

DOCTORAL THESIS SUMMARY

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Logistic aspects of creating value for the client in electronic commerce

Keywords: e-commerce, value for the client, logistics aspects of e-commerce, logistic customer service

The widespread development of the Internet has caused entrepreneurs' interest in using its potential to run a business in this way. This is how e-commerce was born, that is, the activity of buying or selling products and services via the Internet. Electronic commerce is based on technologies such as mobile commerce, electronic fund transfer, supply chain management, internet marketing, online transaction processing, electronic data interchange (EDI), inventory management systems and automated data collection systems.

Electronic commerce, like stationary trading, must face the requirements of the modern market, in particular customers who have higher expectations and requirements for entrepreneurs. Internet commerce, operating in a highly competitive environment, looks for various ways to meet customer expectations. For customers, they are increasingly important to the value they receive along with the product, defined by the convenience of logistics services - from ordering to delivery of products. Logistic service depends on the type of product and the preferences of the customer, who often chooses the form of delivery from among the offered e-shop, as a result of which the store has to show great flexibility and, above all, service efficiency. In addition, the development of technology, which is a consequence of the digital revolution, gives customers the opportunity to send orders to the e-store 24 hours a day, from anywhere, and then track the progress of its implementation and shipment.

The timeliness of the problem decided to set the thesis. It is expressed in the statement that the logistic aspects of the functioning of e-commerce create customer values that affect regular purchasing decisions (customer loyalty).

This thesis prompted to designate the main purpose of the dissertation, which is to identify logistic factors that create value for the customer in e-commerce and to indicate their impact on creating his loyalty. It should be emphasized that making a diagnosis of what the current state of the e-commerce market requires in this respect to carry out own research covering both the demand side and the supply side of the market.

The cognitive goals related to:

- determination of the category of values based on the analysis of the literature on the subject, with particular emphasis on the logistic attributes of the value for the client and an indication of the research gap on this basis,

- systematization of concepts related to value such as: customer value, value for the client, value added,
- defining factors determining shopping decisions on the Internet, which are the result of dynamic changes on the market, especially digitization and, as a consequence, the emergence of a new market entity, which is an e-client,
- describing models of e-commerce and value-management models and creating an original model of creating value for the customer in e-commerce.

Establishing research hypotheses required the formulation of research objectives:

1. determination of the factors determining the shopping on the Internet by customers depending on their demographic and social characteristics,
2. identifying customers' preferences and expectations regarding e-commerce services,
3. recognition of factors affecting positively and negatively the perception of the electronics store,
4. determination of the hierarchy of validity of criteria, especially those of logistic nature affecting shopping decisions of customers on the Internet,
5. defining methods and tools used by online stores to create and deliver value to clients,
6. determining the discrepancy between customer expectations and the actual service status in electronic stores,
7. recommend recommendations referring to creating value for clients before economic entities.

Pragmatic goals are expressed in providing decision-making premises to market entities referring to the importance of various aspects of creating value for the customer in e-commerce, with particular emphasis on the organization of logistic processes.

The following research hypotheses were put forward that were verified by empirical studies:

- H.1. Logistic aspects influence the purchasing decisions of customers on the Internet.
- H.2. Logistic service is a determinant of creating value for the e-client.
- H.3. Delivering the expected value is the source of creating customer loyalty
- H.4. The market conditions of e-shops cause that the value of the offer for the buyer is determined not only by the compatibility of the physical features of the product with the needs of the buyer, but also by the service package proposed with the purchase of the product, which predominantly falls within the scope of logistics tasks.

The deliberations on customer value in e-commerce conducted at the hearing were based on an analysis of Polish-English as well as Anglo-Saxon and, to a lesser extent, German literature. The source basis of the work are secondary and primary sources. Secondary sources included the results of research conducted by Scientific and Research Institutes and state institutions such as the Central Statistical Office and Gemius research.

Literary studies were supplemented with the results of own research. Primary research contributed to the verification of research hypotheses. They were conducted in November 2017 - February 2018 and included both online stores and their clients. In both cases the CAWI method was used - the technique of gathering information in quantitative market and public opinion surveys, in which the respondent is asked to complete the questionnaire electronically. The research sample of business entities consisted of 112 electronic stores,

while 1709 respondents participated in e-customer surveys. It is true that both studies are not representative for the entire population, if only due to the accidental selection of the sample of consumers, they allow to create an up-to-date picture of Polish e-commerce and define factors that generate value for the customer.

The doctoral dissertation consists of an introduction, five chapters, an ending, a bibliography, a list of tables, graphs and drawings and a set of attachments. In the introduction, the subject was justified, the thesis and objectives of the work, the research hypotheses and information on the substantive content of individual chapters were presented.

The first chapter defines the concept of values in social and economic sciences and presents the genesis of this concept. Next, the concept of value for the client was presented, and due to the heterogeneity of the term in the literature, the definitions related to the value in business were reviewed, indicating the differences between the concepts of value for the client and the value of the client. Recognizing that the category of value for the customer in e-commerce is a consequence of the digital revolution, the role of information technology in providing value to the client was emphasized, with particular emphasis on the role of information in the whole process. Then, strategies, attributes and sources of values for the client in trade were characterized. The chapter closes the reference to managing the value for the client as a multi-stage process and exposing the role of business entities in its creation.

The second chapter has a theoretical and statistical character. Due to the fact that the work focuses on the value for the customer in online trading, an important element of the dissertation was the identification of factors affecting the development of online sales and the presentation of individual stages of e-commerce development in Poland and the world. The e-customer profile and requirements set for it in relation to network service were also characterized, which allowed to discuss the concept of creating value in e-commerce. The last part of the chapter is devoted to the characteristics of new e-commerce models.

Recognized and diagnosed in the first and second chapter, the current state of the Polish e-commerce market, allowed for the passage in the third chapter to indicate the importance of logistics in e-commerce and the essence of the value chain. Online store, being the most last but one part of the supply chain, has direct contact with the final consumer. However, the cooperation of all links in the supply chain is a determinant of creating value for the customer, and the online seller is tasked with offering a range of solutions for the client, from which he will compose a bundle of values that he will receive with the product. In connection with this, attention was also paid to the logistics barriers that are associated with e-commerce, as well as customer loyalty which is a consequence of the value provided.

The fourth chapter is an empirical chapter based on the results of own research. At the beginning, the subject and purpose of the research were presented, then the research methods and tools were used and the research sample including customers and online stores was made. An important part of the chapter is the attempt to confront research results among customers and service online stores. The results of empirical research among both studied groups were described and presented, mainly using graphs.

The fifth chapter contains the most important conclusions from our own research, which have been enriched with the results of secondary data from reports available on the Internet. Based on them, the research hypotheses were verified. A number of solutions and actions have also been proposed which should be taken into account in the e-commerce activities in

order to be able to provide value for the client adequate to expectations. The directions of further research in this area were also indicated.

The thesis ends with the conclusion, in which a summary of the research process and the realization of the goal of the work is included. The completion of the work is completed by the assessment of the future of the e-commerce market in the context of current customer knowledge and technology development.