

IMAGE POLICY FORMATION STRATEGY AS A TOOL FOR IMPROVING ENTERPRISE COMPETITIVENESS

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Today, in conditions of fierce market competition and unstable international economic relations, any organization faces the urgent task of creating a personal image of the enterprise. The image of the enterprise, one way or another, affects the future of any organization and is able to strengthen the competitive position of the organization in the domestic and international market. In modern conditions, the successful decision of this task consists of various factors which purpose is creation of a certain favorable image of the company in consciousness of other participants of the market from which in many respects the financial success of the company will depend.

The development of modern market, which is diverse with similar in quality and purpose goods and services, is characterized by constantly increasing competition. In such a situation, the main competitive advantage of the organization is the trust of consumers and their positive opinion about the company. This opinion (impression) of the enterprise is called the image of the organization.

Different authors interpret the concept of "the image of the organization" differently. We should consider this concept in both a broad and narrow sense. In a broad sense, the concept of "the image of the organization" should be viewed from the perspective of the totality of public opinion about any object. In the narrow sense, the concept of "organization image" should be understood as a certain image that has an impact on various groups of the public.

The image of an organization is a public or individual opinion presented in the form of a certain image of the prestige of the organization, which is formed with the help of mass communication and tools of psychological influence.

The purpose of an image building strategy for any company is to create a positive impression of the company, which helps to increase the level of trust and attractiveness of the product or service.

During the strategy of forming an image of the organization, the company may face a number of difficulties, factors that prevent the creation of a positive image. In fact, the image of the organization is the guarantor of the quality of goods, works and services for the consumer, and for suppliers and investors - the guarantor of profitable business deals and contacts. For competitors who expect

to drive the company out of its market share, image is a red traffic light signal that alerts the company to the presence of a strong competitor in the market. This signal informs other businesses to be cautious and carefully "cross the road" to strong competitors. The image is also an individual advantage of the company; like a bright disco ball illuminated by a spotlight and dazzling the eyes of the public, it is able to make a company stand out among the others.

The analysis of socio-psychological research shows that in the eyes of the public, companies which have a sustainable positive image are more popular with consumers and are associated in their minds with high quality, reliability, comfort and safety. This gives a great advantage to the company, but also imposes on it a great responsibility. In order not to lose the trust of consumers, the company must meet the declared standards and requirements. Innovative activities of the company will also have a favorable effect on the image of the organization.

Each organization strives to form its own positive image. Approaches to image policy development as an important link of marketing strategy of increase of competitive ability of a product or service can be very different. As part of the image policy of the company, finding the best strategy for the formation of a positive image of the organization is a fairly complex, time-consuming and financially expensive process. In order to optimize the financial costs and labor processes, it will be relevant to create a concept which would greatly simplify and structure the strategy of forming the image policy of the organization and help to organize the optimal parameters for assessing the image of the enterprise. On the basis of marketing concept "4P" and McKinsey's model "7S" let's develop a native concept "4PK" or "2P+2K" which first letters describe the names of the main variables (coordinates) which are not necessary to form a favorable corporate image. Let us present four main variables influencing the formation of a favorable image of the organization: "Reputation", "Advertising", "Quality", and "Corporate Culture". All coordinates interact very tightly with each other and have a correlation dependence.

The "4PK" or "2P+2K" model consists of a synthesis of several variables that are very important to consider in the image building strategy of any enterprise. It is the emphasis on the elaboration and analysis of the coordinates of this model will be the basis for the strategy of forming the image of the organization, which will increase the competitiveness of the company and ultimately have a favorable effect on the financial performance of the enterprise.

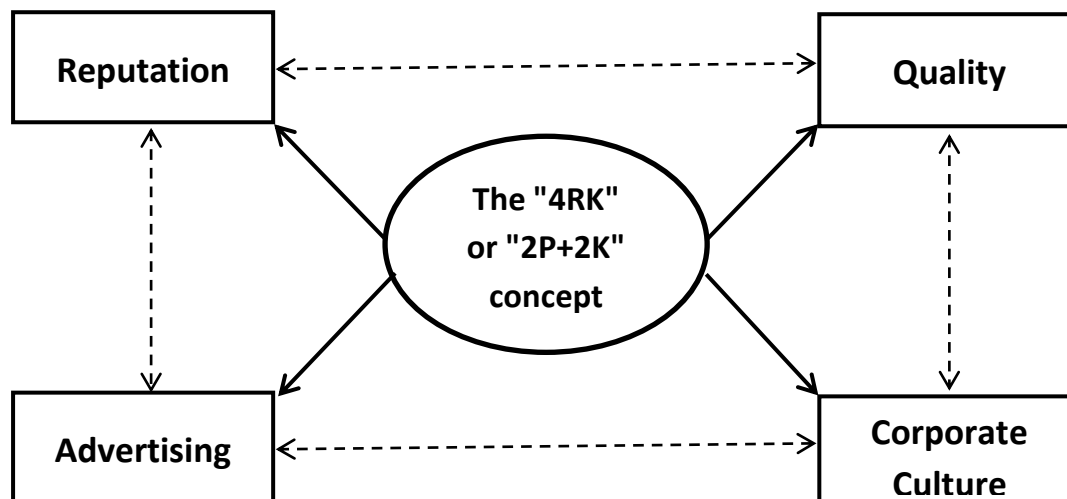


Figure 1 – Model of strategy of formation of organizational image policy "4PK" or "2P+2K"

Characteristics of variables (coordinates) of the model of strategy of formation of the image of the organization "4PK" or "2P+2K":

1. Reputation is a social representation of the company in the eyes of the public. This coordinate in the model "4RK" has a wide complex meaning and is responsible for the age of the company, the amount of authorized capital, the value of shares, the amount of assets of the enterprise, impeccable and untainted history of the company, personal and business reputation of the managers, assessment of the company's management policy at the market, analysis of the competitive policy of the organization (presence of unfair competition), absence of criminal actions, and also bringing the organization or persons cooperating with it to moral, legal and other types of responsibility.

2. Advertising - is a marketing communication, which aims at attracting attention, creating and strengthening the interest of consumers to the advertised object. This coordinate is an integral part of any modern enterprise. Advertising means can be used in each case differently. Here, marketers need to be careful, because unsuccessful advertising can form both positive and negative image of the company. In the "4RK" model, advertising should be understood as the company's interested distribution of positive information in the media, which affects the favorable image of the company. Such information could include the history of the company, innovation, uniqueness, functionality, ergonomics, aesthetics, safety and quality of products or services, as well as pricing (and it is important to understand that underpricing compared to competing products is not an indicator of a favorable image, the price must match the identity of "price-quality").

Advertising can be destructive in nature, with an adverse formation of the coordinates of "Reputation" and "Corporate Culture".

3. Quality is a set of characteristics of goods or services, which are able to meet the established and anticipated needs, according to the purpose of the goods or services. In the "4RC" model, this coordinate includes reliability, compliance with the declared characteristics, the functional value of the good or service, etc. In the context of scientific and technological progress and rapidly changing needs, an important role is played by the innovative activity of the organization, which in the eyes of consumers is associated with the guarantor of quality and modernity of the goods or services.

In interaction with the variables "Corporate Culture" and "Reputation", the coordinate "Quality" influences the formation of additional distinctive characteristics of the organization. These may include product packaging, design, customer service, product delivery, after-sales service, availability of payment guarantee conditions, etc.

4. Corporate culture is a comprehensive model of behavior of an organization or company, aimed at integration with society, the main purpose of which is to create a favorable image of the enterprise. In the "4RK" model it is the widest coordinate in terms of meaning, which simultaneously includes social and labor culture of the organization, corporate style and PR activities of the company. It is important to understand that all categories are very tightly interconnected and interdependent with each other. For convenience we differentiate this parameter into three categories:

4.1. Social and personal characteristics of employees are distinctive features of the personnel of the organization. Here there can be many nuances, connected with personal and professional characteristics of employees of the organization and persons co-operating with it. These characteristics can play both positive and negative role. This category should include education, qualifications, age, gender, character traits, temperament, personal charm and charisma, as well as the characteristics and actions of non-professional activities of employees (human behavior outside work and without the application of professional qualities: social status, level of financial security of employees, hobbies, family environment, etc.).

4.2. Corporate identity is a set of individual creative, socio-psychological and technical components of the organization, which provide visual and semantic unity of products and activities of the company as a whole. This should include the formation of the brand of the company, the creation of a unique form through the color scheme, brand mark, a combination of numbers and/or letters, quotes, music, etc. When interacting with the category "Social and Personal Characteristics of Employees," this should also include the appearance and personal style of employees, tone of voice, pronunciation, tone, accent, smile, facial expressions, gaze, gestures, etc.

4.3. PR activities are planned systematic actions to establish and reinforce understanding between the organization and the environment. These can include presentations, exhibitions, promotions, loyalty programs, sponsorship events,

press conferences, collaborations and partnerships with other successful companies, and more.

When interacting with the "Quality" coordinate, this can also include forming the organization's emphasis, for example, on working only with environmentally friendly materials, proper waste management, etc.

Thus, image policy of the organization is aimed at the strategy of forming a sustainable and favorable image of the company, which is an important tool for improving the competitiveness of the organization and has a great impact on the financial success of the company as a whole. The emphasis on the elaboration and analysis of "4PK" or "2P+2K" model variables allows to considerably simplify and structure the strategy of forming the individual image policy of the organization, and also creates optimal parameters for the evaluation of the company image.

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