

An Analysis of the Marketing Communications of a Selected Student Organization

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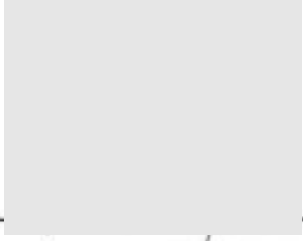
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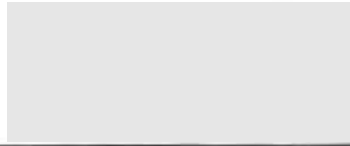
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ABSTRAKT

Bakalářská práce je zaměřena na analýzu marketingové komunikace vybrané studentské organizace se sídlem v Bratislavě, která se věnuje poskytování produktů a služeb s ohledem na vzdělávání v oblasti financí a investování. Cílem teoretické části bylo vypracování literární rešerše, která se věnovala oblasti marketingové komunikace a následná tvorba teoretických východisek potřebných pro vypracování praktické části. Cílem praktické části bylo analyzování současného stavu marketingové komunikace ve vybrané studentské organizaci. Na základě výsledků analýz byly pro vybranou studentskou organizaci formulovány návrhy na zlepšení současného stavu její marketingové komunikace.

Klíčová slova: marketingová komunikace, nástroje marketingové komunikace, studentská organizace, marketingový výzkum, analýza

ABSTRACT

The Bachelor thesis focuses on the marketing communications analysis in the selected student organization situated in Bratislava. The organization offers educational products and services concerning finance and investing. The aim of the theoretical part was the elaboration of literary research, followed up by the formulation of the theoretical bases related to the practical part. The practical part aimed to analyse the current state of marketing communication of a selected student organization. Based on the results of the analyses, recommendations for improvement of the marketing communication of the selected student organization were formulated.

Keywords: Marketing Communication, Marketing Communication Tools, Student Organization, Marketing Research, Analysis

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Motto

“It always seems impossible until it's done.”

Nelson Mandela

I hereby declare that the print version of my Bachelor's thesis and the electronic version of my thesis deposited in the IS/STAG system are identical.

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, not only companies but also students want to contribute to society with their knowledge and experiences. Our world is full of possibilities and innovations. Many people strive to improve their educational level and ensure a better future for themselves. The only problem is that not all possibilities and opportunities are promoted enough to be noticed. For this purpose, marketing communication is crucial for organizations in order to communicate with customers, familiarize them with their products and services, create relationships, or strengthen already existing ones. This bachelor thesis focuses on analysing the selected student organization situated in Bratislava. I had been a member of this student organization for a few months during the pandemic lockdown. It was sometimes frustrating to see so many talented people and an excellent student organization not being recognized as much as they could and deserve to be. On the other hand, this recognition comes with an opportunity to make a breakthrough if the right combination of different marketing communications tools is used correctly. This challenge is one of the reasons why I chose this particular theme for my bachelor thesis research.

The bachelor's thesis is divided into two parts. The theoretical part aims to explain terms connected with effective communication, and then the focus is moved to marketing communication tools and selected trends. The following chapter is dedicated to selected trends in online marketing communication. Lastly, the set marketing analyses such as McKinsey 7S, PESTE analysis, Benchmarking, and SWOT analysis are introduced. The theoretical part serves as the basis for the practical part. At the end of the theoretical part, four research questions are formulated. These research questions will be verified during the elaboration of the practical part of the bachelor thesis.

The practical part aims to analyse the current state of marketing communication of the selected student organization. In the beginning, the student organization, together with the products and services, is introduced by the McKinsey 7S analysis. After that, marketing communication tools are analysed from two points of view.

The following analyses describe the macro-environment, meso-environment, and micro-environment of the student organization. Suggestions for improving marketing communication are listed at the end of the practical part. Due to the reason that the student organization has a limited budget, recommendations suggested at the end of the practical part are meant to be cost-friendly.

I. THEORY

1 COMMUNICATION PROCESS

In the modern age, everything changes so rapidly that people do not attach to anything anymore; it is hard to catch someone's attention. People lose interest and do not care about things as much as they used to. Well, nothing is surprising about this. Our society has a new way of life where everywhere people look, some advertisement is being presented. Eventually, people end up becoming fed up with this phenomenon. Another sad reality is that companies focus more on their products and services than their customers. The advertisements present products and how perfect and unique they are instead of presenting the added value they have to people about why they should want them. Miscommunication between the company's effort to help and the customer's understanding of how some specific product can fulfill their needs can be noticed. If companies want to start succeeding instead of failing, they need to attract more customers. For this, the focus needs to be shifted to the correct communication.

1.1 Introduction to communication

The communication process describes a situation in which two or more subjects exchange certain information. From the marketing point of view, a subject who sends a message through the communication channel is called the sender. The subject who receives a message is referred to as the receiver. This message can be compromised because of noises that make decoding harder for the receiver. The communication process, according to the Shrammov model of communication, is displayed in figure number 1 (Přikrylová 2019, 23).

1.1.1 Sender

A sender is a person, group of people or an organization that sends pieces of information with a specific intention to a receiver. That intention can be:

- To introduce a product or service to the public,
- To build up a company's image,
- To build a better relationship with customers,
- To change customers' behavior,
- To arouse customers' needs and desires (Přikrylová 2019, 23-24).

The sender is the initiator of the conversation. However, for communication to be successful, the sender must be perceived pleasingly by the receiver. The attractive and trustworthy source of a message adds credibility. If the source is reliable from a customer's point of view, there is a better chance of an effective exchange of information. (Přikrylová 2019, 23-24).

1.1.2 Communication channels

Every message that is sent by the sender must go through channels. Their form is dependent on the type of message. If the sender understands his audience accurately, the communication channel can be defined correctly. A correct audience understanding can help the sender achieve a better communication effect. Communication channels used by a company can be divided into means that have an individual approach to a customer:

- Phone calls,
- Individual conversations,
- Letters and E-mails,
- Video calls.

Alternatively, the means that have a collective approach to customers, such as:

- Media,
- Outdoor and Indoor activities,
- Websites,
- Events,
- Presentations,
- Sponsoring (Přikrylová 2019, 26).

The communication channels listed above can be supervised by corporations. Although, situations where supervision is not possible, can appear. For example, the WOM (Word of mouth) communication between customers is generally considered unaffected by the companies' influence (Přikrylová 2019, 26).

1.1.3 Receiver

A receiver is a person or group of people to whom a message is sent by the sender to alter their perception or behavior towards the product, service, or corporation. Receivers can be, for example:

- Suppliers,
- Business partners,
- Customers,
- Employees,
- Investors,
- Opinion formers.
- The public.
- and the media (Clow and Baack 2017, 24).

1.1.4 Noises

A massive number of noises can result in a more complicated understanding of messages sent by the sender. People are different, which means they understand and perceive messages differently. The message must be as transparent as possible to get a desirable intention (Clow and Baack 2017, 25).

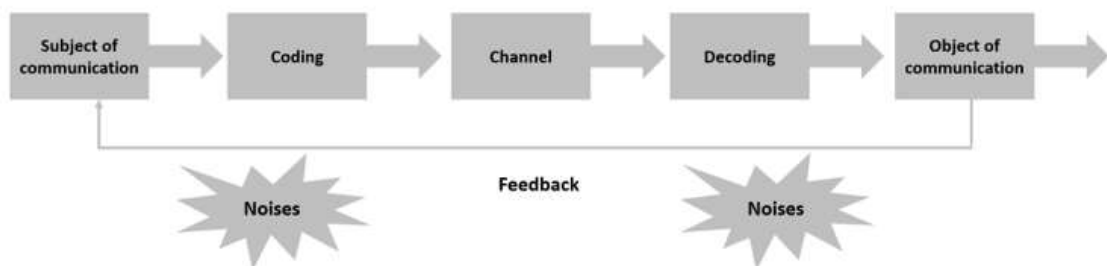


Figure 1. Communication process model (Přikrylová 2019,24)

2 MARKETING COMMUNICATION MIX AND SELECTED TRENDS

Messages that many companies try to communicate with their target audience need to be adjusted to catch more attention. Marketers are being challenged by competitors to develop innovative, creative, and entertaining messages. For that purpose, they use different combinations of marketing communication tools. Not all companies use every marketing communication tool. Using all marketing communication tools can be ineffective and costly. As Karlíček mentioned in his book, the standard marketing communication tools are advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, public relation, and event marketing (Karlíček 2016, 10).

2.1 Integrated marketing communication

One of the fundamental matters that companies need to improve is communication. Much effort is added to an advertisement without thinking it through and making a marketing plan. As a result, customers are flooded with unimportant information. An integrated marketing communication process is used to avoid this problem and save money. The idea behind integrated marketing communication is looking at advertising tools as parts of a spider web where the middle of the web is the communication marketing goal a company is trying to communicate. If accurately done, it should work like a domino where one part refers to another one and that one to the next. Ultimately, everything should be interconnected (Clow and Baack 2017, 25-26).

2.2 Advertising

Advertisement is the most-known form of marketing communication and has a pretty broad spectrum. Different communication mediums can be chosen for different situations.

Such as:

- Television,
- Internet,
- Radio,
- Newspapers,
- Magazines,

- Outdoor and indoor advertisements,
- or even advertisements in the cinema (Karlíček 2016, 49-52).

This form of marketing communication is used the most because of its broad reach and repetition. If the advertisement is well prepared, it can appeal to more customers and create a more vital relationship with them (Karlíček 2016, 49- 52).

2.3 Sales Promotion

While advertising is used to implement information about products or services in a customer's brain, it rarely creates a need for a purchase. Therefore, sales promotion steps in. Sales promotion has five main goals:

- Providing customers with information about the product's properties,
- Reminding customers of products when they are shopping,
- Reducing risks connected with purchasing products,
- Making customers enthusiastic about the product itself,
- Creating a good reputation (Karlíček 2016, 95).

Sales promotion uses different tools to increase demand for a product, such as visual demonstrations, coupons, or free product samples (Karlíček 2016, 95).

2.4 Direct Marketing

The shift to a more personalized marketing approach is visible in direct marketing. Direct marketing aims to get an immediate response from the addressed customer. Measuring the successful response is recognized as one of the advantages of direct marketing. Some of the tools of this form of communication are direct mail, telemarketing, and direct response advertising (Přikrylová 2019, 105-111).

2.5 Personal selling

Personal selling is used by companies at certain stages of the buying process, where an interaction between two and more people takes place. Personal selling is connected with the long-term goal of building stable customer relationships. One of the most valuable advantages of personal selling is face-to-face opportunity to build relationships (Clow and Back 2017, 347).

2.6 Public Relation

Public relation differs from other tools of marketing communication due to its focus. While other forms of communication serve primarily as an advertisement for the products and services of a company, public relation focuses on customers and the public. The main goal is to build better relationships, improve and positively impact brand awareness, and discover the public's attitudes (Karlíček 2016, 119-121).

2.7 Trade shows and exhibitions

Trade shows and exhibitions belong to one of the oldest forms of marketing communication. At the same time, due to their aim, they are one of the most beneficial ones. Trade shows and exhibitions are temporary events designated for displaying new products to customers who can interact and communicate with the company's representatives. The aim can be to:

- Inform customers,
- Show customers new products from existing lines,
- Find out the public's opinions,
- Strengthen the relationship with the public,
- Sell a product (Přikrylová 2019, 145-148).

Depending on location, exhibitions are divided into local, regional, national, continental, and global. From the point of view of exhibitions and trade shows they can be divided into universal and general, multi-branch, and single-branch.

- Universal and general are for the public without the need to understand the theme,
- Multi-branch can be divided into horizontal and vertical,
- Single-branch exhibitions are focused solely on one specific type of product (Přikrylová 2019, 145-148).

2.8 Event Marketing

Event marketing is a form of public relations. It relates to caring for customers and creating events that provide emotional satisfaction or adventure. Participating in activities created by the company will create a positive feeling associated with enjoyment and relaxation, which will result in a better attitude to the brand. Marketing

events have different forms, like street shows, roadshows, workshops, stakeholder events, etc. (Karlíček 2016, 143).

2.9 Word of the Mouth Marketing

Word of Mouth Marketing, also referred to as WOM marketing, is one of the most effective tools. It is based on the customers' recommendations founded on their experiences. Reasons for sharing opinions can differ. It can be to share your positive experience with the product, talk about the excellent behavior of employees, or even share thoughts about the speaker in a workshop. However, WOM can also have a negative form, which is known to spread faster than the positive one. People shared their negative opinions when a company product was in lousy shape; employees were misbehaving, or because of revenge. WOM marketing used on online platforms is called viral marketing. Viral marketing is known for its fast spreading on the internet (Kotler and Armstrong 2016, 438-439).

3 SELECTED TRENDS IN ONLINE MARKETING COMMUNICATION

Even in this era, not everyone may have access to the Internet or even prefers it. Nevertheless, denying the importance of an online presence for businesses is hard. The trend to go online is something that people are now using, especially after the Covid pandemic started. Many companies went bankrupt because they did not know how to attract customers and how to sell, which resulted in their bankruptcy. For some fortunate and resourceful individuals, online presence and digital marketing were helpful instruments. In some cases, businesses shifted completely to digital communication with customers because they discovered the advantages of online advertising, social media marketing, or SEO.

3.1 Online advertising

For example, the ability to target the audience correctly is more accurate online. If companies learn more about their target audience and find out what they do online based, they can target their advertising more effectively. Different analytical techniques represent the second improvement that came with online advertising. Thanks to modern technology, marketers can now track the movement of their page visitors, monitor where and how much time customers spend on their websites, look at roads they took before purchasing products, where customers came from, and what else they viewed beside the purchased product. The issue with offline advertising is that marketers often do not know how effective their advertisements are. The last advantage mentioned by Alan Charlesworth in his book *Digital Marketing a practical approach*, is interactivity. Thanks to the Internet, customers can, with a few clicks, find out what they want and purchase what they desire to have, which can be managed in the comfort of their homes (Charlesworth 2014, 224-225).

3.2 Social media marketing

Social media are characterized as a door that can be opened from both sides. In the past, companies held control over the reputation of their brands. However, with this new approach, they lost their unshakable ground. Social media incorporated the public in a decision-making process of a company. On the other hand, people online are more aggressive and ruthless regarding lies. So, if the company's advertisement is unprepared and flawed or some mistakes are made, almost everyone will soon find out, thanks to viral marketing. At the same time, correctly managed social media marketing can improve

the public's image and perception of a brand. By creating your account on Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook, people can interact and share their opinions with companies and build stronger relationships with brands. Interaction with the public can be made on different online platforms like:

- Blogs,
- Chat rooms,
- Social networking websites,
- Forums,
- Service rating websites (Hollensen, Kotler, and Opresnik 2017, 35-41).

3.3 Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Some may argue that search engine optimization is no longer crucial because many people have access to it. Therefore, it has lost its advantage. However, it is still a tremendous help in attracting more website traffic. The search engine works based on complex algorithms. More generally, the search engine is trying to find the most relevant sites based on entered keywords. Results are based not only on the keywords themselves but also on the content and web pages' design. The organic pages the search engine considers the most relevant are listed highest, below the paid advertisements. To move higher in rank, companies should analyze their customers and their needs, according to which they can adjust the webpage and its content. To help the search engine, companies could add other relevant content such as:

- Blogs on specific themes,
- Podcast,
- Stories,
- Videos,
- Guides (Kingsnorth 2019, 123-132).

3.4 PPC Advertising

PPC is an abbreviation that means pay-per-click. This type of advertising is widely used online because advertisers pay a fee only after someone clicks on the ads. Keyword relevance

is considered the most crucial part of the successful creation of PPC advertisements (Bly 2018,93).

3.5 Banner Advertising

Another online form of advertising is banner advertising; this method uses a display or banner. The banners can contain videos, widget applications, or interactive features. Thanks to technology, companies can choose concrete websites on which they want to display their advertisements (Clow and Baack 2017, 262-263).

4 SELECTED SITUATIONAL MARKETING ANALYSES AND MARKETING RESEARCH

Only people familiar with the factors affecting them and their environment have a chance to succeed in the long run. Being prepared for various situations is the most important motivation for making analyses. Besides discovering the company's customers, these analyses can help uncover threats and opportunities. Thus, a few analyses that every company should consider are mentioned in the following chapters.

4.1 PESTE Analysis

PESTE analysis is one of the macro-economic analyses used to find threats and opportunities, which are later used in SWOT analysis. The name of this analysis is an acronym that stands for:

- P – Political-Legal,
- E – Economical,
- S – Social,
- T – Technological-Technical,
- E – Environmental.

This analysis has undertaken many changes over time. Some scientists consider two additional fields, creating the PESTELE analysis. L stands for legal, and E, the newest, stands for ethical. Each field is looking for weak spots the company cannot control. Although, by knowing the threats, companies can find relative solutions for future problems (Christodoulou, and Cullinane 2019, 3-4).

4.2 Benchmarking

Benchmarking is an analysis of the mid-external environment of a company. The goal is to select the best competitors for the research and focus on their weaknesses and strengths. By measuring and analyzing selected fields, the company can find specific benchmarks to help with future decision-making. The result of benchmarking should be understanding and using differences between companies to achieve desired results, usually staying ahead of the competition (Oncioiu 2020, 179-181).

4.3 The McKinsey 7S Framework

The McKinsey 7S framework belongs to an internal analysis of a company. The company can alter findings described in the McKinsey 7S analysis by specific modifications. The combination of 7S is interconnected and used to define the company and its goal. 7S stands for strategy, structure, system, style, skills, staff, and shared values (Tavana 2013, 143-144).

4.4 SWOT Analysis

SWOT analysis is another acronym where letters of the word stand for analyzed fields. S stands for strengths of a company which can be used to overcome W – weaknesses. O stands for future opportunities of a company used to gain advantages over competitors. The last letter, T, stands for threats that a company is confronted with. This analysis is used, at last, to sum up everything that was discovered in other analyses. (Christodoulou and Cullinane 2019, 3-4).

5 SUMMARY OF THE THEORETICAL PART – THE THEORETICAL BASES RELATED TO THE PRACTICAL PART

The theoretical part of the bachelor thesis starts with an explanation of effective communication. Participants, noises, and channels of communication are mentioned as well. Afterward, the attention is shifted to the marketing communication mix, describing tools used primarily in offline marketing. Due to the increase in the popularity of online marketing tools, the next chapter is dedicated to their description. The last chapter of the theoretical part describes the analyses used in the practical part of a bachelor thesis: PESTE analysis that describes a company's macro-environment from a political, economic, social, technological, and environmental point; McKinsey 7S as the analysis of microenvironment is used to illustrate the style, shared values, skills, staff, strategy, and system of a company; Benchmarking pays attention to the mid-environment, and the competitors and their advantages; The last analysis is SWOT analysis which describes the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of a company. Four research questions will be verified during the elaboration of the practical part of the bachelor thesis. Research questions were stated based on the processing of the theoretical bases.

- *Research question (RQ1): Has the selected student organization optimized its webpage for users on other electrical devices (mobile phones, laptops, etc.)?*
- *Research question (RQ2): Does the selected student organization upload content on its Facebook page at least three times a week?*
- *Research question (RQ3): Does the selected student organization use more frequently offline or online tools for marketing communication?*
- *Research question (RQ4): Is the selected student organization willing to invest in improving its marketing communication?*

The selected student organization did not agree with stating its name; therefore, it will be referred to as the selected student organization. The research will be carried out through the study and analyses of the internal secondary information sources of the selected student organization, semi-standardized interviews, and consultations with employees of the selected student organization. With the help of all these research techniques, the answers to the research questions listed above will be defined (RQ1 – RQ4). Four research questions will be verified during the elaboration of the practical part of the bachelor thesis. Research questions were stated based on the processing of the theoretical bases.

II. ANALYSIS

6 INTRODUCTION OF A SELECTED STUDENT ORGANIZATION AND ITS ANALYSIS BY MCKINSEY 7S

The data provided in the following section are based on the semi-conducted interview with the head of the organization and members. Other conclusions are established from the author's observations, from the study, and the analysis of the internal secondary information sources of the selected student organization.

6.1 Characterization of the selected student organization

The Selected Student Organization (SSO) analyzed in this bachelor thesis is one of three existing subsidiaries. Two are in the Czech Republic, and one is in the Slovak republic in Bratislava. The focus will be shifted solely to the SSO in the Slovak Republic.

The selected student organization is run as a non-profit organization that has been operating in Bratislava since 2017. The difference between the SSO and other student organizations is in reporting and management. While other student organizations report their activity to the university counsel and represent their university, the SSO does not. Instead, the SSO has mutually beneficial partnerships with the following companies:

- DRFG,
- PWC,
- J&T financial group.

All of the companies mentioned above work in the sphere of finance and investing. Companies provide the SSO with a budget of 600 euros for its activities to educate the public about investing and finance. The SSO and its partners have an agreement according to which an increase in the budget is directly connected to the rise in engagement and overall number of customers. Another advantage for partners is improving the brand's reputation and increasing the possibility of hiring already educated future employees from the organization. To educate the public, the selected student organization provides educational products and services free of charge in the forms of lectures, podcasts, livestreams, mentoring, workshops, and YouTube videos (The semi-standardized interviews with the head of the selected student organization).

6.1.1 Lectures

Lectures belong to one of two offline services offered by the SSO. The sessions are usually held at Comenius University in Bratislava premises after classes. The SSO arranges an hour-long lecture from a representative of a particular company (Quantpedia, 365 Life, Tatra Asset Management, etc.) to educate participants on a selected topic (the impact of the war in Ukraine on financial markets, sustainable investments ERG, etc.). Participants have time for their questions and further discussion after the lecture.

6.1.2 Mentoring

Mentoring is the second offline service offered by the SSO. This service is offered to university students who are willing and eager to gain more practical skills in investing, marketing, management, and IT. University students can apply to be a member of the selected student organization, which allows them to learn from existing members, gain valuable contacts in fields of their interests, and increase their chances of finding a job in one of the partnership companies after graduating.

6.1.3 Livestreams

Livestreams are similar to lectures. The difference is that they are held online. Recorded Livestreams are usually saved on the Facebook of the SSO and uploaded on their YouTube channel.

6.1.4 Podcasts

Podcasts are currently the most developed and frequent service provided by the SSO. Members of the SSO invite different experts to their podcasts to discuss topics in the field of investment (How to deal with a bear market, energy crisis, and others). Podcasts are uploaded on Spotify, the website, and YouTube.

6.1.5 Workshop

Workshops have limited access and a more personalized approach to the customers who can sign up for a concrete number of lectures held by the members of the SSO. During the workshop, different topics about investing are studied. At the end of the lesson, participants can ask questions. After the workshop is fully completed, the lectures are available to the public.

6.1.6 YouTube videos

The *YouTube* channel of the SSO is shared with other subsidiaries, and so is the content. The majority of the videos are records of livestreams, podcasts, and workshops.

6.2 McKinsey 7S Framework Analysis

The McKinsey 7S framework analysis is based on the author's participation in the organization, semi-structured interviews with the head of a selected student organization and the head of the marketing department, study, and the analysis of the internal secondary information sources of the selected student organization.

6.2.1 Strategy

The SSO's mission is to *"create associations with students from the economic field interested in economics, finance, investing and business. Furthermore, sharing knowledge from experts and authorities from their fields to the public."* The customer base of the organization is divided into two groups. One consists of members themselves, for which the goal is to gain theoretical knowledge and use it in practice. The public represents the second group of customers, which uses products like podcasts, workshops, and lectures for educational purposes.

6.2.2 Structure

The student organization nowadays consists of ten members. At the top is the head of the student organization. Under him are heads of two divisions. One is the head of marketing, with three other members in his team. The second department is education, in which the head of education has in her team another three people.

6.2.3 System

The selected student organization has its document of regulations used to delegate responsibilities and inform members about their rights and obligations. Besides that, the head of the subsidiary delegates the responsibilities to heads of other departments at the weekly meetings. After the central meeting, heads of each department hold meetings with their team members, where they depute tasks. The completion of tasks is checked weekly.

6.2.4 Staff

As mentioned before, the SSO currently has ten employees. All of them study at universities with economic or finance specializations. Thus, they have the fundamentals of investing. For more extensive knowledge, employees are retrained once in a while.

6.2.5 Style

The consultative management style is used by the head of the organization. When facing the problem, he asks for the opinions of heads of other departments to find out their viewpoint. However, ultimately the final decision is made according to him. Nevertheless, his communication with other members of the organization could be better. The collaborative management style is used by the Head of Marketing. He demands that his team members be creative and self-sufficient. If they want to improve themselves in any sphere, he is willing to make time for them and improve their education level.

The Head of Education has a paternalistic management style when leading her team. She tries to create a family atmosphere between her and her team members, and with every decision, she considers the outcomes for her team before making up her mind. The overall effect is that employees work smoothly within their teams. However, when it comes to the culture of the student organization, employees need to improve their relationships within the whole organization. The collaboration between departments might be strenuous.

6.2.6 Skills

The team in Bratislava consists of university students willing to improve their skills. They come from the economic, management, finance, and marketing sphere. Their educational background suggests that they have at least fundamental education, and the rest they teach themselves with the help of experts in particular fields whom the organization provides. The older students have achieved more profound education and knowledge, which they share with the rest of their teams. The head of a student organization tries to have sessions, tutor them, and have the courses in wished spheres. Besides that, employees can be mentored by experts in the fields of finance, investing and economy.

6.2.7 Shared values

Unfortunately, some employees are not team players, and being a part of their team can be unpleasant. New members might feel a lot of pressure and dishonesty. The head

of the student organization tries to pursue the vision of helping others achieve their goals and use their creativity. Altogether, the organization has some improvements to make to achieve the principal value that is being presented, which is sharing and helping students within the organization improve themselves.

6.3 Conclusion

The SSO's collaborations with other companies to help educate the public in the finance field are considered a high advantage. The organization works as the first stepping point in someone's career. The connections, shared skills, and possible training provide members with additional value to their professional life. Insufficiently solid relationships and weak collaboration between departments might cause issues in the future.

7 ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT STATE OF MARKETING COMMUNICATION TOOLS IN THE SELECTED STUDENT ORGANIZATION

In this chapter, information about marketing communication tools will be provided. As was mentioned previously, the organization has two target groups. Therefore, the following analysis will be divided into two segments representing them. Firstly, the emphasis will be on marketing communication tools that are used to create and strengthen customer relationships. Then, the attention will be moved to analyzing marketing communication tools used to find new candidates. The analysis is based on the semi-conducted interview with the head of the organization and members. Other conclusions are established from the author's observations, the study, and the analysis of the internal secondary information sources of the selected student organization.

7.1 Marketing communication focused on customers

The broader target group of the SSO is represented by its existing and future customers. Therefore, this segment will provide an analysis of the marketing communication focused on creating and strengthening relationships with the customer base.

7.1.1 Offline Advertising

Offline advertising tools have not been used by the Selected Student Organization for a few years now.

7.1.2 Sales Promotion

Since the SSO offers free-of-charge products and services, the organization does not use sales promotion techniques.

7.1.3 Direct Marketing

An offer to sign up for a monthly newsletter can be found on the SSO's webpage. The distributed newsletter contains information about products and services and describes future events.

7.1.4 Personal selling

While products and services provided by the selected student organization are free of charge, the organization does not use personal selling.

7.1.5 Public relationship

According to the head of the SSO, activities focused on improving external public relations have been neglected.

7.1.6 Trade shows and exhibition

There is no evidence that the SSO participated in any trade shows and exhibitions in recent years.

7.1.7 Online advertising

The Growni.sk has the SSO listed as one of the non-profit organizations people can approach. After viewing other organizations' profiles, it was discovered that the Growni.sk platform allows organizations to upload content, events, and information about their services. Unfortunately, apart from being in the listing, the SSO took no further action steps.

The SSO has been on the market since 2017, yet it has not used the opportunity to create its own website. Currently, the existing website is shared with organizations from the Czech Republic. The website is not personalized for the Slovak market and contains no information regarding offered products and services, and Slovak customers might need help finding it. Besides being part of the registry, no other online advertising tools could be found by the author of this bachelor's thesis or provided by the members of the SSO.

7.1.8 Social media marketing

Social media marketing has been considered to be the most used marketing communication tool by the SSO. The SSO has active accounts on Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook, and YouTube. LinkedIn and YouTube are platforms that are managed collectively with other subsidiaries. Therefore, they will not be included in the analysis of the marketing communication.

The focus will be shifted to the activity on Facebook and Instagram. In order to broaden the SSO's reach, 10 euros are invested monthly to pay-per-click ads on these platforms.

To provide a deeper insight into engagement on social media, the following tables are provided:

1. The first table shows the overall engagement on social media platforms – Instagram and Facebook. The average number of likes, comments, and shares assigned to one post for 2021 – 2022 is calculated. The step-by-step approach when calculating the data is described below.

a represents the number of likes/shares/comments for a stated year

b represents the overall number of posts published in the stated year

x represents the average number of likes/shares/comments assigned to one post in the stated year

$$\frac{a}{b} = x \qquad \frac{166}{45} = 3.69$$

Table 1. Overall engagement on social media (Own processing)

	Facebook (2021)	Facebook (2022)	Instagram (2021)	Instagram (2022)
Posts	45	33	51	73
Likes	3.69	3.36	9.61	9.03
Comments	0.35	0.15	0.14	0.054
Shares/Saves	0.2	0.39	0	0

2. The second table displays content posted on social media that is not used as cold selling of the SSO's products and services (posts about employees, events, and holidays).

Table 2. Content focused on deepening relationships with customers (Own processing)

	Facebook (2021)	Facebook (2022)	Instagram (2021)	Instagram (2022)
Posts	1	3	14	16
Likes	10	4.33	13.2	12.5
Comments	0	0	0.2	0.125
Shares/Saves	0	0	0	0

Based on the gathered data, it was discovered that the SSO needs to pay more attention to communication with its customers. The majority of posts function as displays of offered products and services without any further effort in strengthening relationships, starting discussions with customers, or providing additional content to deepen brand recognition. Nonetheless, it was discovered that the posts focused on customers, even though they are limited, scored higher when it comes to engagement:

- For Facebook posts for the year 2021, customer-oriented posts ensured 6.02 % of overall likes.
- For Facebook posts for the year 2022, customer-oriented posts ensured 9.09 % of overall likes.
- For Instagram posts for the year 2021, customer-oriented posts ensured 37.8 % of overall likes.
- For Instagram posts for the year 2022, customer-oriented posts ensured 30.35 % of overall likes.

7.2 Marketing communication focused on the employees and candidates

The SSO is a constantly evolving organization that needs to find and attract more suitable employees among university students. For that reason, the following segment dissects and analyses marketing communication tools focused on this target group.

7.2.1 Offline advertising

Offline advertising tools have not been used by the Selected Student Organization for a few years now.

7.2.2 Sales promotion

Since the SSO offers free-of-charge products and services, the organization does not use sales promotion techniques.

7.2.3 Direct marketing

Direct marketing activities are not used to find and contact new protentional candidates.

7.2.4 Personal selling

While products and services provided by the selected student organization are free of charge, the organization does not use personal selling.

7.2.5 Pubic relationship

Members of the SSO pay increased attention to internal public relationships. Annual holidays, teambuilding events, internal workshops, and lectures are part of the organization's strategies to improve overall employee satisfaction.

7.2.6 Trade shows and exhibitions

There is no evidence that the SSO participated in any trade shows and exhibitions in recent years.

7.2.7 Online advertising

After opening the joint website, candidates are approached by several CTAs to sign up as new members. Nevertheless, this might be more effective for the Czech market than the Slovak one due to the geographical parameters the engine uses when a person is trying to find a student organization in his/her area. E-Commerce, blogs, banner advertising, and search engine optimization are not incorporated into the marketing communication strategy. Although the organization is listed in the Growni.sk's registry, it does not take any advantage of promoting open positions as other companies do.

7.2.8 Social Media Marketing

After analyzing the social media, more precisely Facebook and Instagram, only ten posts advertising the possibility of joining the organization's team were posted. Engagement the post focused on finding customers received is described in table number 3.

Altogether, the post received relatively high engagement in comparison to other posts. Nevertheless, overall engagement is still weak. Figure 2 represents two designs of posts published by the organization (the SSO's name is covered for legal reasons). The small engagement might result from the repetition of the same text on all posts, together with using only two designs.

Table 3. Display of content focused on finding new employees (Own processing)

	Facebook (2021)	Facebook (2022)	Instagram (2021)	Instagram (2022)
Posts	4	2	2	2
Likes	12	10	13	14
Comments	0	0	0	0
Shares/Saves	2	1	0	0



Figure 2. Posts aimed on finding candidates posted by SSO (Own processing)

7.3 Conclusion and evaluation of marketing communications in the selected student organization

Based on the analysis of the current state of marketing communication, it was discovered that even though some communication channels are used, they could be more extensive and elaborated. The SSO does not use channels like offline marketing, personal selling, and sales promotion. Even though the SSO uses social media to promote its new products and services, it needs posts focused on creating and improving customer relationships. Later on, some recommendations for improvement are provided.

8 SELECTED SITUATIONAL MARKETING ANALYSES OF THE STUDENT ORGANIZATION

The following chapter is dedicated to the subsequent analyses: PESTE analysis, Benchmarking, and SWOT analysis. Besides that, the research questions formulated at the end of the theoretical part are also answered here.

The analyses and answers to the research questions are based on the semi-conducted interview with the head of the organization and members. Other conclusions are established from the author's observations, the study, and the analysis of the internal secondary information sources of the selected student organization.

8.1 PESTE analysis

In this chapter, the external environment that affects the selected student organization will be dealt with. More precisely, political, economic, social, technological, and environmental factors. The results discussed in this chapter are based on semi-standardized interviews with the selected student organization members and the analysis of the internal secondary information sources.

8.1.1 Political and Legal factors

The SSO is listed as a non-profit organization, meaning that the organization must act upon the Slovak Republic's applicable law, the organization's by laws, and the articles of incorporation. The law affecting the organization is listed as law No. 213/1997 concerning non-profit organizations that provide beneficial services to the public. The general information, conditions for establishing the organization, the organization's demise, the organization's structure, and additional information are dealt with in this law (Slov-Lex, 2022).

8.1.2 Economic factors

The consumer confidence indicator provides information about consumers' optimism concerning the economic growth and development of the country. According to the newest findings, Slovak people assume their country's economy will suffer. The consumer confidence indicator demonstrates a fall of 1.9 points in December of 2022 from -32.2 to -34.1 due to the public's worries regarding households' financial situation. Unemployment is another fear of the Slovak Republic's residents that increased from 27.2

to 28.3 (Trading Economics, 2023). Although the country's population's expectations increased, the statistic (comparing November 2021 with November 2022 for the Bratislava region) has shown that unemployment decreased from 4.91% to 3.72% (Ústredie práce, sociálnych vecí a rodiny, 2023). The statistics state that this year's inflation (12.8%) was affected by the increase in energy prices and a record increase in food and fuel prices (Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, 2022).

8.1.3 Social factors

There is a risk of not having enough students willing to work in a student organization for free and, at the same time, be skilled. Education is essential, but more and more university students have recently left the country to study abroad. This trend reduces the possibility for the SSO to pick their employees. Moreover, people in the Slovak Republic have not shown much interest in investing. This results in a shortage of skilled students who are also passionate about the field in which the SSO has been operating (The semi-standardized interviews with the head of the selected student organization).

8.1.4 Technological – Technical factors

The SSO's products and services are offered mainly on online platforms. As technologies have been developing, new opportunities and threats have also arisen. The SSO has been taking care of its employees by providing them with a budget for self-development, lectures, and courses that can be useful in the online world. The urge to stay ahead of the newest technological trends is enormous. Most of the employees hired are interested in investing and finance, resulting in a shortage of people with technical skills or an interest in marketing. Therefore, the head of the selected student organization had to stall or completely stop certain projects. Among these projects are:

- Mobile optimization of the website,
- The SSO's own website,
- Innovation of YouTube videos,
- New visualizations for content (The semi-standardized interviews with the head of the selected student organization).

8.1.5 Environmental factors

SSO has its advantage in the online form of activity. Employees do not have a specific head office; therefore, they meet in restaurants, coffee bars, or online. Due to this, the head of the SSO does not think that they are actively contributing to climate change and pollution. At the same time, the amount of waste the SSO produces is minimal (The semi-standardized interviews with the head of the selected student organization).

8.1.6 Conclusion and evaluation of the PESTE analysis in the selected student organization

The SSO must be run in accordance with the law restrictions and organization bylaws. Concerning economic factors, it is visible that residents of the Slovak Republic are expecting a downfall in the country's economy and have to deal with the increase in pricing. This new phenomenon can have two results; it might push students to join student organizations to gain more experience and skills for their future jobs. On the other hand, it might also be why students leave the country and study abroad. The technological factors are associated with innovations that employees must understand to succeed; therefore, the pressure is put on staying ahead of new trends and innovations. According to the head of the SSO, the environmental factor does not impose many concerns when running the organization.

8.2 Benchmarking

In this chapter, benchmarking analysis was used to analyze the competitors of the SSO. The SSO was compared to three other organizations whose names cannot be used. For this reason, they are referred to as organizations A, B, and C.

Organization A is another subdivision of the SSO situated in the Czech Republic. Organization A has a more extensive customer base, a more comprehensive range of products, and more employees.

Organization B is a non-profit organization situated in Bratislava. The main goal of organization B is educating and helping students with their leadership skills. Examples of the organization's rich range of products and services are internships in Slovakia and abroad, educational YouTube videos, lectures, seminars, podcasts, workshops, and development programs. Organization B was chosen for comparing due to its elaborated online and offline promotion and similar products to the SSO.

Organization C is a student organization recognized all over the world. The organization's goal represented to the public is developing young leaders who strive to help the world. Similar products such as seminars, workshops, lectures, and mentoring their employees are why organization C was chosen for comparing.

The criteria analyzed are online advertising, website design, search engine optimization, customer engagement, public relation, and offline advertising. Each criterion is attributed to the weight of the importance of the comparing data. Organizations will be marked on a scale from 1 to 5 based on quality. A rate of 1 is the lowest possible, and five is the highest. The highest possible result that the organization can achieve is 5. Results of the analysis were reached based on the semi-standardized interview with the head of the organization and the author's research. The results of the benchmarking analysis are presented in table number 4.

Table 4. Benchmarking (Own processing)

Criteria	Weight	SSO	Organization A	Organization B	Organization C
Online Advertising	0.20	1	2	5	4
		0.20	0.40	1.00	0.80
Website design	0.10	1	1	5	4
		0.10	0.10	0.50	0.40
SEO	0.10	1	4	4	5
		0.10	0.40	0.40	0.50
Customer engagement	0.25	3	2	4	3
		0.75	0.50	1.00	0.75
Public relation	0.20	3	3	5	5
		0.60	0.60	1.00	1.00
Offline Advertising	0.15	1	2	5	5
		0.15	0.30	0.75	0.75
Total	1.00	1.90	2.30	4.65	4.20

When comparing the SSO with other competitors, it was found that online advertising, website design, SEO, and offline advertising are considered poor quality. Compared with Organization B and Organization C, the SSO has a place for improvement. The Webpage of organizations (B and C) includes all offered products and services with explanations, reviews from customers and hosts, and other essential pieces of information. The SSO and organization B, which share the same Webpage, do not have any mentioned items. According to the analysis, SSO's public relations and customer engagement have received a high rank even though, compared with its competitors, the organization is presented on the market for a much shorter period.

8.3 Answers to research questions

The research questions stated at the end of the theoretical part will be answered in this chapter. The results are concluded from the author's observations, semi-conducted interviews, and the study and the analysis of the internal secondary information sources of the SSO.

- *Research question (RQ1): Has the selected student organization optimized its webpage for users on other electrical devices (mobile phones, laptops, etc.)?*

The design of the SSO's website seems to be optimized at a first glance. Nevertheless, after further analysis and an interview with the head of the selected student organization, it can be concluded that the website was not optimized for users on other electrical devices.

- *Research question (RQ2): Does selected student organization upload content on its Facebook page at least 3 times a week?*

The analysis of the activity of the SSO examined the period from January 2021 to December 2022, resulting in the finding that the SSO does not upload at least three posts per week. Data in Table number one shows that the SSO uploaded 45 posts on Facebook in year 2021 and only 33 in 2022.

$$a) \frac{45}{12} = 3.75 \quad b) \frac{33}{12} = 2.75$$

As the calculation above indicates, the SSO hardly uploaded 3 posts per month in 2021 and 2 posts per month in 2022. The SSO needs to increase its activity on Facebook if it would like to meet the goal of 3 posts per week.

- *Research question (RQ3): Does selected student organization use more frequently offline or online tools for marketing communication?*

In the analysis of the current state of marketing communication tools in the SSO, it was discovered that the SSO had used offline marketing tools during the pre-pandemic period. Although, since the coronavirus pandemic started, the organization stopped offline advertisements altogether. Currently, only online marketing communication tools are used by the SSO. The SSO's advertisement is focused mainly on social media marketing.

- *Research question (RQ4): Is selected student organization willing to invest into the improvement of their marketing communication?*

Currently, the SSO has a 600 Euro budget that is being invested in marketing per semester. According to the semi-conducted interview with the head of the SSO, increasing the budget is possible. The SSO has few sponsors that invest in the organization based on their engagement and popularity with the public. The sponsors are J&T, PWC, and Pale Fire Capital. An agreement between the SSO and its sponsors states that increased engagement and the number of customers will directly increase the SSO budget.

8.4 SWOT analysis

SWOT analysis will be dealt with in this chapter. First, to describe are strengths and weaknesses that can be affected by the members and the organization itself. The second part will closely look at the opportunities and threats. They cannot be affected by the organization. Still, if they are spotted on time, the organization can take precautions. Data listed in the following sub-chapters are based on the interview with the head of the company and the author's research.

8.4.1 Strengths

The strengths of the selected student organization are the following:

- Many employees are direct target audience representatives - a profound understanding of the target audience.
- The organization is situated in Bratislava, which consists of many universities – making it the best location for acquiring new employees.
- Presence on the market for over seven years with a solid customer base.
- Loyal customers.
- The budget can increase with the increment of the customer base.

- The possibility of getting guidance and mentoring from professionals in the fields of investing and finance.

8.4.2 Weaknesses

The weaknesses of the selected student organization are the following:

- Weak engagement of customers on social media platforms.
- Inability to adapt quickly to new trends in marketing communication.
- The website is outdated, without any relevant information about products and services.
- Ineffective use of hosts and experts in their presentations and lectures in marketing communication.
- A small effort to communicate with customers and improve relationships with them.

8.4.3 Opportunities

Opportunities of the selected student organization are the following:

- Increase in demand for the products and services (more people willing to learn about investing).
- More students will start their university education (more customers).
- More students will start their university education (more employees).
- A possible acquisition of more customers from other parts of the Slovak Republic through online platforms.
- New employees with technical skills.

8.4.4 Threats

Threats of the selected student organization are the following:

- New student organizations will appear in the market.
- Already existing Student organizations on the market will increase their market share through innovation.
- Increase in online advertisement pricing.

- Decrease in popularity among existing customers.
- Shortage of skilled and talented students.

8.4.5 Conclusion of SWOT analysis

As a student organization that employs students from different universities, the location in Bratislava is advantageous when new employees are needed. As the student organization consists of students interested primarily in investing and finance, there is a lack of employees invested in marketing and IT, which can negatively affect not only the overall communication and relationship with the public and customers but the quality of the products and services offered. One of the opportunities might be students' interest in investing and finance. So far, investing and the stock market were not famous among students in the Slovak Republic. However, in recent years, an increasing trend has started appearing. This can allow the SSO to gain more customers and increase its market share. Regarding the interest in investing, there is also a threat of new student organizations entering the market and decreasing the organization's competitive strength. Further threats can be higher prices connected with online advertisements (banners, PPC, e.g.) and a surplus of skilled people invested in finance.

9 SUMMARY OF THE PRACTICAL PART AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF MARKETING COMMUNICATION

The Selected student organization was introduced at the beginning of the practical part by McKinsey 7S, which provided some basic information about the organization and its products and services.

Secondly, the analysis of marketing communications tools was established. This part was divided into two segments, representing two targeted groups. It was discovered that the SSO started neglecting crucial channels for offline marketing. Besides, some channels are not used at all due to their needlessness.

Then the focus was moved to the organization's macroenvironment, described in the PESTE analysis. The macroenvironment analysis mentioned political-legal, economic, social, technological, and environmental factors.

The SSO was compared to its two main competitors and one partnering student organization situated in the Czech Republic in the benchmarking analysis. Given the results, the SSO still has space for improvement.

The SWOT analysis characterized the selected student organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Working with experts in specific fields and hiring employees from the best universities in the Bratislava region are considered the most valuable strengths. The main weakness is the lack of employees invested in marketing and technology, which can negatively affect the overall communication and relationship with customers and the quality of the products and services offered. An increasing number of students interested in finance and investing is one of the opportunities. Already existing competitors and a possible shortage of talented employees are visible threats.

The SSO has two main goals. The first is to constantly increase the number of its customers and followers on social media, together with better conversion. The second goal is to find new employees and expand its team with new members while simultaneously having a great scale of candidates. Therefore, the recommendations for improving the SSO's current state of marketing communication formulated in the following chapter will be divided into three sections based on its purpose. The first section will focus on strengthening and deepening relationships with its customers. The second section will describe steps for gaining

more candidates. The third section will include common activities. Stated proposals are based on implemented analyses. The internal secondary information sources of the selected student organization, semi-standardized interviews with members of the SSO, and analysis of the external secondary information sources were used primarily. Given that the SSO is a non-profit organization with a relatively small budget, the recommendations in the following subchapters were meant to be low-cost.

9.1 Recommendations focused on customers

This section lists recommendations focused solely on improving customers' overall satisfaction, their relationship with the SSO, and the enhancement of the brand.

9.1.1 Adding new products and services

As the SSO is the youngest of its subsidiaries, it has an advantage in analyzing the popularity of products and services provided by its neighboring branches. It is advised to consider adding new products and services to its portfolio, especially products with positive rankings in the Czech Republic. One of the most popular products is a blog, which can complement lectures and podcasts. If the SSO wants a small change, an online magazine can be a great option. Among other products and services that are considered to have a promising chance of succeeding are:

- Investing beer,
- KI Jobs,
- YouTube videos.

These products might be easier to add to the offer thanks to the help of other subsidiaries from the Czech Republic that can help with the know-how and process implementations.

9.1.2 Improvement of awareness of the SSO

Since the start of the coronavirus pandemic, the SSO has moved entirely to the online presence and forgotten about its offline activities. Not to mention that their promotion needs to be solidly constructed. The target audience recognizes only a small number of products and services. Therefore, it is recommended that the SSO promote the utilized webpage on different channels. A poster providing basic information about the organization can be put in each university in the hallways or toilet cabins. Figure number 3 showcases an example

of the such poster. Another popular method to gain awareness can be collaborations with organizations that have similar specialization:

- Workshops,
- Lectures,
- Events,
- Meeting with experts.



Figure 3. Design of the flyer (Own processing)

9.1.3 Personalization of the content on the social media

As discovered in the previous analysis, the SSO neglects communication focused on engaging with customers. Moreover, such content posted online received great engagement from customers. Therefore, the implementation of similar content is highly recommended. The organization can be perceived as cold and focused on selling. Creating content that helps the SSO develop voice and personality might have a positive effect in the long run.

The type of content that could be looked into is the following:

- Information about employees,
- Video content,
- Instagram reels,
- Photos/videos from events,
- Quizzes and other types of games,
- Competitions,
- Introduction of experts with whom the SSO collaborates,
- Achievements of employees,
- Fun facts from the finance world,
- Educational stories about critical historical events that influenced investing.

9.2 Recommendations focused on candidates

In this section, recommendations focused solely on attracting more candidates are presented. The organization needs a pipeline of candidates to find the most skillful and knowledgeable. Therefore, this kind of activity should be addressed.

9.2.1 Creation of their own website

The website of the SSO is commonly used by all subsidiaries. The issue with this shared ownership is the geographical location of other companies. When a person is looking for some information in the query, websites shown in the search results are chosen as the best fit by the search engine. Therefore, if students from the Czech Republic were looking for student organizations near them, the search engine would pick the organization's website, thanks to the geographic criterion. Unfortunately, this situation cannot be applied to the Slovak market. It is recommended that the SSO invest in buying subdomain specific for customers in the Slovak Republic. According to exohosting.sk medium package containing all necessary functions would cost 54.45 euros yearly (Exohosting.sk, 2023).

9.2.2 Personalization of content on the social media

The content of the SSO has constantly been developing. Therefore, it would be advised to take this approach in marketing communication and its tools too. During the analysis of the content focused on finding candidates in recent years, it was visible that the designs and text are stagnating. Small changes and implementation of new creative ideas might provide a positive outcome in the long run. Figure 4 showcases an example of a post

designated for Instagram, whereas Figure 5 showcases an Instagram Story idea adjusted to the winter season.

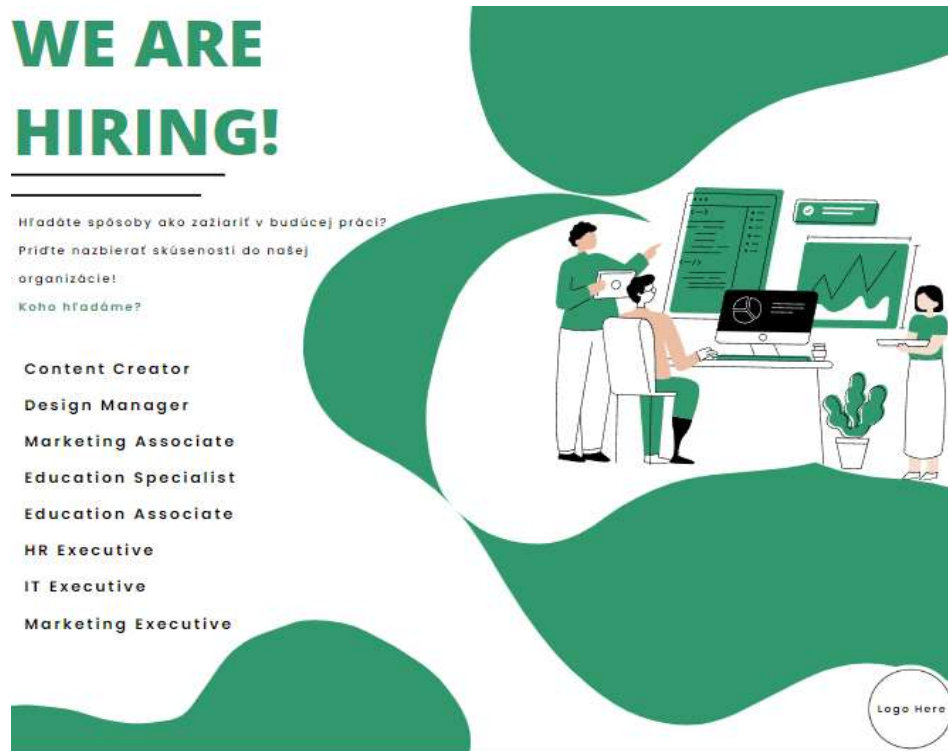


Figure 4. Design for Instagram post (Own processing)

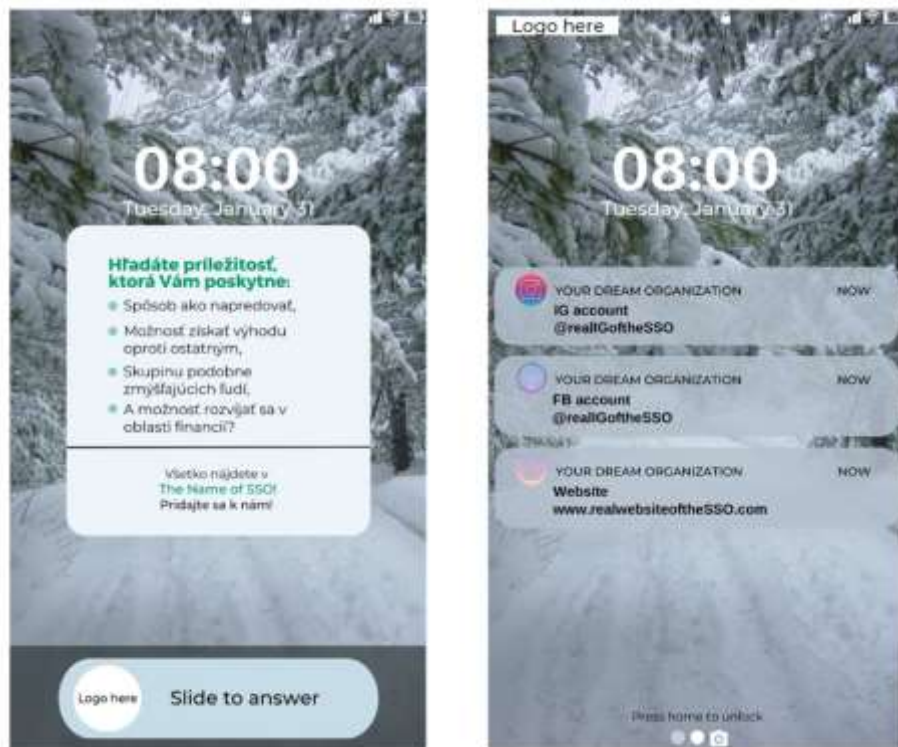


Figure 5. Design of Instagram Story (Own processing)

9.2.3 University Magazine

Comenius University has the most faculties among all universities situated in Bratislava. Due to the reason of finding new employees among university students, the organization could implement paid promotion in the Comenius University Magazine into its costs. The new volume is published every three months. If the advertisement is published at least at the beginning of each semester (2 times a year), it would cost the organization 130 Euro yearly.

9.2.4 Trade shows and exhibitions

Many trade shows and exhibitions that provide their services to non-profit organizations free-of-charge are held in Bratislava. Besides that, they usually take place on the school premises. BDC is an organization that creates events for people interested in voluntary work. After the phone interview with the head of the organization, it was discovered that conditions for collaboration are pretty simple and without fees. If the organization would like to participate in a trade show held by BDC, it has to create interactive activities for students and have advertising materials. Non-profit organizations do not pay any type of fee.

9.2.5 Online promotion

Growni.sk platform was mentioned in the analysis of marketing communication tools of the SSO. Even though the organization is listed in the register, it might be wise to pay attention to the promotion of open positions, mentoring possibilities, and participation in different projects. If the organization does not take advantage of this possibility, it would be an ineffective use of resources. Another platform that has its own register of organizations is BDC. On its website is a whole list of non-profit organizations participating in voluntary work, which is also the scope of work of the SSO.

9.3 Common recommendations

Recommendations affecting both targeted groups are listed in this section.

9.3.1 Editing already existing page

Since the head of the selected student organization can currently have other essential expenditures and might not see the creation of the organization's website as doable at the moment, it is advised to alter and edit the website that the Czech Republic subsidiaries use. The organization's website, which is used by all subsidiaries, is outdated and has in-

sufficient use. Mainly basic information about student organizations is provided to customers on the website. Besides them, job offers (in the Czech Republic), sponsors, and the possibility to join student organizations are visible on the page. It is recommended to improve the usage of the webpage by adding the following:

- Products and services together with their descriptions,
- Information about employees,
- Reviews from customers and hosts,
- Links to all platforms of student organizations,
- Updates about upcoming events,
- A section dedicated to cooperating hosts.

Visiting the webpage can be considered meaningless without at least half of these additions to the customers.

9.3.2 Improvement of online promotion

As was also mentioned in the research questions, the SSO does not post regularly or at least three times a week posts on Facebook. That same apply to the Instagram page as well. According to the organization members, they are allowed to release three lectures per semester. The rest of the products and services publications depend on each organization.

Therefore, it would be advised to:

- Post more on social media platforms (preferably references to older products and services or the website where they can find all products),
- Make an agreement with organizations with similar products or organization partners and sponsors to promote your banners on their websites,
- Create an agreement with hosts who appear in their podcasts and videos to mutually share the organization,
- Create an agreement with student parliaments for mutual sharing of some posts in stories on Instagram and Facebook.

9.4 The cost of the improvement of the marketing communication of the selected student organization

The cost of marketing communication improvement is calculated in table number 5. All offered recommendations were aimed to be affordable due to the low budget of the SSO, which is currently 600 euros per semester (The semi-standardized interviews with the head of the selected student organization).

Therefore, the values visible in table 5 are taken from low-cost websites, and the rest of the recommendations listed in previous chapters that are not stated in table 5 can be done or were made in the past free of charge or by employees of the selected student organization and employees from other subsidiaries.

Table 5. The calculation of total costs (Own processing)

Suggestion for improvement	Euro/per semester
Creation of subdomain for the Slovak market	54.45
Posters (150 pieces)	193.50
Banner	6.90
Promotion in school magazine	130.00
PPC	20.00
Total costs	404.85

The calculated total cost per semester is 404.85 euros. The price for applying the recommendations listed previously does not exceed the budget limit the SSO offers. Therefore, the SSO still has a place to use the budget on other interesting ideas its employees might develop.

CONCLUSION

Every organization needs to find a way to properly use communication tools to get desired customer results. For student organizations that have at their disposal a tight budget, the importance of accurately choosing communication tools is much higher. Luckily, it is not impossible; the goal is to understand the organization's customers. Besides that, there are many affordable tools and ways. A few of them are described in this bachelor thesis.

The bachelor thesis is divided into two parts. The theoretical part aimed to explain and introduce terms and topics that were used and analysed in the practical part – communication process, promotional mix, selected trends in online marketing, and analyses. Besides the theoretical introduction, four researched questions were formulated at the end of the theoretical part and later answered in the practical part. The second part of the thesis is focused on analysing the current use of the promotional mix, together with different selected analyses.

The Selected Student organization has two main target groups – its customers and employees. Therefore, the analysis of the marketing communication tools was divided into two segments accordingly. After completing all selected analyses, a chapter dedicated to recommendations follows. Similarly, this chapter is divided into three segments to analyse marketing communication tools.

The first segment contains recommendations focused on customers. It was discovered that the organization neglected its relationship with customers, and the brand's voice was almost non-existent. After analysing the communication platforms of the selected student organization, cold-selling tactics were spotted. One of the organization's prominent advantages against other competitors is its profound understanding of its customers. This upper hand should be used to create strong relationships with customers and ensure their loyalty. Instead, the organization solely focused on promoting its products and services without any further interactions with the public. In order to prevent losing customers in the future, applying new approaches to improve brand recognition, loyalty, and awareness should be considered.

One of the serious threats that organizations face is a shortage of skilled employees. Suggestions focused on finding new candidates and ensuring a long-term pipeline of future employees are listed in the next segment. Overall, the engagement with head-hunting posts was positive compared to other content. On the other hand, the full potential of the employees' creativity was not fully used. Throughout the years, the organization has

been using the same format, layout, and text for its recruitment content. As technology is constantly developing, innovations are presented to the world, and requirements on employees are rising, so should recruitment efforts improve.

The last segment of this chapter contains recommendations that have an impact on both target groups. While the selected student organization is run as a non-profit organization, all of the recommendations were meant to be low-cost, whose calculation is visible in table number 5. The calculated total cost per semester is 404.85 euros. The total cost of recommendations mentioned in this bachelor thesis does not exceed the budget limit the SSO offers, leaving the SSO with 195.15 euros for developing other projects and ideas.

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Interview

Alexej, Szladicsek, the head of the Selected Student Organization. 2023. Interview by author, March 5, Trnava.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SSO Selected Student Organization

CTA Call to Action

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