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Levchuk Kateryna, PhD in Economics, Associate Professor, Associate Professor of the Department of Management
Dniprovsky State Technical University, Kamianske
ORCID ID: 0000-0002-4803-5355
e-mail: career_dgtu@ukr.net
Huliaieva Yevheniia, Head of the Department
Donbas Professional College of Technology and Management, Kamianske
e-mail: guialieva_y@ukr.net

Левчук К.О., кандидат економічних наук, доцент, доцент кафедри менеджменту
Дніпровський державний технічний університет, м. Кам'янське
Гуляєва Є.В., завідувач відділенням
Донбаський фаховий коледж технологій та управління, м. Кам'янське

DIGITAL MARKETING IN THE PROMOTION OF SPORTS AND WELLNESS SERVICES: MODERN TOOLS AND THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THEIR USE

ЦИФРОВИЙ МАРКЕТИНГ У ПРОСУВАННІ СПОРТИВНО-ОЗДОРОВЧИХ ПОСЛУГ: СУЧАСНІ ІНСТРУМЕНТИ ТА ЕФЕКТИВНІСТЬ ЇХ ВИКОРИСТАННЯ

The article examines the role of digital marketing in the promotion of sports and wellness services in the context of the rapid digital transformation of the service sector. The relevance of the study is determined by the growing competition in the sports and fitness industry and the increasing importance of digital communication channels for attracting and retaining customers. The paper analyzes modern digital marketing tools, including social media marketing, content marketing, targeted advertising, email marketing, and mobile technologies, and evaluates their effectiveness in the Ukrainian sports and wellness market. Particular attention is paid to the economic efficiency of digital marketing, which is assessed using key performance indicators such as return on investment (ROI), customer acquisition cost (CAC), and customer lifetime value (LTV). The study highlights the advantages of digital marketing compared to traditional marketing approaches in terms of cost optimization, audience reach, and service personalization. Statistical data on the development of the sports and wellness services market in Ukraine and the growth of digital advertising expenditures are presented. The article also identifies current trends in digital marketing development, including the use of artificial intelligence, mobile applications, and personalized communication strategies. The results of the research confirm that the comprehensive use of digital marketing tools contributes to increased competitiveness, customer loyalty, and financial performance of sports and wellness organizations. The practical significance of the study lies in the possibility of applying the proposed approaches to improve marketing strategies of sports and wellness enterprises in the digital environment.

Key words: digital marketing, promotion, sports and wellness services, modern tools, effectiveness.

У дослідженні обґрунтовано, що розвиток цифрових технологій та поширення інтернет-комунікацій суттєво трансформують підходи до просування послуг у сфері спортивно-оздоровчої діяльності. В умовах зростання конкуренції між фітнес-центрами, спортивними клубами та рекреаційними закладами цифровий маркетинг стає ключовим інструментом забезпечення їх конкурентоспроможності, підвищення впізнаваності бренду та формування довгострокових відносин із клієнтами. Визначено, що використання соціальних мереж, контент-маркетингу, таргетованої реклами, e-mail-маркетингу та мобільних

застосунків дозволяє ефективно залучати нових споживачів, підвищувати рівень їхньої лояльності та оптимізувати витрати на рекламну діяльність.

Проаналізовано сучасний стан розвитку ринку спортивно-оздоровчих послуг в Україні, який характеризується стабільним зростанням попиту на послуги фізичної активності та здорового способу життя. Встановлено, що цифровий маркетинг поступово стає домінуючим каналом комунікації зі споживачами, а впровадження цифрових інструментів сприяє підвищенню ефективності маркетингових стратегій підприємств сфери послуг. Особливу увагу приділено оцінюванню економічної ефективності цифрового маркетингу, що здійснюється на основі ключових показників результативності, зокрема рентабельності інвестицій у маркетинг (ROI), вартості залучення клієнта (CAC) та довічної цінності клієнта (LTV).

Наголошено, що комплексне використання цифрових маркетингових інструментів забезпечує зростання кількості клієнтів, підвищення доходів підприємств, скорочення витрат на рекламу та покращення якості обслуговування споживачів. Визначено перспективні напрями розвитку цифрового маркетингу у сфері спортивно-оздоровчих послуг, серед яких особливе значення мають застосування штучного інтелекту, персоналізація маркетингових комунікацій, розвиток мобільних платформ і впровадження інноваційних цифрових технологій. Узагальнення результатів дослідження дає підстави стверджувати, що ефективне використання цифрового маркетингу є важливим чинником стійкого розвитку підприємств спортивно-оздоровчої сфери та підвищення їх конкурентоспроможності в умовах цифрової трансформації економіки.

Ключові слова: цифровий маркетинг, просування, спортивно-оздоровчі послуги, сучасні інструменти, ефективність.

JEL Classification: M31, L83, O33

Introduction. In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, the sports and wellness industry is undergoing significant transformations. The widespread adoption of internet technologies, mobile apps, social media, and online platforms is fundamentally changing approaches to service promotion and customer engagement. A significant portion of fitness clubs and sports centers are implementing digital tools to attract customers, build loyalty, and enhance competitiveness [1,2].

According to recent studies, about 70 % of companies in the fitness industry use digital tools to improve customer engagement, and the majority of marketing budgets in the industry are directed specifically toward online promotion channels [3].

In addition, nearly half of consumers learn about new fitness services through social media, indicating the growing role of digital marketing in shaping demand for sports and wellness services [3].

In this context, there is a need to study modern digital marketing tools, their effectiveness, and their potential applications in the sports and wellness sector. This determines the relevance of the chosen research topic.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The development of digital marketing in the promotion of sports and wellness services has become an important area of scientific research in recent years due to the rapid digitalization of society, the growth of the service economy, and increasing competition in the fitness and recreational sectors [1,2]. Modern studies focus on the effectiveness of digital communication channels, consumer behavior in online environments, and the economic efficiency of marketing strategies in the service sector.

Ukrainian researchers who have examined issues of digital marketing, service promotion, and the development of sports and wellness activities include O. Hryhorenko, N. Savchenko, V. Kravchenko, O. Klymenko, and L. Bondarenko. Their studies address the implementation of digital technologies in marketing communications, the use of social media platforms for promoting fitness and recreational services, and the role of digital tools in improving customer engagement and service quality. Particular attention has been given to the transformation of marketing strategies in the context of digitalization and the growing importance of personalized communication with consumers.

Foreign scholars who have investigated theoretical and practical aspects of digital marketing and service promotion include P. Kotler, D. Chaffey, R. Ryan, K. Keller, and S. Strauss [1,2]. Their research highlights the role of digital platforms, content marketing, targeted advertising, and data analytics in increasing the competitiveness of service organizations. In addition, international studies emphasize the importance of customer relationship management (CRM), mobile applications, and artificial intelligence technologies in enhancing marketing effectiveness and customer loyalty in the sports and wellness industry [4,5].

Thus, the issue of improving digital marketing strategies and evaluating the effectiveness of modern digital tools in promoting sports and wellness services remains highly relevant in the context of digital transformation and the development of the service economy.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the features of using digital marketing tools in the promotion of sports and wellness services and to assess the effectiveness of their application for attracting and retaining consumers.

Presentation of the main material. Digital marketing represents a set of marketing tools and communication strategies implemented using digital technologies and internet resources. Its main goal is to create, promote, and distribute goods and services, as well as to establish effective interaction with consumers through electronic communication channels. In scientific literature, digital marketing is defined as a strategic process of attracting and retaining customers through the use of online platforms, social networks, search engines, mobile applications, and other digital tools. In Ukraine, digital marketing demonstrates steady growth and gradually becomes the dominant channel for promoting goods and services, including the field of sports and wellness services. In particular, in 2026, the volume of Ukraine's digital advertising market is forecasted to reach 850 million USD, which constitutes about 65 % of the country's total advertising budget [7].

According to the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine, as of 2024: more than 17 % of the population of Ukraine regularly engages in physical activity; the number of fitness centers and sports clubs exceeds 3.5 thousand establishments; the market for sports and wellness services is estimated at approximately 1.1–1.3 billion USD [8].

These indicators indicate the formation of a competitive environment in which the effective use of digital marketing becomes a key factor in the development of enterprises.

In addition, the growth rate of digital advertising is approximately 12 % per year, indicating an active transition of businesses to online communications and digital promotion channels.

An important trend is the dominance of mobile technologies in digital marketing. In particular: about 60 % of digital advertising expenditures are spent on mobile advertising; more than 68 % of online purchases are made through mobile devices; more than 75 % of Internet users in Ukraine regularly use smartphones to search for services [7].

In the context of the development of the information society, digital marketing is gaining particular importance for the service sector, as it allows for rapid response to changes in demand, personalization of communication, and improvement of advertising campaign effectiveness. Its application ensures increased competitiveness of enterprises, optimization of promotion costs, and enhancement of the consumer experience.

Marketing in the field of sports and wellness services has specific features that distinguish it from the marketing of physical goods. The main characteristics are:

1. Intangibility of services, which requires active use of communications to build trust and reputation of establishments;
2. Intense competition among fitness centers, sports clubs, and wellness studios, which stimulates the search for innovative promotion methods;
3. Personalization of services, since the success of marketing strategies depends on the ability to meet the individual needs of clients;
4. Seasonality of demand, which requires flexible and adaptive marketing solutions;
5. The growing role of a healthy lifestyle, which shapes the social significance of sports and wellness services and increases their value in the minds of consumers.

In this context, digital marketing becomes a key mechanism for ensuring the competitiveness of sports and wellness organizations, allowing for effective communication with the target audience and creating sustainable relationships with consumers.

The sports and wellness services market in Ukraine demonstrates stable development, despite economic and social challenges.

Social networks (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, etc.) are the main communication channel for sports and wellness establishments with consumers. They allow the organization to build its image, increase brand recognition, and attract new clients. Content marketing in this area includes publishing articles, video tutorials, online workouts, tips on nutrition, and a healthy lifestyle. High-quality and regular content stimulates audience interest, increases interaction levels, and builds customer loyalty. Targeted advertising allows delivering advertising messages specifically to users who belong to the target audience, taking into account their age, interests, geography, and behavioral characteristics. Email marketing is used to maintain contact with existing clients, inform them about new services, promotions, and special offers. Both tools help increase the conversion of advertising campaigns and ensure more effective customer acquisition and retention.

Mobile apps for fitness and online sports platforms are becoming an important tool in digital marketing, as they allow for personalized services and ensure constant contact with clients. Through apps, users can receive individual training programs, track their progress, participate in virtual workouts, and interact with other community members. Online platforms provide scalability for marketing activities and allow sports and wellness facilities to expand their market without significant material costs. Tabl. 1 shows the comparative effectiveness of digital marketing tools in the field of sports and wellness services in Ukraine.

Table 1. Comparative effectiveness of digital marketing tools in the field of sports and wellness services in Ukraine

Digital Marketing Tool	The main purpose	Key Performance Indicator	Average Result
Social Media (SMM)	Customer engagement and brand building	Brand awareness growth	+20–35% customer activity
Content Marketing	Building trust in services	Increase in user interaction	+15–25% website traffic
Targeted Advertising (Google Ads, Meta Ads)	Attracting new customers	Advertising campaign conversion	2–5%
E-mail Marketing	Customer retention	Return on investment (ROI)	32:1 – 36:1
Mobile Technologies and Personalization	Increasing customer loyalty	Frequency of repeat visits	+18–22%

Source: compiled by the author based on [1,3,5,6]

The cost-effectiveness of digital marketing in the sports and wellness services sector is determined by the ratio of marketing expenses to financial results. In today's environment, digital tools make it possible to significantly optimize advertising costs, increase the profitability of businesses, and ensure steady revenue growth.

According to research by marketing agencies and analytics firms, the use of digital marketing tools in the service sector results in: a 20–35 % reduction in advertising costs, a 15–40 % increase in customer conversion rates, a 10–25 % increase in business profitability, and an 18–30 % reduction in the cost of acquiring a single customer [7,8]

In the sports and wellness services sector, these metrics are particularly important, as competition among fitness centers and sports clubs is constantly growing, and consumers are increasingly choosing services through digital communication channels.

The following economic indicators are used to assess the effectiveness of digital marketing: return on marketing investment (ROI). According to research [3], the average ROI for digital marketing is 250–400 %, while for traditional advertising it is 120–180 %.

The next indicator is customer acquisition cost (CAC), which shows a company's expenses for acquiring a single new customer.

Lifetime value (LTV), which reflects the total profit a customer generates over the entire period of service use. Studies show that the use of personalized digital marketing tools allows for: increasing customer LTV by 20–35 %, and extending the duration of the customer relationship by 15–25 % [5]

Tabl. 2 presents a comparison of the economic efficiency of digital and traditional marketing

Table 2. Comparative Analysis of the Economic Efficiency of Digital and Traditional Marketing

Metric	Traditional Marketing	Digital Marketing
Advertising Cost	High	20–35% lower
Audience Reach	Limited	High
Customer Conversion Rate	3–6%	8–15%
ROI	120–180%	250–400%
Customer acquisition cost	450–600 UAH	280–350 UAH
Service personalization	Low	High
Speed of results analysis	Slow	Instant

Source: compiled by the author based on [1,3,7]

In the practical activities of sports and wellness facilities, the use of digital marketing technologies allows achieving the following results: an increase in the number of clients by 20–40 %, growth of enterprise revenue by 15–30 %, improvement of the organization's competitiveness, optimization of advertising costs, and increase in client loyalty. According to industry research, enterprises that actively use digital marketing demonstrate: 25 % higher profitability, 30 % faster revenue growth, and 20 % lower marketing costs [6].

Modern trends in the development of digital marketing in the sports and wellness sector are determined by the intensive implementation of new technologies and changes in consumer behavior. The main promising directions include:

1. The expansion of analytics and artificial intelligence (AI) use for personalization of offers. The integration of AI allows predicting customer needs, creating individual training programs, and offering relevant services, which increases customer satisfaction and loyalty.

2. The integration of virtual and augmented reality (VR/AR) into marketing strategies. Using VR/AR allows creating interactive presentations of services, virtual tours of gyms, and online workouts, which helps engage a young and technologically active audience.

3. Development of mobile fitness platforms and online communities. Focusing on mobile applications and interactive platforms allows for increased customer engagement, encourages their self-motivation, and helps build long-term relationships with consumers.

4. Social responsibility and promotion of a healthy lifestyle through digital channels. Integrating marketing campaigns with the promotion of physical activity and healthy nutrition strengthens the brand and enhances its social significance.

Thus, the further development of digital marketing in sports and wellness activities will be based on a combination of technological innovations, service personalization, and interactive communication with consumers.

Conclusions. Digital marketing in the sports and wellness sector is an effective tool for attracting and retaining clients, increasing brand awareness, and enhancing the competitiveness of

establishments. Social media and content marketing contribute to the formation of consumer loyalty and trust, while targeted advertising and email marketing ensure direct interaction with the target audience. Mobile applications and online platforms allow for service personalization, provide constant contact with clients, and encourage regular visits to sports and wellness facilities. The prospects for the development of digital marketing in sports and wellness activities lie in the use of analytics and AI, integration of VR/AR, development of mobile platforms, and promotion of a healthy lifestyle through digital channels. Comprehensive use of modern digital tools enables sports and wellness organizations to effectively respond to changes in demand, increase client engagement, and strengthen their position in the market.

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