

The impact of the website's design on the user recommendation of such a website

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Abstract: The main objective of this research is to carry out an impact analysis of the selected attributes of design on the user recommendations of a website. The analysis was carried out through a survey which aim was to test the impact of the different elements of online marketing campaigns on the perception of the organization by consumers. The selected company belongs to the category of SME, and actively implements marketing campaigns on the Internet. Therefore, it will be possible to monitor and assess the impact of these activities on the perception of the organization by its customers. From the achieved results we assume that the selected elements of design of the monitored website directly impact recommendations given by its visitors. The presented study defines a set of selected elements of website design in the light of the impact of these factors on the perception of the organization by consumers. The study defines important principles relating to the essential Internet marketing tools that throw a light on the issues.

Keywords: webdesign, clarity of design, website recommendation

JEL Classification: M15; M30; M31; M37

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1. Introduction

Developments and advances in Internet technologies have led to fundamental changes in the fundamentals concerning the interaction of organizations on the B2B (Business to Business) and B2C (Business to Consumer) markets (Parasuraman 2002). Marketing communication is a component of a corporate communication that focuses on stimulating sales. Marketing communication has to be consistent with the objectives of the corporate communication in order to create a single image.

“The web has created tremendous opportunities for direct addressing of a narrow spectrum of buyers using well-targeted messages the costs of which are only a fraction of big advertising budgets” (Meerman Scott 2010, s. 5).

In the past, it was not easy to obtain data about consumers and trends from various fields. Before launching a new product or service companies had to rely on expensive and time consuming surveys, and the collection of data took quite a long time. Surveying the competition and corresponding business sectors has been a slow and costly process. Thanks to the large amounts of data these factors can now be considered as a non-issue. Today it is possible to know exactly what customers want and at a much larger scale than they ever before. Data on competition and industry are available at a blink of an eye. It is possible to get an immediate feedback, investigate whether the changes made in a marketing strategy are working, as well as monitor the increasing or decreasing interest of consumers before the actual investment (Fox 2011).

Website content is an important factor for organizations and customers alike. The content makes organizations unique and creates their image by presenting their ideas at the online marketplace of ideas (Meerman Scott 2010).

Websites have become common means of corporate marketing communication through which companies give information to their already-existing as well as potential customers and other company stakeholders, build relationships with various target groups and create an environment for two-way communication. The methodology set out in Figure 1 can serve as a basis for further research into other aspects of online marketing. Its most important feature is the interactivity with customers which according to Přikrylová (2010) must meet the following criteria:

- Attract the attention of users. All previous forms of marketing communication more or less forced a customer into something, while marketing on the Internet requires a customer to voluntarily visit a website. It is therefore important to have easy to remember domain name which will be associated with a name of a company, product or brand. The seller must be aware of the costs of attracting potential customers, review the effectiveness of communication and check customers attracted by it.
- Attracting attention and cooperation with users. After attracting attention it is necessary to use the interactivity options provided by the medium. It is desirable that the website is attractive, have interesting content, and provide clear and easy to reach information. It is important to understand that the target group on the Internet differs significantly from the general population. Internet users are more focused on the acquisition and use of information, they are better educated and are more likely to communicate with sellers whose products or services are placed on the Internet.
- Keeping users and ensuring their return to the application. If a website manages user's attention, it is important to ensure he/ she will come back. This step is the basis for creating the relationship. The more time a company invests in the interaction with users, the less likely users will look for opportunities elsewhere.

2. Data and Methodology

The main objective of this research is to carry out an impact analysis of the selected attributes of design on the users' recommendations of a website. The analysis was carried out through a survey, which is intended to test the impact of the different elements of online marketing campaigns on the perception of the organization by consumers. The selected company belongs to the category of SME, and actively implements marketing campaigns on the Internet. Therefore, it will be possible to monitor and assess the impact of these activities on the perception of the organization by its customers.

For the purpose of the research we focus on the selected company based in the Slovak Republic and selected Internet marketing tools used by the company in its online marketing strategies. Based on our objectives we have set the following research problems:

- Is there a significant relation between the user recommendation and the perception of the website's design?
- Is there a significant relation between the user recommendation and clarity of the website?

Based on the defined objectives and research problems the following research hypotheses were set:

- H1. We assume the existence of a linear relationship between user recommendations and perceptions of website design.
- H2. We assume the existence of a linear relationship between user recommendations and clarity of a website.

To obtain the necessary data we used the exploratory method based on the collection of information through subjective responses of respondents - visitors of the selected company's website.

3. Data sample and execution of survey

Primary sources of information were obtained through the quantitative research using the method CAWI (Computer Assisted Web Interview). Data was collected using an online questionnaire in November 2014. The link to the electronic questionnaire was placed on the website of the company, at www.citygym.sk, on the Facebook page of the company (on the post) at www.facebook.com/city.gym.presov and www.facebook.com/city.gym.kosice. The post published on the social network Facebook was supported by a short-term advertising campaign consisting of the link to the online questionnaire. After the data collection process had been completed we started sorting, coding and evaluating respondents' answers. The basic set of respondents consisted of visitors of the fitness center City Gym, visitors of the monitored website and subscribers of their Facebook page. The research sample consisted of 222 respondents.

Table 1. Representation of respondents by gender

	N	%	Cumulative N	Cumulative %
<i>Gender</i>				
Man	99	44,59	99	44,59
Woman	123	55,41	222	100,00
Overall	222	100,00	222	100,00

The above results show that the research sample was slightly dominated by females (N = 123, 55.41%), compared to the representation of males (N = 99, 44.59%). It can be stated that the composition of the research sample corresponds to the real long-term composition of the fitness center's clients. Gender composition of the survey corresponds to the gender composition of the visitors of the fitness center's Facebook page as well as the website Citygym.sk.

Most of the research sample consisted of respondents aged 19-29 years (N = 144, 64.86%). Respondents who were younger than 18 years amounted to 8.11% (n = 18) of all respondents. The second largest age group were people aged between 30 and 39 years, a total of 42 people, representing a value of 18.92%. Given the nature of the research (the researchers sample consists of people interested in fitness), we assumed lower number of people aged between 40 to 49 years (n = 12, 5.41%) and respondents aged 50 and older (N = 6, 2.70%). Based on data obtained from the web analytics tool Google Analytics, the age structure of survey participants corresponds with the age structure of visitors of the fitness center's Facebook page and website Citygym.sk.

Table 2. Website design affects the user comfortably

	N	%	Cumulative N	Cumulative %
Definitely yes	102	45,95	102	45,95
Probably yes	78	35,14	180	81,19
Not choose	24	10,81	204	91,90
Probably no	18	8,11	222	100
Definitely no	0	0	222	100
Overall	222	100,00	222	100,00

Q1: The question focused on the perception of visual elements of the website. The website design is very nice - a total of 102 respondents (45.95%) agreed with this statement. 78 respondents (35.14%) chose the answer "Probably". We can conclude that the design of the website works fine with the visitors.

Table 3. Website design affects the user clearly

	N	%	Cumulative N	Cumulative %
Definitely yes	102	45,95	102	45,95
Probably yes	87	39,19	189	85,14
Not choose	27	12,16	216	97,30
Probably no	9	4,05	222	100
Definitely no	0	0	222	100
Overall	222	100,00	222	100,00

Q2: With regard to the clarity of the website respondents gave this question a highly positive evaluation by choosing "definitely yes" and "rather yes" (83.78% of respondents). A total of 27 respondents (12.16%) chose the answer "do not know", and negative attitude towards the clarity of the website expressed 4.05% of respondents (N=9).

Table 4. Recommendation of website

	N	%	Cumulative N	Cumulative %
Definitely yes	117	52,70	117	52,70
Probably yes	72	32,43	189	85,13
Not choose	27	12,16	216	97,29
Probably no	6	2,70	222	100
Definitely no	0	0	222	100
Overall	222	100,00	222	100,00

Q3: 117 respondents, representing 52.70% of the respondents, stated they would definitely recommend the website. The answer "Rather yes" was chosen by 72 respondents (32.43%). 27 respondents (12.16%) chose the answer "not choose". Only 2.7 % of the respondents had a negative attitude toward recommending the websites (2.70%).

4. Summary and discussion

The results of the research on the perception of the visual aspects of websites suggest a highly positive attitude of the respondents in relation to these variables. Therefore we expect that recommendations are directly dependent on the perception of the website's design and visual clarity of the website. We assume that there is a linear trend between variables (recommendation and the perception of the design/ recommendation and clarity of the websites). The extent of the linear dependence between variables was evaluated using Pearson correlation coefficient.

Table 5. Pearson correlation (N=222)

	Comfortably design	Clearly design	Recommendation of website
Comfortably design	1	,574	,479
Clearly design	,574	1	,570
Recommendation of website	,479	,570	1

Positive correlation coefficients indicate a linear relationship between the chosen variables (recommendation and clarity of navigation; recommendation and website usability/ ease of use). We rejected the alternative hypothesis due to lack of a linear relationship between the variables. The significance was calculated at $p = 0.000$. The analysis showed a significant relationship between the variables at the significance level $\alpha < 0.01$. A significant correlation coefficient of the variables usability / ease of use and clarity of navigation ($r = 0.833$) indicates a heavy dependence between the variables. The user recommendation and other variables ($r = 0.501$ and $r = 0.449$) showed a moderate dependency.

The results of our research on the impact of Internet marketing on the perception of organizations by customer show that Internet marketing tools significantly contribute to the positive image of the organizations and subsequent recommendations by customers. The research on the influence of various aspects of websites showed their importance in case of the perception of organizations by customers

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