

The time perspective as a factor of increasing the efficiency of marketing communications

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Abstract: article provides an overview of approaches to defining the role of time in the structure of consumer behavior and capabilities of efficient use of time in various aspects of marketing communications. The results of research of influence of time perspective at the individual perception of marketing, including advertising messages are presented.

Keywords: *The time perspective, psychological time, marketing communications, advertising, consumer behavior*

The time perspective as a system of the individual notions about the past, present and expected future is closely linked with system of values, personal meaning and a direct impact on different areas of human life, including the sphere of material consumption. The accumulation and understanding of past experience, subjective perception of the present, vision of the future and its plan – are an integral components of any type of human behavior. And consumer behavior is no exception. Time perspective is a significant determinant of each stage of the consumer cycle: whether it awareness of the need, information retrieval or evaluation of alternatives, purchase, own consumption or disposal of consumed.

The problem of psychology time and time perspective is revealed in a large number of studies: R.A. Block, S. Grondin, T.J. Cottle, K. Lewin, J. Nuttin, L. Frank, P.G. Zimbardo, J.N. Boyd. Relevant research carried out by ukrainian scientists: Ye.I. Golovakha, O.O. Kronik, B.I. Tsukanov, Z.O. Kireeva, O.V. Polunin etc. Time in psychology studied in the context of motivation, event-biographical, typological approaches and probabilistic forecasting.

However, studies of the relationship of temporal perspectives and time constructs with consumer behavior are relatively few. These issues have examined in particular M. Venkatesan and Beverlee B. Anderson, Robert J. Graham, Philip B. Schary, Susan H. Jung, Robert B. Settle, Pamela L. Alreck and John W. Glashee.

Researchers include time to a so-called situational factors influence to consumer behavior (as opposed to economic, national, cultural and social determinants that have a sustainable nature for definite cultural environment and internal determinants that for a long period of time provide sustainable individual consumption style). As a situational factor, time manifests itself in conditions of change in the usual consumer's schedule: spontaneous or temporary liberation/ lack of time for shopping and consumption. Therefore, time is a component of consumption perceived poorly managed by the marketers, which eliminates its value.

However terms of economic psychology time - is primarily a resource that optimally implements different activities, including consumer transactions. Efficient distribution of time is consequently fundamental aspect of research. Under this approach, time with the money appears part of consumer spending and can become the subject of direct marketing efforts.

The authors of one of the most famous books about consumer behavior Roger D. Blackwell, Paul W. Miniard and James F. Engel [1; 234-238] point out three main

vectors of time that are meaningful for marketing efforts. Time which is outlaid on decision making until the moment of purchase and includes the operations of collection and processing information about a product, view advertising, previous visits to shop and compare offers. The desire to save time in the situation of choice increases the role of marketing efforts directed, for example, on the formation of brand loyalty.

The time spent on the purchase (stay in the store, payment, queues, time spent on the road). Some marketing strategies focused on saving time that a consumer spends for buying (online sales, delivery services, easy payment options, development of local distribution networks, the system of pre-orders, etc.); some strategies aimed at prolongation of this process in order to encourage consumers to make more spontaneous and unplanned purchases.

Time, which is outlaid after the purchase (familiarization with instructions for use, testing period and exploration of new products, consumption and recycling or utilization process). Marketing efforts in the context of after buying behavior is often aimed at forming notions about simplicity and friendliness of the product, reducing the risks associated with the process of exploration and building of convenient utilization services.

There are many products in which time savings appears as an additional or even primary a paid benefit (fast food, strong household equipment, quickly dry paints and varnishes, so on).

From the perspective of marketing communications is also important to study the best time for submission of marketing messages. So the authors of the book "Consumer behavior: European perspective» Solomon, M; Bamossy, G.J.; Askegaard, S; Hogg, M K. [2; 306-312] singled out Flow time: periods in which consumers are so caught up with some activities that become insensitive to marketing appeals. Unfavorable also is Deadline time: the period in which human activities are limited in time, and consumers don't have the opportunity to be distracted by something extraneous. The other hand conducive to concentration and perception on content of marketing and advertising messages are those timeframes as Leisure time: periods of "downtime" not engaged urgent affairs or Time to kill, when people fill the time released between the more significant events.

In contrast to traditional basic components of the marketing mix (product, price, place and promotion), time is intangible and it has understood and experienced primarily subjective. Therefore, the psychology of consumer be-

havior shifts attention from the resource potential of time on its subjective perception.

In psychology, the research of time is focused on several constructs: life guidance and individual life plan, life perspective, time horizon and others. So-called "temporal perspective of the individual" is an integral concept.

The concept of time perspective in psychology was introduced by K.Lewin, who interpreted it as the inclusion of future and past, real and ideal life plan in the plan of actual moment. The term "Time perspective" was introduced into scientific use by L.Frank for the characterization of interconnection and mutual influence of the past, present and future in consciousness of the individual and human behavior.

The time perspective concept has been developed in the works of J. Nuttin who supplemented understanding of time perspective by notions "Time attitude", like more or less positive or negative mood to the subject of past, present or future and "Time orientation" which describes the individual direction of behavior on objects and events in the past, present or future.

P.G. Zimbardo, J.N. Boyd consider five key dimensions of time perspective: positive and negative past, future, fatalistic and hedonistic present. Factor "positive past" reflects the sentimental attitude to own past and is characterized by its positive reconstruction. A negative attitude to the past is often the result of the actual traumatic and unpleasant events. Hedonistic present reflects orientation to get pleasure, lack of caring about the consequences. Fatalistic present reproduces helplessness and the belief that the future is already determined. Focus on the future displays the desire for goals and aspirations rewards of future and characterizes by tendency to planning.

The time perspective therefore significantly affects to the content and nature of consumer behavior, causing personal style of consumption, consumer preferences and restrictions. The marketing communications (especially advertising) open the opportunity for updating and modeling temporal perspective of consumers which correspond the with assigned tasks.

Advertising offers a number of temporal constructs which allows reproducing the relevant view of the world and actualize certain components of time perspective. It is primarily about the types of linear or cyclic time and gap of time.

In our own research, conducted in cooperation with Eugenia Fastryga, we analyzed the basic temporal constructs that are used in advertising.

Simple linear time shows movement from the past to the future (progressive linear) or backwards (regression linear).

Using the past tense enables communicator appeals to the experience of the recipient, the events, feelings and values that were important in previous segments of his life. Quite often communicator appeals to the national legends, historical events or nostalgic feelings which have formed image of a happy childhood, adolescence - a period in which a person certainly felt happy.

Designing of future in the advertising is oriented to transfer a person to another, better reality that can exist under certain conditions in the near term. It awakens in the consumer expectations and dreams, hopes and aspirations for change. Advertised object is positioned as in-

tended to approach future to make dreams real, it goes ahead of time and exceeds the consumer's expectations.

Present time most commonly associated with a particular moment which is relevant to here and now. It updates the mythical opportunity to stop or continue at a longer time interval a happy moment or a moment of pleasure.

More often than simple linear time in advertisements are used constructs which show different options out beyond the uninterrupted time: stop of the time, its speed up or slow down. One of the most common options of such use of temporal constructs is working with the gap of time. The sequence of events (progressive or regressive) in this case stores, however certain time intervals fall, time compresses, objects and characters of advertising gusty move in time, acquire new traits and characteristics. The most commonly used time gaps that show the situation "before" and "after" use of the advertised product. Other types of gap of time combine the present with an approximate or rather distant future, in this way appealing to the phenomena of life plan or dreams, the past time with a present or future.

So chronotop "Present as insight", is characterized by lack of a segment of the past time. Instead, an unexpected decision of the hero is in the present and not supported by previous experience.

In the chronotop "Present as a pleasure" all the the focus is on events of the present day, hour, minute. Thus, future is not important, while all the characters experiences are actual only in the present.

Chronotope "Future as a Dream" contains a gap associated with the present. The future is not supported by actual possibilities and conditions of present, so often have a fantastic context.

Cycle time is also well represented in advertising. Mostly these time constructs based on formula of predetermined, symbolic repeatability of the situation. Scenes which actualize cyclical time construct, develop according to a typical pattern: problem - solution. In this time construct frame is neither past nor present, nor future, only the repeatability or sequence of certain events which one or an unlimited number of characters may reconstruct in their own experience.

Phenomenon of a single moment in present has a special value for advertising, with the advertised product characters get the opportunity to stop or continue such moment for indefinite period of time. Hedonism as a desire to enjoy the here and now is the most common reason for stopping time.

Our own research was directed to identify the influence of personal Time Perspective and other individual psychological characteristics of respondents to the perception of advertising messages that contain different time constructs.

In our study 122 respondents were involved who were divided into four age groups:

- 1) Group of teenagers - 30 respondents
- 2) Youth persons - 30 respondents.
- 3) Adults - 32 people.
- 4) Group of the elderly - 30 respondents.

To the respondents the TV spots were shown, based on the different time constructs that need to be assessed by the method of semantic differential. Previously, respondents

were asked pass a Zimbardo Time Perspective Inventory (ZTPI) and "Life-sense orientation" test by D.O. Leontyev.

Later were found the correlation between these individual psychological characteristics of respondents and peculiarities their perception of different advertising time constructs.

For analysis of the results of research the method of mean values, correlation and factor analysis were used. Data from different age groups were assessed and compared

Our research has showed a difference of perception of various time constructs depending on the age of respondents. Using linear progressive time in advertising is most relevant to the teenage target audience and youth. Especially favorably this audience perceives time gaps with transitions in the near future (the desired result without intermediate effort) and distant future (life plan constructs and dreams). Linear regression time was predictably more relevant in advertising designed for adults and elderly consumers. The advertising with non-linear (cyclic and spiral) time demonstrated the highest indicators of efficiency in this age category too.

Our research has revealed a clear dependence between positive perceptions of advertising samples with different time constructs and the age of respondents. Most clearly the differences traced between polar age groups: teenagers and the elderly.

Tendency to positive assessment of regression temporal constructs in advertising is the highest among the elderly, who often live by memories, analyze of past part of their life and experience the existential crisis, during which they tend to rethink past events. In this age group were the lowest indicators of perception of advertising time gap. Older people treated carefully the logical sequence of events and are not inclined to consider some periods of time as irrelevant, such that may fall out unpredictably.

Instead, the teenagers evaluated as the lowest the samples of advertising with regressive time constructs. They seemed to them annoying and intrusive. They perceived worst of all age groups the nonlinear time constructs. Advertising based on such constructs gives them feeling of confusion, they describe it as unclear and difficult to understand. Instead, the members of this age group perceived positively the hedonistic ideas and dreams in the advertising samples and are the most sensitive to the time gap between the present and the future.

Teenagers perceive advertising with the construct of linear progressive time more positively than other age groups, while the evaluation of advertising that appeals to the future from the elderly respondents is closely linked with emotions of dissatisfaction and fears or alienation.

Adults have average indicators in assessing the majority of samples of advertising. Interestingly, they perceive less emotionally chronotop "Present as a pleasure" associated with hedonistic focus on the present.

Significant differences were found between the nature of perception of advertising with different time constructs by respondents with different dominant of Time Perspective. It was found in particular that the respondents of the "present-hedonistic" type most positively perceived the constructs of linear progressive time. A similar pattern was found among people of the "present-fatalistic" type and the "future-focused" type.

There is an inverse relationship between efficiency of perception of linear regressive time and nonlinear time constructs of time and such personal of Time Perspectives as "present-hedonistic" and "future-focused". That is, people who are prone to risky behavior, seek new experiences so as well organized and ambitious people who are aimed at achieving the goals are weakly sensitive to regression or repetition in time series of advertising events.

Respondents of the "present-fatalistic" type were the most sensitive to the constructs of regression and nonlinear time.

Some patterns of perception of different time metamorphosis and time gaps in advertising were found among respondents with different Time Perspective. So the time constructs which are based on slowing or stopping time (the "Moment as a pleasure") are assessed positively by people of the "past-negative" type and as was expected – the respondents of "present-fatalistic" type. Instead, respondents of the "future-focused" type negatively assessed advertising with such chronotops.

Time gaps between present and future ("The future as a Dream") were positively assessed by respondents of the "present-hedonistic" type and the "future-focused" type. However, this time constructs in advertising are ineffective for people of the "present-fatalistic" type.

Some regularities have been singled out during the analysis of features of perception advertising with different time constructs by respondents who have diverse life orientations. So a person with clearly life objectives are positively perceive advertising that appeal to the linear progressive time, especially where time gaps between present and future ("The future as a life plan") are present. Persons, which focus on zest for life and its emotional intensity, are more supportive for time constructs like "Moment as a pleasure" and "The Future as a Dream." However, using for such people nonlinear and regression linear constructs would be inappropriate.

High indicators of personal internal locus of control positive impact on the perception of linear progressive time constructs, whereas external locus of control correlates with a positive assessments of nonlinear time constructs.

Final analysis of the psychological factors of perception of different time constructs in advertising allowed us to single out four groups of respondents with identical parameters.

For the first group it is peculiar the combination of humanistic vision of life, the desire to live a rich emotional life, orientation to the future, a high level of aspiration and the clear definition of life goals. This group is the most sensitive to the linear progressive time constructs and the time-gap in the operating area of a present ("Future as a dream").

For the second group is typical a sense of fatalism, dissatisfaction with life and no controllability the course of events, a positive vision of their past and feeling of dissatisfaction about present. These respondents most positively perceived regressive time constructs in advertising and they are the most favorable to the non-linear temporal construct (spiral time).

The third group is characterized by an external locus of control, propensity to "drift", passivity, lack of a clear vision of their own future and life plan. These respondents are most sensitive to nonlinear time constructs (spiral, and

circular time) and to the advertising stylization at the legends and myths.

The fourth group has the highest negative vision of their past and experience, tends to focus on present day and has hedonistic life orientations, trying to get as much as possible out of life here and now. These respondents are the most sensitive to the time constructs which related to the stopping or slowing of time, including chronotop "Present as a pleasure."

Thus, purposeful use of certain temporal constructs in the marketing communications, including advertising should be conditional by strategic objectives and certain individual psychological characteristics of the target audience. Provided consideration of individual time-settings, including the dominant time perspective of the target audience, you can significantly increase the effectiveness of marketing applications and find new strategies for modeling of consumer behavior.

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