developed and developing countries.

In conclusion, it can be emphasized that managers in the marketing environment of corporations are crucial for creating success and differentiation in the modern market. Their ability to integrate knowledge from management, marketing, digital technologies and ethics is becoming a key prerequisite for sustainable development and competitiveness. In the future, their role will be increasingly strategic and transformative, as the long-term results of the corporation and its contribution to society depend on their ability to manage complexity and uncertainty.

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IZAZOVI ZA MENADŽERE U KORPORATIVNOM MARKETING OKRUŽENJU

Milan Mihajlović, Nataša Novaković Božić, Bojana Čavić, Nikola Vujanović, Đorđe Dabetić

Apstrakt

U okruženju koje karakterišu brze tržišne transformacije i tehnološki napredak, menadžeri marketinga suočavaju se sa sve složenijim izazovima u prilagođavanju očekivanjima potrošača. Cilj ovog rada je da pruži pregled aktuelnih teorijskih koncepata i savremenih istraživačkih nalaza koji se odnose na ulogu, zadatke i odgovornosti menadžera marketinga u uslovima globalne konkurencije, digitalizovanih procesa i sveobuhvatne poslovne transformacije. Posebna pažnja posvećena je identifikaciji ključnih savremenih izazova, među kojima se izdvajaju upravljanje digitalnim komunikacionim kanalima, izgradnja i održavanje reputacije brenda, primena održivih marketinških praksi i rešavanje etičkih dilema u procesu donošenja odluka. Na osnovu analize relevantnih izvora, rad daje objedinjeni pregled najvažnijih savremenih saznanja i formuliše preporuke za unapređenje menadžerskih aktivnosti u oblasti korporativnog marketinga. Rezultati ukazuju na značaj razvoja fleksibilnih organizacionih modela, jačanja digitalnih veština i primene strateškog pristupa u uslovima brzih tržišnih promena.

Ključne reči: *menadžment, marketinško okruženje, izazovi, korporacija, digitalna transformacija, strategije, održivi marketing*

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