

UDC 658.821:005

Mykytenko N.¹

¹ Associate Professor, State University of Trade and Economics

FEATURES OF CONSUMER MARKET SEGMENTATION IN CATEGORY MANAGEMENT

In the face of rising competition and dynamic changes in the consumer market, trade enterprises require the implementation of modern assortment management tools, one of which is category management. A key aspect of the success of the new philosophy of assortment management by product categories is a consumer-oriented approach and effective segmentation of the consumer market, making it possible to identify the motivational factors and criteria for consumers' choice of product categories.

Considering the wide range of interpretations of the concept of "market segmentation" presented in the scientific papers of foreign and domestic researchers [1, 2, 3], we have generalized and adapted a definition suitable for category management. Our version of the definition is as follows: market segmentation is the division of the consumer market into separate parts (segments), each encompassing consumers who have similar behavioral patterns in product choice, purchasing preferences, and similar responses to the main parameters of product categories, determined by consumer needs.

Today, market segmentation serves as a fundamental mechanism of category management, allowing for the identification and analysis of factors that influence consumers' choices of product categories and category products. With segmentation, companies can more accurately position categories and create targeted, personalized offers for specific groups of buyers. This approach not only increases the level of satisfaction of the target audience's needs but also contributes to the optimization of business processes and the improvement of the efficiency of trade enterprises. Therefore, effective market segmentation in category management should take into account a whole range of factors, enabling the identification of and a multifaceted perspective on different consumer groups.

The most common among these factors is the geographical one, which involves dividing the consumer market according to regional characteristics. Consumers from different countries and even geographical areas have varying cultural and socio-economic conditions, and, consequently, different traditions, experiences, and consumer preferences. Considering regional taste preferences, it is possible to create regional product assortments. Forming the meat product category, it should be noted that in the north of Ukraine, consumers prefer meat products such as pork and lard with garlic, and due to proximity to forests, game is also present in their diet. In the south, lamb, beef, and poultry are widely used. In western Ukraine, pork and beef are very popular, and due to the influence of

neighboring Polish and Austrian cuisines, dishes with goose and duck are offered. Eastern Ukraine prefers pork, beef, and poultry. Central Ukraine is characterized by a diverse diet that includes pork, beef, poultry, and game.

An important factor in market segmentation is demographic, based on characteristics such as age, gender, nationality, marital status, and other factors that directly influence consumers' purchasing decisions. For instance, Gen Z consumers are usually more open to new brands and innovative technologies, while Baby Boomers and Generation X members mostly prefer well-known, established brands and products, and may resist new products or the latest methods of selling goods.

The socio-economic criterion of segmentation involves analyzing consumers' income levels and social status. It allows distinguishing the premium market segment, aimed at wealthy buyers, the mid-price segment, which favors products with an optimal price-quality ratio, and the low-price segment, which is the most sensitive to price fluctuations in goods.

The psychographic factor, in turn, takes into account such aspects as lifestyle, values, interests, purchasing priorities, beliefs, thinking patterns, and consumer motivation. For example, supporters of environmental initiatives may be more likely to buy products made from recycled materials or organic products that do not harm the environment [4, p. 88]. In the category of sportswear, an interesting aspect is the division of consumers by their chosen type of sport and behavioral patterns – climbers, runners, bicyclists, gymnasts, tennis players, football players, etc.

Another segmentation model is the division of the market by consumption intensity, which analyzes the frequency and volume of purchases of certain products by consumers. This approach identifies groups of consumers such as category enthusiasts; regular buyers, who purchase products occasionally; and opportunists, or consumers who do not purchase certain product categories at all. For example, vegetarian consumers would be enthusiasts of the fruit and vegetable category, regular buyers of oil, eggs, and fish, and opportunists of the meat product category.

Segmentation of the market by consumer benefit is also relevant, where attention is focused on the personal advantage that buyers receive when purchasing a particular product, such as saving money, convenience, health, or care for the environment. This segmentation model is based on the characteristics of product perception and its properties [5]. For example, one segment of the dairy product market may consist of consumers who wish to limit fat intake and therefore need low-fat or fat-reduced dairy products. Another segment may be formed by consumers who prefer dairy products with various flavor additives (strawberry, cherry, banana, or vanilla flavor, with the aroma of chocolate, caramel, cocoa, coconut, etc.).

An important feature of segmentation is consumer loyalty to a particular brand. An example can be a segment of absolute fans of a certain trademark (enthusiasts of jewelry from the French house Cartier or household appliances only from the German brand Bosch). Companies use loyalty programs to retain customers and encourage repeat purchases, which is key to a long-term strategy for increasing profits.

It should be noted that there is no single template for consumer market segmentation. It is advisable to apply an original algorithm and selection of segmentation criteria to each product, product category, and store. The result of market segmentation should be the accurate identification of the target audience. In this context, consumer market segmentation serves as a key tool in category management, enabling a better understanding of buyers' motivations and needs, helping meet current consumer demand, and, in the strategic term, restoring trust in domestic retail, that an important direction for Ukraine's economic stabilization and post-war recovery.

REFERENCES

1. Kotler Ph. (2025). Fundamentals of Marketing. Classic Edition. Textbook. Kyiv: Naukovyi Svit, 622.
2. Illiashenko S. M. (2025). Marketing: Bachelor's Course. Textbook. Kyiv: Universytetska Knyha, 1134.
3. Starostina A. O. (2024). Marketing. World Experience and Ukrainian Dimension. Textbook. Kyiv: Lira-K Publishing LLC, 490.
4. Bedii N. I. (2021). Market Segmentation of Products in the Context of Modern Consumer Behavior Trends. *Investments: Practice and Experience*, (9).
5. Struk N., & Mykhailyk, N. (2024). Marketing Strategies of Segmentation and Target Market Selection. *Economy and Society*, (59).