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**MARKETING IN POLISH ENTERPRISES  
– MAZOWIECKIE VOIVODSHIP AND BEYOND**

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**INTRODUCTION**

Numerous theoreticians and practitioners alike do not differentiate marketing management in enterprise (MME) from marketing management (MM). In the literature, MME is one of a few enterprise management concepts described. It includes goal-driven management, process management and knowledge management [Brilman 2002, Zimmiewicz 2003]. In MME, the starting point for all decisions and activities is the needs of clients and the market as well as – as has been emphasised in marketing for years now – the enterprise being socially responsible. A board of directors (the owners, directors, and the president) that incorporates this concept into the management of its organisation will create the conditions conducive for the directors and management to manage by marketing – that is, to implement marketing activities. This practically guarantees that a marketing orientation (marketing) is achieved.

The director of marketing together with his or her management team cannot effectively accomplish their goals, strategies and responsibilities (recorded in plans) without effective MME being put in place by the management board. This direct engagement of management is called the marketing management, and the members of a thus engaged management team are considered to be a highly capable marketing experts [Slyvotzky et al. 2000].

The aim of the present article is to describe, in mainly quantitative terms, chosen marketing activities companies in MV employed at the turn of the second decade of the 21st century and to compare them with the activities companies throughout Poland use. The marketing activities to be analysed include marketing management in the enterprise (MME), marketing research done by companies or commissioned by them, product and price evolution, and promotional activities.

## DATA AND RESEARCH METHODS

The analyses described in this paper are based on data collected in scientific research by the team I head at the Marketing and Commerce Department at Nicolaus Copernicus University in 2010–2011. Research project NN115549738 was financed by the Ministry of Higher Education. The quota-random sample ( $n = 350$ ) was selected from the population of Polish companies in proportion to their number and structure in each of Poland's 16 provinces, or voivodships. A total of 65 companies from the country's most populous voivodship, Mazowieckie (MV), were involved. They comprised 18.6% of the total number of companies considered for Poland as a whole, while 7.4% of the total considered for the country were based in Warsaw. Companies from MV comprised the largest group in the research. The raw data were gathered from individual interviews, which, where accessing these individuals was impossible, a computer-assisted telephone interview was done. The questionnaire used in the interview consisted of 24 questions and the responses were scaled appropriately to simplify the process of quantifying, reducing and analysing them.

The report written following the analysis was published in the September – October 2011 volume of the journal "Handel Wewnętrzny" ("Internal Trade"). To that point, only one report had been written and looked only at the Kujavian-Pomeranian Voivodship, a region on the Baltic Sea.

## MARKETING MANAGEMENT IN ENTERPRISE

The basic group of marketing activities that make up the activity programme have a very positive influence on the development and success of the company. Of course, they also depend on the concepts management elects to implement. Opinions of management on selected groups of activities are presented and compared in the next three tables. Table 1 presents opinions on the importance of selected activities for the development and success of enterprises from Mazowieckie Voivodship (MV) compared to companies located throughout the country.

TABLE 1. The importance of chosen marketing activities for the company's growth and success (%)

Marketing activity	Very important		Somewhat important		Less important		Not important	
	C	MV	C	MV	C	MV	C	MV
Building lasting relationships with clients	85.7	89.2	9.7	6.2	2.9	4.6	1.7	0.0
Carving out the company image	85.1	93.8	12.3	4.6	0.9	1.5	1.7	0.0
Improving product or service quality	84.9	89.2	12.9	9.2	11.1	1.5	1.1	0.0
Modernising products	76.9	83.1	18.9	10.8	2.3	6.2	2.0	0.0
Gaining knowledge about the market	75.1	81.5	18.9	15.4	3.4	3.1	2.6	0.0
Improving employee satisfaction	70.6	70.8	23.1	23.1	4.0	6.2	2.3	0.0

MV – Mazowieckie Voivodship, C – average for the country.

Source: own study.

The vast majority of managers at Polish enterprises attach great importance to development and success factors. In MV enterprises they are clearly more important than other measures. Carving out a positive image, modernising product lines and learning about the market are also all relatively important to the MV enterprises. However, merely recognising the particular importance of certain activities does not yet mean that they have actually been implemented – they are only declarations. To determine which activities were actually being implemented (other than those listed in Table 1), the companies were asked to indicate those activities they had employed in the past three years (2008–2010). These were treated as a differentiator of marketing orientation and are included in Table 2 for the two groups of companies.

TABLE 2. Actual use of chosen marketing activities (% enterprises)

Marketing activity	C	MV
Building a sense of responsibility for the effect of marketing throughout the company	45.4	63.1
No changes to responsibility and knowledge	33.4	20.0
Improving level of knowledge employees engaged in marketing possess about marketing	30.0	36.9
Increasing those employees' responsibility for realising marketing activities	26.0	32.3
Increasing the knowledge employees from other departments possess about marketing	25.7	41.5

MV – Mazowieckie Voivodship, C – average for the country.

Source: own study.

Marketing activities are actually done to a much smaller extent than was claimed. Nonetheless, all of the ones listed in Table 2 are used much more by the MV enterprises than the average figure for the country. This applies particularly to building a sense of responsibility for the effects of marketing in the entire enterprise (63.1 in MV vs 45.4% nationwide) and increasing the marketing knowledge of employees of the organisation's other (non-marketing) units (25.7 vs 41.5%). The difference with regard to other voivodships are even more pronounced – for example, in Kujavian-Pomeranian Voivodship, only 5% of enterprises increase employees' marketing knowledge.

Planning, including marketing planning, both strategic and operational, are among the most crucial management activities. Strategic planning includes the entire enterprise and is long-term (a year minimum). The strategic plan for a new product can cover several years and involve most of the company's employees. Table 3 provides a schedule of several basic types of planning used by the MV enterprises and compares them to the data for the country as a whole.

TABLE 3. Marketing planning in MV companies and the country as a whole (%)

Types of marketing planning	C	MV
Marketing plans are worked out for a one-year period (operational plan)	39.4	46.2
Marketing activities are not planned (decisions are made in real time/on the spot)	37.4	27.7
Marketing plans are elaborated for periods exceeding one year (strategic plans)	17.4	23.1
I don't know	5.7	3.1

MV – Mazowieckie Voivodship, C – average for the country.

Source: own study.

As Table 3 shows, a significant percentage of companies inside and outside of Mazowieckie elaborate operational plans for a one-year period (along with, to a lesser extent, tactical ones). However, slightly more MV-based companies employ such plans and also lay out strategic marketing plans more often than companies elsewhere in the country (23.1%). A lack of planning also occurs less at companies operating in Mazowieckie than at those outside of it (27.7 vs 37.4%).

MME cannot be effectively implemented without support from a formal organisational marketing structure. Within this structure there are separate units that cooperate with others to make decisions and conduct marketing activities. Table 4 compares the organisational marketing structures in MV enterprises and the average for the country as a whole.

TABLE 4. Organisational structure of marketing in MV companies compared to the country as a whole (%)

Type of organisational unit	C	MV
There is no separate marketing unit (division, department or division)	51.4	44.6
There is a marketing division or department	28.3	30.8
There is a position for marketing	18.3	23.1
Marketing is organised in a different form	2.0	1.5

MV – Mazowieckie Voivodship, C – average for the country.

Source: own study.

The figures in Table 4 clearly show that companies in Mazowieckie Voivodship more often feature a marketing department (30.8%) or position (23.1%), and less often make do without a marketing department (44.6 vs 51.4%). Generally, the situation at MV enterprises is somewhat better in terms of organisation than in the country as a whole, though it is not entirely satisfactory.

## MARKETING RESEARCH

The results of scientific research conducted in Poland between 1989 and 2014 show that Polish companies use only a small area of marketing research. Research done by the Department of Marketing at Nicolaus Copernicus University (UMK) in 2000–2002 on a national sample ( $n = 391$ ) revealed that only 16.5% of companies carry out or commissioned any marketing study at all. However, the share grew considerably as the size of the company increased: 43% of medium-sized companies (101–250 employees) and 53% of large companies (more than 250 employees) indicated they had done marketing research [Escher 2002].

The Marketing and Trade Department at UMK in 2010–2011 repeated similar research that showed only a small degree of independently conducted or commissioned market research was being done in Poland at the time. In fact, only 21.1% of enterprises said they had conducted such research during the previous three years (2008–2010). At only 4.6%, that's very little growth over the levels reported at the turn of the century. This research was done by a somewhat larger percentage of MV enterprises, as Table 5 shows.

However, the vast majority (69.2%) of them had done no research at all over the past three years. They may perhaps find some consolation in that figure being somewhat higher than the national average. Nonetheless, a small percentage of management (6.2%) did not know if such studies had been conducted in their companies. The same held for managers nationwide, though the proportion was higher. Only 24.3% of medium-sized enterprises and 40% of large ones had conducted research [Pawlak-Kołodziejska and Schultz 2011].

TABLE 5. Comparison of the two groups of enterprises and the incidence of market research conducted (%)

Has your enterprise done or commissioned marketing research in the past three years (2008–2010)?	Location of enterprise in Poland	
	C	MV
Yes	21.1	24.6
No	73.8	69.2
I don't know	5.1	6.2

MV – Mazowieckie Voivodship, C – the entire country.

Source: own study.

The low level of market research done by Polish companies stands in stark contrast to management declarations of its importance. As Table 1 shows, 75% of management is convinced that gaining knowledge about the market is essential. A full 81.5% of management at MV companies indicated the same. The results of this study suggest that the utilisation of marketing research depends on the availability of marketing professionals and the quality of their work as well as the financial capabilities of enterprises. As many as 44% of enterprises that do research have a marketing division or department, 33.3% have a dedicated marketing position, and only 6.4% have no separate marketing unit [Pawlak-Kołodziejska and Schultz 2011].

Table 6 compares some of the areas (topics and themes) of marketing research done by the companies inside and outside of Mazowieckie Voivodship. The latter group of companies prove superior to the national average, and far better than companies in some other voivodships – for example, in Kujavian-Pomerania in-company staff participates in conducting research in less than 5% of companies and the vast majority of issues is not studied at all. These data starkly expose the lack of good and experienced marketing research staff.

Remember, the data in Table 6 concern only those groups of Polish companies (21.1%) and companies in Mazowieckie Voivodship (24.6%) which do any marketing research. In both groups, research is done far more frequently by a company's own research personnel. The exception is research of the preferences, needs and opinions of clients in MV companies, where research is commissioned to agencies 50% of the time. The vast majority of research subjects/topics in both groups of enterprises relate to the preferences, needs and opinions of buyers (customers), competitors, the opinions and needs of their own employees, and the efficiency and effectiveness of self-promotion (marketing communication). In the MV group of companies, most studies also look at product prices and distribution channels. Both groups study new products and packaging comparatively less, although the number is skewed more towards enterprises in the whole country. The reason for this is probably the low level of innovation in Poland.

TABLE 6. Areas of market research the two groups of enterprises do (%)

Area of marketing research	C			MV		
	company's own team	research agency	not researched	company's own team	research agency	not researched
Client preferences, needs and opinions	58.1	23.0	18.9	37.5	50.0	12.5
Competition	54.1	14.9	31.0	56.3	25.0	18.7
Employee opinions and needs	51.4	6.8	41.8	68.8	12.5	18.7
Effectiveness and efficiency of promotions	45.9	21.6	32.5	43.8	25.0	31.2
Suppliers and sources of supply	40.5	5.4	54.1	43.8	6.2	50.0
The prices of products and services (including new ones)	37.8	8.1	54.1	43.8	18.8	37.4
Distribution channels (intermediaries)	37.8	9.5	52.7	50.0	12.5	37.5
Research on new products and packaging	28.4	12.2	59.4	37.5	12.5	50.0
Other	6.8	1.4	91.8	6.3	0.0	93.7

MV – Mazowieckie Voivodship, C – the entire country.

Source: own study.

Management at Polish companies too often ignore the role played by marketing research in market activity. This is characteristic of an economy that is currently dominated by a model of development based on imitation and low risk – that is to say, a lack of innovation. Companies feel too little pressure to enlist research. When attempts are made, a lack of knowledge and experience in marketing means that managers do not know who has to collect and analyse market data. Confused management therefore assign marketing research in this field to incompetent IT specialists.

## PRODUCT EVOLUTION AND PRICE

Some writers have identified product evolution as product management, product policy or product planning. It is one of the core groups of marketing activities carried out at the operational level. Like the (mainly new) product, its constituent elements, including price, packaging and brand must also be created. Management activities (managing and planning) are linked to product evolution, but they mainly consist in activities including generating ideas, creating and researching concepts, projects and prototypes, marketing, creating assortment, analysing complaints, and improving quality, among other things.

This part of the paper looks at certain innovative activities, but only to a small extent those that are implemented in the market cycle. The cycle of innovation and the market cycle make up the life cycle of the product. Such an interpretation of cycles is presented by, among others: Kreikebaum [1996] and Sojkin [2012]. According to the results of the above 2010–2011 study, 62% of Polish companies said they had made changes to their offer within the past three years. At 64.4%, MV companies indicated a somewhat higher level. Analysis of the data for the entire country shows that only 9% of Polish companies research new products. Clearly, then, very few of those new products were analysed,

or considered against either existing or anticipated customer needs. It is unknown what percentage of new products were successful, or accepted by buyers, and nor is it clear what accounted for the failure of products. Additional research would be required to make these determinations [Kaczmarczyk 2011].

During the research, the companies revealed the types of changes they made to their products and packaging. Table 7 presents a comparison of the two groups. The total frequency of the types of the changes made exceeds 100% because some of the companies made more than one change during the research period. They mainly concerned changes made to product function, colour, shape, change or size.

TABLE 7. Types of changes in products offered by the two groups of companies (%)

Types of changes in new products	C	MV
Introducing entirely new products on the market	71.6	80.5
Changing the characteristics of products and services introduced to this point	41.9	39.0
Changing the packaging of products offered to this point	20.9	26.8
Other changes in the company's products and/or services	11.2	4.9

MV – Mazowieckie Voivodship, C – the entire country.

Source: own study.

Among the more than two-thirds of the MV enterprises (64.6%) making changes in their offer, a large majority (80.5%) introduced entirely new products onto the market. This too is a considerably better result than the companies in the country as a whole turned out (71.6%). The numbers are similar for changes made to product packaging, though in this regard changes in the characteristics of products are made on a similar level by companies operating in and outside of Mazowieckie Voivodship. Other changes are somewhat more common in the companies operating outside of the province.

One of the components of a product or service is the price. In the literature one comes across a variety of definitions, many of which identify price with the value of a product. Price should be understood as information conveyed by and/or agreed with the entity holding or handling the product or service, specifying, for the holder of the product or service, the amount of money or other assets desired by the holder for selling the product or service. Quantitatively defined price rarely equals the quantitatively framed real value of the product. The price is therefore the information exposed in different forms and on different media by sellers, who establish or change it using various methods. The test methods used by the companies inside and outside of Mazowieckie Voivodship for determining changes in prices are shown in Table 8.

TABLE 8. Methods of establishing and changing prices used by the two groups of companies (%)

Method of establishing or changing prices	C	MV
On the basis of costs	81.4	84.6
On the basis of competitors' prices	50.9	49.2
On the basis of research on buyers' opinions (demand method)	19.1	15.4
Other methods	10.3	4.6

MV – Mazowieckie Voivodship, C – the entire country.

Source: own study.

Enterprises from MV set and/or change their prices frequently based on cost (84.6%) and competitors' prices (49.2), while they use demand as the basis much less often (15.4%), and other methods even less so (4.6%). In most cases, companies establish and change their prices at the same time based on both costs and the impact of competition. The basic pricing decisions should also be differential pricing depending on the conditions existing in a given market or market segment. The methods the companies use to differentiate price are presented in Table 9.

TABLE 9. Factors in differentiating prices used by the two groups of companies (%)

Method for differentiating prices depends on	C	MV
Size of purchase	56.0	49.2
Group of buyers (which segment of the market)	52.3	70.8
Date of payment	25.7	29.2
Season of the year	22.6	20.0
Other	16.3	7.7

MV – Mazowieckie Voivodship, C – the entire country.

Source: own study.

The only factor in differentiating prices employed at a similar rate by both groups was the time of year; the use of other methods varied greatly. While differentiation by size of purchase is the leading consideration companies located outside of Mazowieckie Voivodship use (56%), in MV companies it is the group of buyers that predominates (almost 71%). Countrywide, nearly 84% of companies use price to differentiate themselves.

## SELECTED ELEMENTS OF MARKETING COMMUNICATION

Enterprise marketing communications consist of basic elements including company promotions, product promotions, sales promotions and personal promotions. Beyond these, companies also use promotional research. Only the first three types of promotion were studied for this paper. Company promotions include the following types:

- public relations activities (PR);
- a comprehensive system of corporate identity;
- promotions at fairs and exhibitions;
- sponsorship;
- publicity;
- lobbying.

For our research, the first four types of promotion were considered. Since the purpose of PR is to initiate and maintain positive relationships with the public, it exerts a wide range of influences on the environment. The main aim of a company's visual identification is to create and maintain a positive corporate image in the community – and, within itself, among employees. Sponsorship plays a similar role. At fairs and exhibitions all forms of communicative activities are used. Table 10 compares how the two groups of companies use the four types of company promotion.



TABLE 10. Use of four types of company promotion in the two groups of companies (%)

Type of company promotion and PR activity		C	MV
Activity and type of PR	keeping employees up to date on company developments	59.4	83.3
	organising parties and integration trips for employees	48.9	61.9
	organising special events for customers	32.6	40.5
	press releases and conferences	29.4	57.1
	other	1.4	2.4
Other types of promotion	overall visual identification of the company	76.3	90.5
	sponsoring	58.9	71.4
	taking part in fairs and exhibitions	57.7	69.0

MV – Mazowieckie Voivodship, C – the entire country.

Source: own study.

Companies from MV use all of the promotion types listed in Table 10 decidedly more often than the average for the country. Beyond organising parties for customers (40.5%) and other forms of PR (2.4%), the majority (more than 50%) of firms located in MV used all of the promotion types listed. Compared to the average for the country, MV companies are far more likely to put out press releases and hold press conferences, which 27% more of the companies in MV did, and 23.9% more of the MV companies also reported keeping their employees abreast of company developments than their countrywide counterparts did.

The second type of promotion is product promotion, a category dominated by advertising and among the most frequently used types of promotion, not only in Poland. That is why outlays on advertising are normally the highest of all promotional spending. There are more than a dozen types, the names of which come from names used in the media. Table 11 provides chosen forms of advertising used by both groups of Polish companies.

As with the promotions category, all forms of advertising are far more frequently used by MV firms. In both groups of firms, online advertising is the most commonly used. The rate of use of advertisements are the same for each form of advertising in both groups with the exception of press advertisements, which is the second most frequently used

TABLE 11. Use of chosen forms of advertising by the two groups of companies (%)

Form of advertising	C	MV
Online	77.1	88.1
In stores (at service points)	64.3	73.8
In the press (in newspapers and magazines)	63.4	83.3
Outdoor advertising	47.1	64.3
Radio	30.3	35.7
By post	23.7	28.6
Television	15.1	21.4
Other	4.6	9.5

MV – Mazowieckie Voivodship, C – the entire country.

Source: own study.

form of advertising chosen by MV companies. Television advertising is used less due to the prohibitive costs of making and showing such advertisements, mainly advertising spots and product placement.

The main task of company promotion is to realise long-term goals, while the task of advertising and sales promotions is to realise short-term goals. There are four types of sales promotion: commercial promotion, consumer promotion, internal promotion and merchandising. Each of them uses a specific set of tools. Table 12 presents a small number of consumer promotion tools used by both groups of companies.

TABLE 12. Use of consumer promotion in both groups of companies (%)

Forms of consumer promotion	C	MV
Reducing prices	59.3	71.4
Gifts with the purchase of a product	32.1	42.9
Free trials	28.1	35.7
In-store demonstrations and product tasting	23.8	35.7
Competitions, lotteries and games for customers	18.9	33.3
Competitions among sales-people	18.6	40.5
Free products	18.3	33.3
Other	2.6	2.4

MV – Mazowieckie Voivodship, C – the entire country.

Source: own study.

The promotional tools presented in Table 12 are, like other forms of promotion, used decidedly more often by the companies operating in Mazowieckie Voivodship. In both groups the most popular type of promotion is price reductions, the only form of promotion that most companies in both groups use. Companies from MV organise sales competitions much more frequently than the national average (there's a 22% difference).

## CONCLUSION

Polish companies discuss marketing activities more than they actually use them. This is true for companies both outside of Mazowieckie Voivodship and within it, though companies operating in Poland's most populous province not only use a far greater variety of activities, but use them far more often. They conduct marketing research somewhat more often, introduce new products to the market far more often, and use different types of promotion far more often. Companies located in Mazowieckie Voivodship set and change prices on the basis of insufficient customer surveys (demand method) less often than companies outside the province. Overall, the still infrequent use of marketing in Poland is typical for an economy based on imitation, lack of universal innovation, low risk, and traditional management.

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**Summary.** The analysis was based on data gained from scientific research done in 2010–2011 by the research team at the Marketing and Commerce Department at Nicolaus Copernicus University. The article describes and compares data on marketing conditions in Mazovia's enterprises with data on Polish enterprises from the country as a whole. The main focus is a comparative analysis of chosen marketing activities and tools used by all the companies under consideration. The issues discussed are among the practical and theoretical aspects of contemporary marketing in Poland, especially in Mazowieckie Voivodship.

**Key words:** scientific research, marketing activities, Polish enterprises, enterprises in Mazowieckie Voivodship

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