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FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE BEHAVIOR OF INDUSTRIAL ONLINE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) CONSUMERS IN INTERNATIONAL B2B AND B2G MARKETS

The article demonstrates that an important condition for the efficient operation of a company is the identification of the main factors influencing consumer behavior. This enables the firm to plan the production and sale of those services that have the necessary characteristics and qualities to meet the individual needs of consumers. Using the example of brightfin, a company specializing in IT cost management software, the article examines the factors influencing consumer behavior in the field of information technology using the 7P marketing mix. Understanding these factors is important for companies to create targeted marketing campaigns to meet the specific needs of industrial online consumers. The above ensures high competitiveness and helps to increase the efficiency of marketing efforts to ensure a successful business.

Keywords: consumer behavior, industrial online consumers, 7P concept, international B2B and B2G markets, IT services, information technology.

JEL classification: L86, M31

ФАКТОРИ ВПЛИВУ НА ПОВЕДІНКУ ІНДУСТРІАЛЬНИХ ONLINE-СПОЖИВАЧІВ У ГАЛУЗІ ІНФОРМАЦІЙНИХ ТЕХНОЛОГІЙ (IT) НА МІЖНАРОДНИХ РИНКАХ B2B ТА B2G

У статті розглядається вплив моделі 7P на поведінку індустриальних online-споживачів у галузі інформаційних технологій (IT) на прикладі фірми «brightfin», що спеціалізується на програмному забезпеченні для управління IT-витратами. Мета дослідження – з'ясувати, як застосування комплексу маркетингу 7P впливає на поведінку споживачів IT-послуг на міжнародних ринках B2B та B2G. Актуальність теми полягає у зростаючій глобалізації та конкуренції на ринку IT-послуг, де фірми повинні адаптуватися до швидко мінливого середовища та задовольняти різноманітні потреби своїх клієнтів, що постійно змінюються. Щоб бути успішними, фірми повинні розуміти складні фактори, які впливають на прийняття рішень споживачами, і гарантувати, що вони надають пропозиції, які відповідають очікуванням, залишаючись при цьому конкурентоспроможними. Дослідження є особливо актуальним з огляду на швидкі темпи технологічного прогресу та зростаючий попит на IT-рішення в різних галузях. Правильно застосовуючи модель 7P, фірми можуть створити сприятливе середовище для задоволення індивідуальних потреб клієнтів і забезпечити надання високоякісних послуг, які є конкурентоспроможними і добре сприймаються цільовими ринками. У статті підкреслюється важливість розуміння того, як кожен елемент моделі 7P – продукт, ціна, місце, просування, люди, процес і фізичні докази – впливає на прийняття рішення споживачем. Методи дослідження зосереджені на систематичному аналізі компонентів моделі 7P, з особливим акцентом на розумінні того, як кожен елемент впливає на споживчі вподобання та загальний процес прийняття рішень у секторі IT-послуг. Такий підхід дає цінну інформацію про ключові чинники споживчого вибору та фактори, що сприяють лояльності та задоволеності. Дослідження показало, що завдяки ефективному використанню моделі 7P такі компанії, як «brightfin», мають змогу краще адаптувати свої пропозиції до конкретних потреб міжнародних

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B2B та B2G online-споживачів, що сприяє підвищенню їхньої лояльності та задоволеності. Практична цінність статті полягає в тому, що вона надає інформацію для IT-компаній, які прагнуть вдосконалити свої маркетингові стратегії. Впроваджуючи ці стратегії, IT-компанії можуть підвищити ефективність своїх маркетингових зусиль і забезпечити успішний вихід на міжнародні ринки B2B і B2G. Крім того, застосовуючи модель 7P, компанії можуть диференціювати себе на все більші переповненому ринку і отримати конкурентну перевагу, одночасно будуючи міцні відносини зі своїми цільовими споживачами.

Ключові слова: поведінка споживачів, індустриальні online-споживачі, концепція 7P, міжнародні ринки B2B та B2G, IT-послуги, інформаційні технології.

Statement of the problem. Consumer behavior is always influenced by various factors, from the economic situation in the market to cultural changes in the business environment. “brightfin”, a company officially registered in the United States, provides IT services. Despite the lack of representative offices in other countries, the company is active in the international B2B and B2G markets, serving industrial online consumers in the online space on different continents

The 7Ps marketing mix model is used by business process participants to develop and implement innovative strategies that allow them to respond effectively to market changes and shape new trends. In this context, the emphasis is not only on the classic elements of product, price, place, and promotion, but also on a deeper understanding of interaction with consumers, employees, process optimization, and providing physical evidence of the quality of services or products.

This approach allows business process participants to create integrated, innovative strategies that better meet the needs and requirements of the modern consumer. The 7P marketing mix helps to provide a more personalized approach to each client, increase the efficiency of internal processes and strengthen competitive advantages by optimizing all components of interaction with the market.

This approach is important for understanding the marketing strategies of “brightfin”, which strives to ensure effective work in the international market, taking into account all the factors that influence the change in the behavior of their consumers.

Analysis of the latest research and publications. A fundamental approach to the study of consumer behavior and marketing strategies is demonstrated by F. Kotler. In the book “Principles of Marketing”, published in 2006, Kotler and his co-authors consider the basic concepts of marketing, including analysis of consumer needs, market segmentation, pricing, promotion and distribution.

Recent studies of consumer behavior focus on various factors that influence consumer decisions in the process of choosing and purchasing goods and services. In particular, O. Al-Ghaswini points out the importance of consumers' awareness of environmental aspects when choosing products, emphasizing the social and personal significance of these decisions

The well-known researcher R. Solomon emphasizes the psychology of the consumer in his works, considering how social and cultural contexts shape consumer behavior. [3] Scholars L. Schiffman and L. Kanuk also focus on microsocial aspects, offering a deeper analysis of the motivations behind the choice of goods.

M. Sharif studies marketing in social networks and

emphasizes the importance of the impact of new advertising forms on consumer behavior. [8] Researcher M. Bean, when considering the formation of consumer loyalty, relies on the postulates of emotional marketing. [10]

Given these studies, it is obvious that consumer behavior is the subject of scientific research by many scholars. It is subject to the influence of both traditional marketing factors and the latest technological and social changes. Therefore, further research with a focus on the factors that influence their behavior remains relevant.

The purpose of the article. To study the impact of the 7P model of “brightfin” on the behavior of industrial online consumers of IT services in the international B2B and B2G markets.

Presentation of the main material. The study of factors that influence consumer behavior is the basis for a successful business. Since the Pareto principle states that 20% of customers account for 80% of sales, it is natural that firms are constantly improving their marketing strategies to retain existing customers. At the same time, the business environment makes it necessary to search for new markets and new customers in search of effective business development. Of course, this is a resource-intensive process that also requires the introduction of innovative marketing strategies.[11] In order to satisfy consumers and create long-term purchases, businesses must invest significant efforts in market research. According to Solomon et al.[3], customer satisfaction is the measurement of consumers' experience after purchasing products or using services. Researcher Fruth[5] notes that some consumers rely on their own knowledge and experience to make quick purchasing decisions, but others may need more information.

Consumers often behave unpredictably and their behavior may differ even when it comes to the same product. Therefore, firms need to conduct customer and market segmentation to most effectively explore the needs of target groups and their offerings.

In order to take into account the needs of different consumer groups, marketers use various models to help optimize strategies and respond effectively to market demands. One of these models is the marketing mix, which serves as the basis for building an integrated approach to product development and promotion. A vivid example of a marketing mix is the McCarthy model, which includes 4Ps: product, price, place, promotion.[2] Invented in 1960, it became the basis for further consideration of market development. In 1981, B. Booms and M. D. Bitner supplemented the model with three more components: process, people, and physical evidence.

Let's look at how the 7Ps concept (or Bitner's model) works in the IT services market on the example of the

American company “brightfin” and offer our own vision of improving each component of the marketing mix.

1. *Product.* “brightfin” is a provider of telecom expense management (TEM) software and digital workplace solutions offered through ServiceNow, and helps companies manage IT assets and expenses related to mobile, telecom (fixed line/voice and data) and cloud. “brightfin” offers pre-configured integration with many telecommunications providers for automatic invoice processing. A unique feature is the integration with ServiceNow, which allows you to seamlessly manage voice and network services, contracts, and suppliers.

The most popular IT service for industrial online consumers is IT Expense Management. This service helps business process participants optimize IT costs by ensuring transparency, control, and effective management of funds. Also relevant for a large number of industrial online consumers is the service of using the brightfin software to manage their IT costs independently. Popular among industrial consumers is the UEM (Unified Endpoint Management) service, which provides centralized management of all endpoint devices used in the company. This service allows you to control mobile and other devices that connect to the corporate network.

Since industrial online consumers may have different needs in managing IT resources, we suggest introducing more opportunities to personalize the software offered. “brightfin” can offer customized solutions or module customization that allow companies to choose only the tools

they need, optimizing software costs. This will not only increase customer satisfaction but also improve resource efficiency. It is also important to constantly receive and analyze customer feedback about the product. This may include online surveys, interviews with key customers. Adapting the product based on this feedback will allow the company to meet current needs and anticipate future market demands.

2. *Price.* “brightfin's” website does not provide clear information about prices for IT services. Instead, there is information about potential savings through its technology cost management solutions that integrate with ServiceNow.[12] Consumers are encouraged to request demos and calculate potential savings using a customized pricing approach based on specific business needs. In our opinion, the publication of the price segment of IT services on the company's website can become its competitive advantage and ensure an increase in the customer base

“brightfin” applies a combined marketing strategy that covers both retaining the existing client base and winning new ones in the international B2B and B2G markets.

3. *Place.* Since a large number of international companies are headquartered in the United States, “brightfin” is mainly focused on the North American market (Williams Sonoma, Ardent, Hess, etc.), although part of its client base is located in Europe (Volkswagen, Henkel, Siemens, etc.) and Asia (Nissan, etc.). Figure 1 shows the structure of “brightfin's” client base by part of the world.



Figure 1. The structure of “brightfin's” client base by part of the world.

Source: developed by the authors

In our view, the growing trend of US companies participating in lucrative projects in Europe emphasizes the special advantages and opportunities inherent in the European market. Factors such as huge market potential, access to cutting-edge innovations, economic stability and cultural synergies combine to drive this process. “brightfin” may consider a full-fledged entry into the European market as an alternative direction for redistributing its client base. This may require establishing partnerships with local companies and service providers to provide integrated solutions or local support, creating marketing campaigns focused on the specifics of European markets, with an emphasis on the benefits of for industrial online consumers, and understanding the requirements in service and communication approaches

The firm does not plan to enter the Asian market and focuses on cooperation with existing online consumers from Asia that are headquartered in the United States. The reason for this is the complexity of adapting the product to the various cultural, linguistic, and legal requirements that vary across Asian countries. In addition, differences in business cultures and approaches to doing business can create barriers to successful integration and development in this part of the world.

4. *Promotion (advertising).* The main online communication of the firm with its industrial online consumers is conducted through the firm's website and the social network LinkedIn. Figure 2 shows the screenshots from the websites listed above.

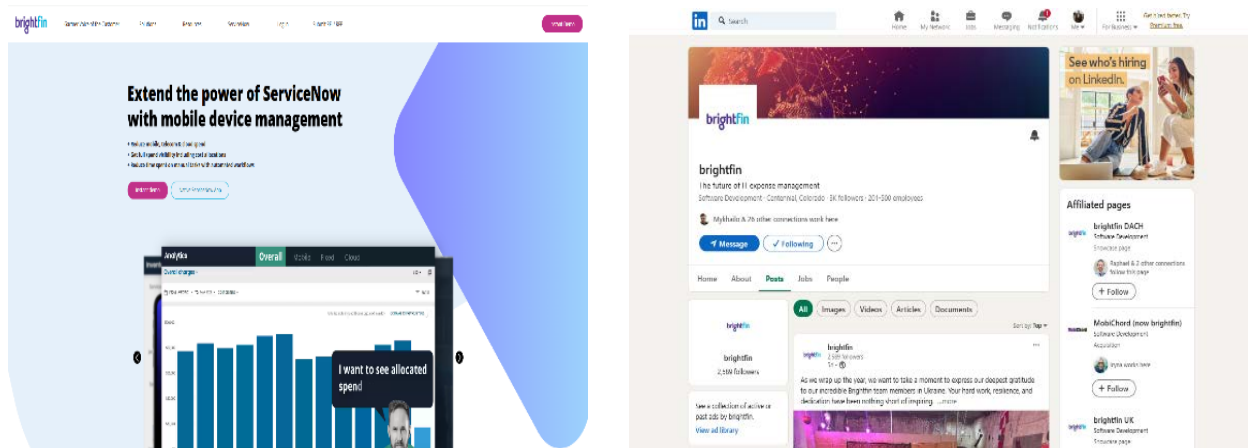


Figure 2. Screenshots from <https://www.brightfin.com/> and <https://www.linkedin.com/company/brightfin-software/posts/?feedView=all>.
Source:[12],[16]

In our opinion, it is necessary to increase the number of online advertising and promotion channels for “brightfin” services, as well as to detail the work with feedback from current customers. By using other social networks such as Instagram, Facebook, and Tiktok, you can significantly increase your customer base and expand the geography of consumers when using targeted advertising. The right choice of online communication channels allows not only to increase sales of IT services, but also to strengthen the company's position in the market in general. However, it is important to remember that each online channel has its own characteristics and requires an individual approach in terms of promotion and communication. Among the advantages of increasing the number of online advertising channels are the wide coverage of potential customers and the possibility of using multichannel marketing to increase the effectiveness of communications. “brightfin” successfully uses offline advertising at forums and workshops, such as the ServiceNow World Forum and Workshop in Munich, ServiceNow World Forum in New York, and World Forum in London, where direct communication with potential customers is carried out, questions are answered, and contact details are exchanged for further communication and cooperation.

5. *People.* Staff training and development is key to maintaining a high level of service. “brightfin” employees have the opportunity to take advanced training courses or choose a course of their interest to grow vertically or horizontally within the firm. As of the end of 2024, “brightfin” has about 200 employees on 3 continents, including North America, Europe, and Asia. The language of communication between departments is English. Diversification of the workforce is one of the important factors in intercultural communication with online consumers.

6. *Processes.* “brightfin” is the only TEM service provider capable of centralizing mobile and telecom data as configuration elements in ServiceNow. The company sells a unique solution that offers a complete overview of total IT asset costs, allowing each of its online industrial customers, regardless of geography or type of business, to get detailed information about their cost structure and possible budget optimization. The firm provides each

customer with qualified managers and solution engineers who help throughout the entire process of selling IT services. “brightfin”, in our opinion, is an alternative to commercial enterprise-level spend management firms that do not fully realize the value of a partner ecosystem. A partner ecosystem is a complex network of interdependent relationships between various business process participants, individuals, and resources that work together to create value and innovate. The very essence of a partner ecosystem is based on the philosophy that businesses can grow faster by working together and developing interconnected relationships. The movement towards partner ecosystems will remain for a long time. This is stated in the McKinsey article: "By 2030, ecosystems will play an important role in almost every aspect of the global economy, generating about \$80 trillion in annual revenue - one-third of total global income." [15] In the example of the cooperation between brightfin and ServiceNow, we see that a network of partners with complementary strengths and capabilities is directly related to improving the customer experience and achieving common business goals. By working with industry online consumers and government agencies, “brightfin” delivers cost savings, efficiency, and insight into mobile, telecom (fixed), and cloud services. For the past two years, the firm has been included in the Inc. 5000 Most Dynamic Companies ranking and has gained the status of a leading expert in technology spend management. [12]

7. *Physical evidence.* Physical evidence of the 7Ps is the tangible aspects of an IT service, including branding, etc. Epsilon research shows that 80 % of consumers are more likely to make a purchase if a brand offers them a personalized experience. [9] This conclusion is confirmed by “brightfin's” participation in forums and exhibitions, where employees can personally demonstrate examples of providing IT services to various business process participants in optimizing the management of telecommunications and mobile assets and provide their industrial IT consumers with a personalized experience.

The competitors of “brightfin” in terms of geography and range of IT services are such American firms as Tangoe [13] and Calero [14]. “Tangoe and Calero are two firms in the IT and mobile cost management in the United

States and Europe. Both companies provide comprehensive solutions for optimizing the costs of mobile devices, telecommunications services, IT infrastructure, and other business needs.

Figure 3 shows the authors' scheme of implementation of the 7P model by "brightfin" in the international B2B and B2G markets:

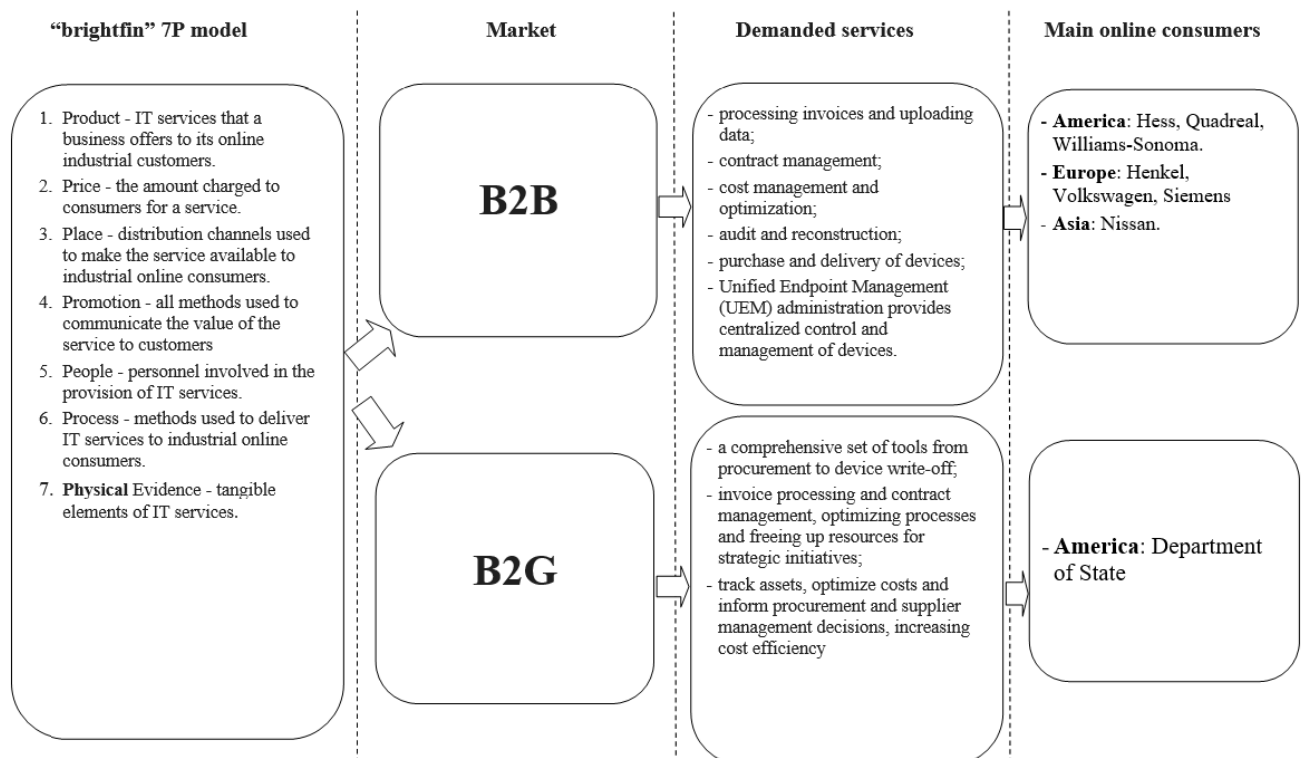


Figure 3. Implementation of the 7P model by "brightfin" in the international B2B and B2G markets. Developed by the authors
Source: developed by the authors

Conclusions. The 7P model is one of the most effective and widely used marketing strategies for modern businesses, including those in the IT industry. This model contains 7 elements, each of which is key to forming a competitive strategy and ensuring high quality of service for industrial online consumers.

For "brightfin", IT solutions and financial technology company, the 7P model is an important basis for building marketing strategies to retain existing online customers and win new ones. It helps to ensure proper customer interaction and optimize service processes.

We believe that in the future it would be reasonable for "brightfin" to consider moving from the 7P model to the more extended 12P concept, which allows for an even deeper focus on specific aspects of the firm's business strategy.

We recognize that "brightfin" the following reasons for doing so:

1. Business growth and expansion. When scaling up a company, it is important to consider new aspects of cooperation with partners, which can be critical to the successful implementation of innovations and ensuring high quality services.

2. Personalization of services. Given the rapid changes in the needs of industrial online consumers, especially in the field of financial technology, "brightfin" needs to focus on personalizing its tech products and IT services for each consumer, both in the B2B and B2G markets,

which will help to maintain long-term relationships and will also be a good advertisement for attracting new customers.

3. Improving productivity. Since the success of a firm depends not only on quality IT services but also on process efficiency, it is important to use additional tools to continuously improve productivity at all stages of service, such as: a quick demo presentation of the platform, choosing a data integration model, uploading all invoices to the "brightfin" platform, customizing the self-service portal to meet customer requirements, and supporting customers throughout the entire cooperation process.

4. Emotional connection with customers. Taking into account the feelings of industrial online consumers and creating a positive emotional experience is becoming critical to building a brand that can attract and retain attention in a constantly competitive environment. In the B2B market, there is a perception that emotions do not influence consumers' decisions and that they only think about numbers, data and ROI. B2B consumers actually spend more time thinking about their purchases. They weigh more options, crunch more numbers, and tend to be more data-driven in their purchasing process. But that doesn't mean emotions don't play a role in the process. B2B consumers still want to be sure that they have made the right decision. They want to feel like they got a good deal and made the right decision. They want to get the attention of their management because they saved money.

Consumers in the B2G market are government agencies for which quality, reliability and compliance with legal requirements are important. The 7P model has a significant impact on the formation of a strategy for interacting with such consumers. The service provided by the firm must be of high quality and meet the specifications of government contracts. The price should be competitive and transparent, taking into account the budgetary constraints of government agencies. Processes must be clear and efficient to ensure timely order fulfillment. The 7P model helps “brightfin” to interact effectively with government customers, taking into account all the factors that influence their decisions.

The 7P model of “brightfin” has a significant impact on the behavior of industrial online consumers of IT services in the international B2B and B2G markets. Taking into account the specifics of both markets, each element of the model - from product and price to processes and physical environment - contributes to the formation of effective customer interaction strategies. For B2B customers,

innovation, personalization of services and support at all stages of cooperation are important, while for B2G customers, additional emphasis is placed on regulatory compliance, transparency and reliability. By carefully considering all aspects of the 7P model, “brightfin” is able to adapt its strategies to the needs of different types of customers, ensuring a stable demand for its IT services. Accordingly, the correct application of the 7P model allows the firm not only to meet customer requirements, but also to maintain a competitive advantage in the international B2B and B2G markets.

Thus, the current business practice of “brightfin” in the IT market shows that the 7P model is effective and takes into account all the necessary tools for effective marketing and service management, but for further development, “brightfin” should move to the 12P concept. This will significantly increase the competitiveness of the company as a whole and successfully adapt to rapid changes in the technological environment, taking into account all the factors influencing the behavior of its industrial consumers.

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