

DETERMINING DIRECTIONS OF MARKET RESEARCHES BY CONCRETE MANUFACTURING ENTERPRISES

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Determining Directions of Market Researches by Concrete Manufacturing Enterprises

The aim of the article is to determine the directions of carrying out marketing researches by concrete manufacturing enterprises and to develop approaches to the organization and functioning of the subsystem of marketing researches at these enterprises. The article substantiates the need for development of specific directions of marketing researches for concrete manufacturing enterprises, which take into account a high degree of risk of their entrepreneurial activity. It is offered to carry out marketing researches in two directions: marketing researches of the market (research of the demand for real estate, research of trends in the construction industry, research of innovative technologies in production of construction materials and construction, market conditions research and research of competition on the market, forecasting research) and research of marketing potential (analysis of the competitiveness of the enterprise and its products, evaluation of image of the enterprise and its products; forecasting sales research; forecasting pricing research, promotion research, market segmentation research).

Keywords: directions of marketing researches, concrete manufacturing enterprises, marketing research, marketing potential research

Fig.: 3. **Tabl.:** 1. **Bibl.:** 12.

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Педько И. А. Определение направлений маркетинговых исследований предприятиями-производителями бетона

Целью статьи является определение направлений проведения маркетинговых исследований предприятиями-производителями бетона и разработка подходов к организации и функционированию подсистемы маркетинговых исследований на этих предприятиях. В статье обоснована необходимость разработки специфических направлений маркетинговых исследований для предприятий-производителей бетона, которые учитывают высокую степень риска их предпринимательской деятельности. Предлагается маркетинговые исследования осуществлять по двум направлениям: маркетинговые исследования рынка (исследование спроса на недвижимость; исследование тенденций в строительной отрасли; исследование инновационных технологий в производстве строительных материалов и в строительстве; исследование конъюнктуры рынка; исследование конкуренции на рынке; прогнозные исследования) и исследования маркетингового потенциала (анализ конкурентоспособности предприятия и его продукции; оценка имиджа предприятия и его продукции; прогнозные исследования сбыта; прогнозные исследования цены; исследования продвижения; исследование сегментов рынка).

Ключевые слова: направления маркетинговых исследований, предприятия-производители бетона, маркетинговые исследования рынка, исследования маркетингового потенциала

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Педько І. А. Визначення напрямів маркетингових досліджень підприємствами-виробниками бетону

Метою статті є визначення напрямів проведення маркетингових досліджень підприємствами-виробниками бетону і розробка підходів до організації та функціонування підсистеми маркетингових досліджень на цих підприємствах. У статті обґрунтовано необхідність розроблення специфічних напрямів маркетингових досліджень для підприємств-виробників бетону, враховуючи високий ступінь ризикованості їх підприємницької діяльності. Запропоновано маркетингові дослідження здійснювати за двома напрямками: маркетингові дослідження ринку (дослідження попиту на нерухомість; дослідження тенденцій у будівельній галузі; дослідження інноваційних технологій у виробленні будівельних матеріалів та у будівництві; дослідження кон'юнктури ринку; дослідження конкуренції на ринку; прогнозні дослідження) та дослідження маркетингового потенціалу (аналіз конкурентоспроможності підприємства і його продукції; оцінка іміджу підприємства і його продукції; прогнозні дослідження збуту; прогнозні дослідження ціни; дослідження просування; дослідження сегментів ринку).

Ключові слова: напрями маркетингових досліджень, підприємства-виробники бетону, маркетингові дослідження ринку, дослідження маркетингового потенціалу

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General formulation of the problem. Enterprises manufacturing concrete and concrete products are a link of the construction materials industry, which serves as an indicator of macroeconomic changes in the country. The construction industry and the construction materials industry are the first

to feel a forthcoming crisis, the first to suffer from restriction of credits and rise in interest rates on them, the first to reduce production or go bankrupt. And, on the contrary, in the years of economic recovery construction and production of construction materials grow at a frenetic pace providing jobs for

a large number of workers and giving a stimulus to development of related industries. This happens due to a large pent-up demand for housing. According to the Monitoring Report "On the general scheme of planning of the territory of Ukraine" published by the Ministry of Regional Development, Construction, Housing and Communal Services, the average level of housing in the country is 23.7 square meters per person. This level is the lowest in Europe, where housing ranges from 35 to 45 m² per person [1].

Concrete manufacturing enterprises produce homogeneous products, which can be sold in a short time to construction organizations located at a distance of no more than 50-70 km from the producer. Therefore, these enterprises are characterized by a high degree of entrepreneurial risk, which requires the marketing department to introduce a marketing information system for the company to monitor the external and internal environment and marketing research.

Analysis of recent researches and publications. Today marketing research due to its importance in providing information, on the basis of which management decisions are made, as well as to complex and specific procedures and techniques of its conducting, is a separate industry growing rapidly and covering a lot of research organizations. According to the Ukrainian Marketing Association, in 2013 the volume of marketing research in Ukraine amounted to 487.10 million UAH, which is 8.4% higher than the corresponding figure in 2012, and in 2012, the marketing research increased by 26.7% compared to the year 2011 [2]. On the Ukrainian market in this area there functions more than 70 companies, including such well-known international agencies for social and marketing research as TNS, GFK, AC Nielsen etc. There are a great variety of techniques and methods used to carry out marketing researches. In Ukraine there has been formed a scientific community consisting of the leading teachers of high educational establishments publishing essential and fundamental works in this area. Among them it is worth noting such scientists: A. V. Zozulov,

S. M. Illashenko, S. A. Solntsev, A. A. Starostina, A. V. Fedorchenko, O. I. Yashkina.

Highlighting the earlier unsolved parts of the general problem. Despite a large amount of materials on marketing research, the problem of the organization and functioning of marketing research subsystems in the field of the manufacturing of concrete and products from it remains unsolved. Risks of entrepreneurial activity of these enterprises are too high, the character of their work is special. Therefore, the system of marketing research of concrete manufacturing enterprises should provide information on forecasting future threats and opportunities by means of special tools (methods, techniques, programs).

Formulation of aims of the article. The aim of the article is determining directions of carrying out marketing researches by concrete manufacturing enterprises and developing approaches to the organization and functioning of the marketing research subsystem at these enterprises.

Statement of the basic material of the research. Marketing research is a subsystem of the marketing information system at the enterprise and, unlike its subsystems, which work in the monitoring mode (subsystems of collecting external information and the internal reporting), it acts periodically, that is, in case of need to obtain information for making a managerial decision. Marketing research is a tool used to measure the risks of entrepreneurial activity, make decisions on the enterprise development strategies and development of the marketing mix (Fig. 1).

The multidimensional nature of marketing research and its importance for decision-making was noted in the definition of the International Code on Market and Social Research ICC/ESOMAR. "Marketing research is a key element within the total field of marketing information. It links the consumer, customer and public to the marketer through information which is used to identify and define marketing opportunities and problems; to generate, refine and evaluate marketing actions; and to improve understanding of marketing" [3].

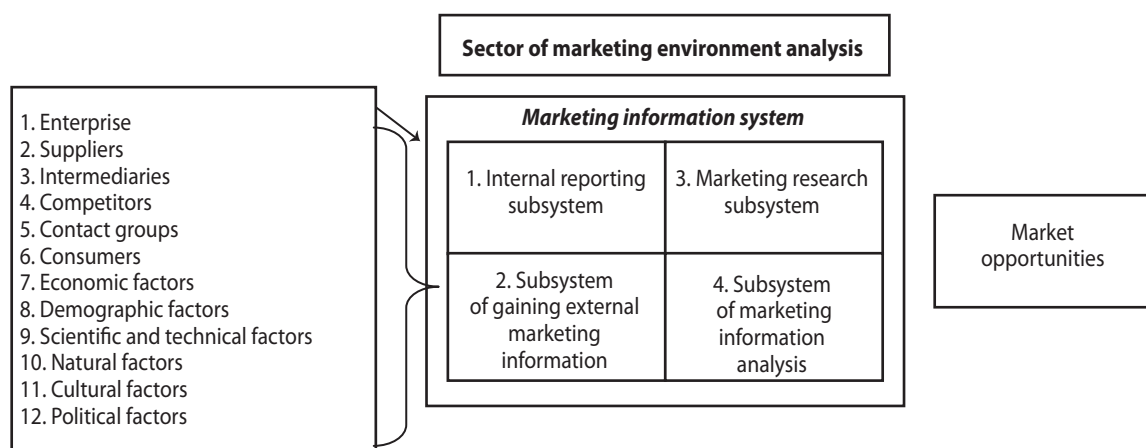


Fig. 1. The sector of marketing environment analysis at the enterprise [4]

The founders of the Ukrainian school of marketing research S. M. Illashenko, S. O. Solntsev, A. O. Starostina, A. V. Fedorchenko in the definitions of marketing research make emphasis on two aspects: strategic and functional. The strategic

one highlights the goals and objectives of marketing research, the functional one focuses on its functions (Table. 1).

To determine the development strategies for assessing entrepreneurial risk and making managerial decision by en-

Table 1

Definitions of marketing research by domestic scientists

№	Definitions	Source
1	Marketing research is a complex category that, depending on specific purposes may include many constituent elements. In general, it is focused on a deep study of trends and parameters of the business environment by means of a wide range of indicators using formalized criteria and procedures.	Fedorchenko A. V. [5, p. 205]
2	Marketing research is a primary means of collecting and analyzing information necessary to make economically sound decisions in permanently changing conditions of the market environment. It is marketing research that provides an opportunity to assess the market conditions and the competitive position of the enterprise and to determine the directions of its development adequate to external conditions and potential of the enterprise.	Illashenko S. M., Baskakova M. Yu. [6, p. 5]
3	Marketing research is a systematic process of planning, collection, analysis and presentation of market information necessary for decision-making in relation to the enterprise product-market strategy aimed at the most complete coordination of interests of producers and consumers.	Zozulev A. V., Solntsev S. A. [7, p. 17]
4	Marketing research is a systematic process of setting research purposes; identification of the volume, collection, analysis of the objective market information and development of recommendations for making specific managerial decisions regarding any elements of the product-market strategy of the organization and methods of their implementation in order to achieve high performance of its activity in a particular marketing environment.	Starostina A. O. [8, p. 25; 9, p. 19]

terprises manufacturing concrete and products from it, it is also necessary to conduct marketing research. To determine the tasks that can be solved with its help, let us consider the modern classification of marketing researches according to the purposes, directions and methods of their implementation.

There are several different approaches to defining the purpose of marketing researches. So, Neresh K. Malkhorta considers that marketing researches are carried out either to identify the problem or to solve it. Among the researches to identify the problem he highlights the following [10, p. 35]:

- market potential research;
- market share research;
- image research;
- market characteristics research;
- sales analysis research;
- forecasting research;
- business trends research.

To researches aimed at solving problem Malkhotra N.K. classifies the following:

- segmentation research;
- product research;
- pricing research;
- promotion research;
- distribution research.

The enterprise undertakes the problem identification research in the case of the need for information to identify the problems and risks that are not apparent on the surface. The problem-solving research is undertaken to solve specific marketing problems. Somewhat different classification based on marketing research purposes is offered by A.V. Zozulev and S.A. Solntsev. In their opinion marketing researches can be divided into fundamental and applied ones [7, c. 24–25]. Fundamental marketing researches deal with determination of basic market patterns and trends:

- basic marketing laws;
- trends in the development of economy, industry and commodity markets;

- household conditions.

Applied marketing researches are conducted to find a solution to the specific management problem of the enterprise. Among them the authors name the following:

- demand for the enterprise products;
- level of customer loyalty;
- brand image;
- condition of distribution channels;
- customer service quality.

A. O. Starostina holds the same opinion. She believes that the fundamental marketing researches are the market researches and the applied ones are intended to solve problems of a particular company [8, p.27]. O. I. Yashkina offers to divide innovation marketing researches into marketing researches of the market potential and research of marketing potential.

“If the enterprise has an intention to carry out innovate activity, it is necessary, at first, to collect information about the market environment: market conditions, competition, dynamics of changes in supply and demand, consumer behavior, macroeconomic factors that may affect the changing of market trends ... this is the research of innovation market potential” [11, c. 25]. The author offers to consider researches of innovation marketing potential the research concerning improvement of the enterprise marketing mix.

Summarizing the classification of marketing researches based on the purpose, as it is mentioned above, we suggest developing the one that takes into account the specifics of economic activity of enterprises manufacturing concrete and concrete products and its risks. Here is the reasoning for the classification of the marketing researches according to the purpose. Enterprises manufacturing concrete and concrete products belong to the construction materials industry, which together with construction and design organizations form the construction and industrial complex (CIC). The CIC in its turn inextricably linked to many sectors of production of goods and services. The dynamics of the CIC development is reflection of the economic processes in the country both at the macro

and household level. Advanced development of the construction materials industry contributes to development of capital construction, maintenance at the appropriate level of existing facilities and development of social infrastructure, provision of the population with shelter. The CIC and its components are considered an indicator of the society welfare.

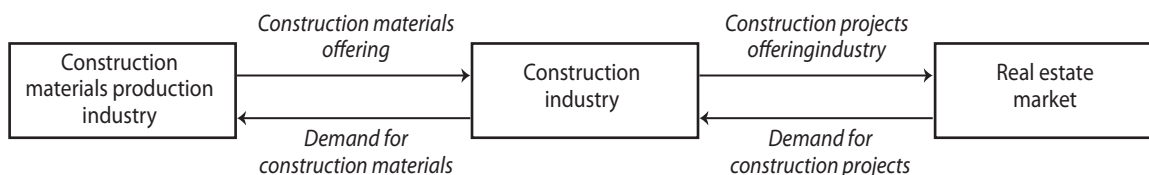


Fig. 2. The chain of total intersectoral risks

In the case of the growth in the demand for real estate, the number of construction projects increases and, consequently, the demand for construction materials increases as well. That is, the primary cause of the growth in the demand for construction materials is the demand for real estate. The demand for real estate depends on many factors, which in turn are subject to special marketing research. Thus, the task of marketing research is to identify the trends in the real estate market and the construction industry.

Enterprises manufacturing concrete and concrete products carry out their economic activity in a competitive environment. For enterprises of the industry it is extremely important to conduct research of the market, competition on the market and predict future market changes. Without this information, the enterprise is not able to work out strategic development plans and hold or improve a competitive position on the market. It is also important to trace innovative technologies in the production of construction materials, implementation of which will give the company a competitive advantage.

Therefore, the first purpose for enterprises manufacturing concrete and concrete products to carry out marketing research is the market researches. These, in our opinion, include:

- research of the demand for real estate;
- research of trends in the construction industry;
- research of innovative technologies in the production of construction materials and construction;
- market conditions research;
- research of competition on the market;
- forecasting research.

The second purpose for conducting marketing researches at enterprises manufacturing concrete and concrete products, in our opinion, is the marketing potential research. That is, the definition of vectors, on which the marketing activities of the enterprise can be improved. These researches include:

- analysis of the competitiveness of the enterprise and its products;
- evaluation of the enterprise image and its products;
- forecasting sales research;
- forecasting pricing research;
- promotion research;
- market segmentation research

Enterprises manufacturing concrete and concrete products are suppliers of products for the construction industry, which in its turn depends entirely on the demand for real estate, which is caused by its ability to be acquired by the population or commercial structures. In our opinion, in this situation, a "chain" of total intersectoral risks is formed (Fig. 2).

Competitiveness of the enterprise production in a narrow product range is a key factor for its survival and efficiency of its operation. Evaluation of the enterprise by its customers, the organization credibility, high evaluation of the product quality are also a key factor for success on the highly competitive market of construction materials. All the above factors form the concept of image, which also needs to be investigated with the help of special scientific and methodical approaches.

Seasonality of construction works affects the demand for construction materials, so identifying general trends that have developed in sales of the products it is possible to receive a reliable forecast of demand for the future that allows optimizing work of all departments. Manufacturing concrete and concrete products is energy and material intensive. The increase in prices for energy and raw materials can result in bankruptcy of the enterprise or a sharp decline in its profitability. So we consider it necessary to obtain forecasts of prices for the enterprise products by means of specially developed techniques.

Consumers of production of manufacturers of concrete and reinforced concrete products are not homogeneous, therefore, it is necessary to conduct marketing researches, which will provide characteristics of each segment, select target segments and develop effective communication activities for each of the segments.

The generalized scheme of marketing researches classification according to the purpose for enterprises manufacturing concrete and concrete products is shown in Fig. 3. According to their directions marketing researches are divided into exploratory, descriptive and causal. The exploratory research, which has another name — the prospect one — is gathering information for deeper understanding of the marketing problem. They are conducted either with the help of collection and analysis of secondary information — the so-called desk research — or by qualitative research. Qualitative researches primarily include focus groups and in-depth interviews, as well as researches in projective techniques. Descriptive researches include researches, by means of which the information describing the characteristics and functions of the market is received. They are carried out by the methods of interviewing or observation. Causal researches allow revealing the cause and effect relationships, such researches are conducted by means of experiments.

For enterprises manufacturing concrete and concrete products exploratory researches based on collection and analysis of secondary information are most relevant. First, such

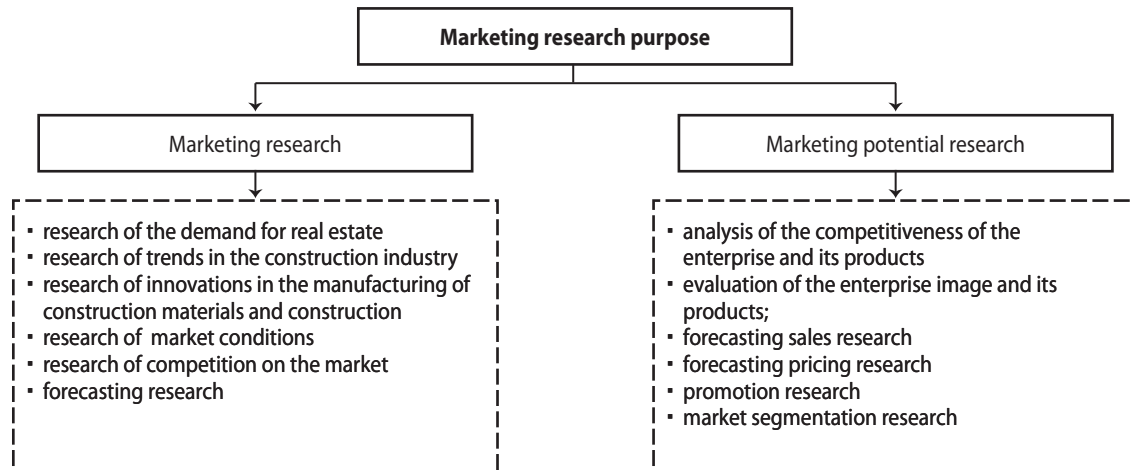


Fig. 3. Classification of marketing researches according to the purpose for enterprises manufacturing concrete and concrete products

researches do not require large financial expenditures necessary to conduct focus groups, interviews and experiments. Secondly, such researches can be carried out by the enterprise marketer familiar with certain procedures and methods of their conducting. Thirdly, information for specific tasks of these researches is available in the Internet environment, or in special literature.

To study the demand for real estate marketers need to collect information in the following areas:

- dynamics of housing prices in a given region;
- dynamics of putting housing into operation;
- dynamics of putting commercial real estate into operation;
- dynamics of capital investments in housing construction;
- dynamics of cash expenditures of households.

Analysis of the above indicators will allow determining the factors influencing the demand, and forecasting the development of the real estate market in the future. To study the trends in the construction industry is necessary, first of all, to determine the degree of influence on its performance of such factors as the season and the demand for real estate. The seasonal factor should be studied using monthly data of concrete production for the period of five years. According to the model of decomposition of the time series the market researcher receives seasonal indices, characterizing the demand for concrete in different seasons, as well as the general trend — the trend, according to which medium-term forecasts of production are received. All other directions of marketing researches shown in Fig. 3 can also be carried out by analyzing secondary information: about innovative technologies in development of construction materials and construction [12], on the market conditions, competition on the market, and so on. Descriptive researches are mass interviews or observations that are usually financially costly and conducted at studying consumer goods on the B2C market. But there are certain types of descriptive researches that will allow providing important information for enterprises manufacturing concrete and concrete products. This is, above all, observations. Observations can relate, first, to behavior of other market participants — consumers of construction materials, producers of construction materials, real

estate buyers, and secondly — determination of the optimal location of production.

Conclusions. On the basis of the stated material we can make the following conclusions: the concrete manufacturing industry is an industry with a high-risk activity, so the enterprises of the industry require special tools of marketing researches to reduce the risk of entrepreneurial activity. First of all, enterprises manufacturing concrete should pay attention to marketing research: research of the demand for real estate, research of trends in the construction industry, and so on. The second direction of marketing research of enterprises manufacturing concrete is research of marketing potential used to determine the optimal marketing mix.

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