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TEA BUSINESS BRAND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES: MARKETING APPROACH

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The tea market in Ukraine continues to grow steadily and at a rapid pace. The global pandemic, the war and fluctuations in global demand for tea are having an impact on the operations of domestic tea producers. The global tea market is showing steady growth, with significant competition also being observed among key market suppliers. Consequently, at present, brand development in the tea business is not only an objective necessity but also a strategic priority for the implementation of qualitative transformations within enterprises in this sector. The emergence of intense competition in this segment is primarily due to the fact that the basic product is of similar quality across many manufacturers; therefore, building a distinct brand is a key means of differentiating one's own product. In this context, it is appropriate to examine the brand from a marketing perspective to identify a set of key brand development strategies that can be utilised by tea manufacturers and suppliers.

Research into strategies for developing the tea business, specifically through a marketing approach, will enable the identification of the key components of its competitiveness and will shape the main areas of brand recognition, in particular its positioning, brand identity and emotional connection with customers. Marketing research in this segment plays a leading role as one of the main tools for business development, which is built on a competitive and high-quality brand. With this approach, the primary objective of the brand development strategy is the effective management of brand equity as one of the company's key intangible assets. It is brand equity that creates added value for products, ensures consumer trust and provides a long-term competitive advantage in the market. In today's environment, it is a vital component of a company's intellectual capital, determining its capacity for innovative development and adaptation to changes in the market environment [1].

The key strategies for developing a tea business brand from a marketing perspective include:

- a product portfolio development strategy (continuously updating the range, creating gift and seasonal beverage collections, new flavours, and limited-edition collections);
- a clear brand positioning strategy (positioning should clearly distinguish the brand from competitors, be understandable and highlight the product's uniqueness, increase brand recognition, and create a sense of comfort to meet consumer expectations);
- a strategy for segmentation and focus on the target audience (clear division into homogeneous groups, identification of group and individual characteristics);
- a strategy for developing a unique selling proposition (specifying and articulating the competitive advantage of your specific product, visual identity);
- content marketing strategy (engaging the target audience, building a loyal customer base, creating relevant emotional video content with the customer, native content);
- digital promotion strategy (social media activity; SMM, targeted advertising; development of a creative concept);
- corporate social responsibility strategy (responsible attitude towards society, employees and customers; economic, environmental and social responsibility).

To build a strong brand in the tea industry, it is essential first and foremost to focus on meeting the needs of today's consumers, as repeat purchases indicate that the business is successfully fulfilling its obligations to consumers and building trust. If customers return time and again, this confirms the effectiveness of the business and a high level of brand loyalty [2].

To sum up, it should be noted that when considering brand development strategies for the tea business from a marketing perspective, it is worth noting that, first and foremost, they must be based on a combination of clear positioning, strong branding, flexibility and adaptability in responding to consumer demands, an active digital presence, and a deep understanding of the consumer. As practice shows, in today's environment, the tea producers and suppliers who succeed are those who create added value around this beverage in the form of a consumer lifestyle and evoke positive emotions in them. In today's environment, the development of a tea brand is not merely about product promotion, but involves systematic marketing efforts to create a high-quality product that generates added value, brand recognition and builds consumer trust. Without a clear marketing strategy, even good tea 'can get lost' in the market.

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