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THEORETICAL PRINCIPLES OF MANAGEMENT OF SALES ACTIVITIES OF AGRICULTURAL SERVICE ENTERPRISES

ТЕОРЕТИЧНІ ЗАСАДИ УПРАВЛІННЯ ЗБУТОВОЮ ДІЯЛЬНІСТЮ АГРОСЕРВІСНИХ ПІДПРИЄМСТВ

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The peculiarity of managing the competitiveness of agricultural and agro-service enterprises is related to the fact that their economic activity is influenced by many factors that act with different intensities and directions in different conditions. At the same time, a significant part of the problems faced by such enterprises can be solved by improving the management of their activity of a production and commercial nature, first, marketing of their products, which is a crucial area of activity in determining business directions under the conditions of a market economy. Any enterprise's production and commercial activity is characterized by cyclicity, and sales is its decisive stage because it forms the enterprise's financial results. Ensuring the maximization of profit from the sale of the company's products as the main task of improving the management of the marketing system requires, first of all, focusing efforts on correcting the company's sales policy. Solving the problem of gaps in time and space that separate the product from the consumer requires the effective use of various distribution channels and the joint efforts of the manufacturer and intermediaries to coordinate and implement marketing strategies and create competitive advantages. Intermediary structures, which form many product distribution channels, can ensure the implementation of numerous marketing functions. Planning of sales activities is related to the choice of the distribution channel, the number of intermediaries, the promotion methods, or their influence on implementing the enterprise's price and product policy. The criteria for choosing intermediaries are their experience, economic results of cooperation with them, solvency, compatibility when working with other organizations, and reputation. It was determined that the relationship between the manufacturer and intermediaries is built through the manufacturer's cooperation with intermediaries, long-term partnership, or distribution planning, during which the manufacturer and the intermediary sell its products most efficiently.

Keywords: marketing management, production, and sales activities, sales channels, agricultural service enterprises.

Особливість управління конкурентоспроможністю аграрних та агросервісних підприємств пов'язана з тим фактом, що їхня господарська діяльність перебуває під впливом багатьох чинників, які мають різну інтенсивність та спрямованість в різних умовах. При цьому значна частина проблем, з якими стикаються такі підприємства, може

бути вирішена шляхом вдосконалення управління їх активністю виробничо-комерційного характеру, передусім, маркетингом їх продукції, що є ключовою сферою діяльності у визначенні напрямів господарювання за умов ринкової економіки. Виробничо-комерційна діяльність будь-якого підприємства характеризується циклічністю і збут виступає її вирішальною стадією, адже на ній відбувається формування фінансових результатів діяльності підприємства. Забезпечення максимізації прибутку від реалізації продукції підприємства як основної задачі вдосконалення управління системою маркетингу вимагає передусім зосередження зусиль на корекції збутової політики підприємства. Вирішення проблеми розривів у часі та просторі, що відділяють товар від споживача, вимагає ефективного використання різних каналів розподілу та спільних зусиль виробника і посередників, спрямованих на узгодження й реалізацію маркетингових стратегій, створення конкурентних переваг. Посередницькі структури, що формують більшість каналів розподілу продукції, спроможні забезпечити реалізацію численних маркетингових функцій. Планування збутової діяльності пов'язане з вибором каналу розподілу, числа посередників, способів їх заохочення, чи їх впливом на реалізацію цінової та товарної політики підприємства. Критеріями вибору посередників є їх досвід, економічні результати співробітництва з ним, платоспроможність, сумісність при роботі з іншими організаціями, репутація. Визначено, що відносини виробника з посередниками будуються шляхом кооперування виробника з посередниками, довгострокового партнерства чи планування розподілу, за якого виробник сумісно з посередником здійснює збут своєї продукції в найефективніший спосіб.

Ключові слова: управління маркетингом, виробничо-збутова діяльність, канали збуту, агросервісні підприємства.

Statement of the problem

Ensuring progressive development of the country's economy requires revision of management methods of specific enterprises acting as market subjects. The modern paradigm of enterprise management considers the latter as an open system, the results of which are determined by the market position, the ability to adapt one's activities to conditions that change under the influence of objective and subjective factors, the development of the activity strategy, personnel, product quality, and other factors.

The activity of many enterprises is characterized by increased risk due to the general crisis state of the country's economy, problems in the markets of material and technical resources, financial services, and other objective reasons. However, the experience of a large number of enterprises, including, if not primarily, the agrarian sector of the country's economy, proves that their crisis situation is also the result of an insufficiently deep understanding and consideration of the factors of the external environment critical for the survival and development of the organization, namely the behavior of consumers, competitors, the right choice of partners, the creation of competitive goods and services, the use of reliable sources of information, etc. That is, many problems faced by enterprises can be solved by improving the management of their production and commercial activity and, first, by improving the management of the marketing of their products, as a field of activity that should determine all other areas of management of an enterprise operating in the conditions of a market economy.

The specificity of the activities of most agricultural and agro-service enterprises forces them to function on the markets of standard products, sufficiently structured and ordered because of the objective laws of the development of the market economy. Moreover, the product orientation of the activities of these enterprises is under the influence of objective reasons of a natural, geographical, and material-technical nature, the influence of which has rather limited possibilities. That is why the issues of harmonizing the sales activities of this category of enterprises are being brought up to date.

Analysis and research of publications. The theoretical and practical aspects of the management of the sales activities of enterprises have been taken care of by numerous scientists, but currently there is no unambiguous interpretation of the concept of "sales activities". Foreign scientists D. Lancaster and D. Jobber [1, p. 22], F. Kotler [2], define the sales activity of enterprises operating under market orientation as one of the functions of marketing. The purpose of sales policy in the marketing system is to organize an optimal sales network for the effective sale of manufactured products. The effectiveness of sales activity is determined by the number of sales channels and intermediaries, the level of development of the market infrastructure, etc.

The works of domestic scientists such as V. Rossokha [3], Yu. Danko [4], I. Chychkalo-Kondratska, I. Novytska [5] and others are devoted to the theoretical and methodological aspects of the problem of managing the marketing activities of agro-industrial enterprises. But the issues of managing the marketing activities of agricultural service enterprises remain insufficiently covered.

The purpose of the research

The purpose of the article is to research and evaluate the aspects of managing the sales activity of agricultural service enterprises as a decisive stage of the enterprise's production and commercial activity.

Presentation of the main research material

The production and commercial activity of any enterprise, regardless of its branch affiliation and product orientation, is cyclical in nature. The activity of agricultural and agro-service enterprises is no exception. Moreover, the cyclicity of their production and sales process is determined not only by

limitations of production capacity, but also by the action of natural seasonal factors, because the production of agricultural products and the provision of services for soil cultivation, sowing and harvesting are directly dependent on the biological processes of growing agricultural crops [4].

Scientific acquisitions and practical experience of the functioning of agricultural and agro-service enterprises are characterized by a detailed elaboration of questions and recommendations on the optimal construction of the production part of the cycle of their economic activity. In fact, all significant issues that enterprises may face when carrying out their production activities are theoretically and methodologically developed, as well as practically tested. Any imperfection in the organization of the execution of production processes is connected either with a lack of investment resources, or with imperfect management, or with deficiencies in the formation of the material and technical base [6, 7].

However, the decisive stage of the cycle of production and commercial activity is still the sale of products, the rational organization of which for a long period of time was not paid due attention. However, the formation of financial results of its activity depends on the quality of strategic tactical and operational planning and organization of the implementation of this stage of the enterprise's economic activity [7, 8]. Of course, it is possible to consider situations when the enterprise has profitably found its market niche, has chosen product specialization and produces products that are characterized by a consistently high inelastic demand and the effectiveness of its activity is determined only by the quality and volume of production. However, this situation is more like a model like a monopoly position of an enterprise on the market, than a typical situation for modern business in our country, in general, and agrarian business, in particular.

The enterprise of the agro-industrial complex system, which specializes in providing services to other agricultural enterprises in soil cultivation, crop care and harvesting, agricultural machinery repair services and motor vehicle services, as well as in the production of its own agricultural products, automatically acts as an operator on two targeted markets First, in the market of growing and harvesting services, and, secondly, in the market of agricultural products.

The state policy of reforming the agrarian sector of the economy, which has been carried out in Ukraine since 1999, along with positive consequences, has also created some negative ones. The main consequences of the latter are the decline of large-scale agricultural production, the deterioration of the general condition of the material and technical base of agricultural enterprises, the reduction of potential opportunities for effective use of the opportunities of agricultural enterprises in the use of effective tools of the infrastructure of raw materials markets. It is, first, about the fact that during the ten-year development of the markets of agricultural raw materials, they have become one of the most developed and perfect in terms of the development of their structure. However, the policy pursued by all participants of these commodity markets is aimed at ensuring profit maximization in the short term. The latter not only does not benefit the development of the activities of the direct producer but eliminates the opportunities for expanded reproduction in the agrarian sector, as a result of the decrease in the profitability of agrarian business. After all, it is the price of products that is the main source of the development of the enterprise and providing it with funds for the implementation of the reproduction process [9].

That is why it is advisable to focus the greatest attention on improving the management of the company's product marketing system, the main task of which is profit maximization, on the correction of the company's sales policy.

At the same time, it should be noted that intermediaries often help the manufacturer to reduce marketing costs, including the promotion and distribution of goods. The use of distribution channels eliminates long gaps in time and space that separate the product from the consumer. The effectiveness of the sales channel depends significantly on the level and quality of interaction between the manufacturer and intermediaries. That is why the greatest effectiveness of the sales channel is achieved with the joint efforts of the manufacturer and intermediaries in the development and implementation of agreed marketing strategies, creating advantages over competitors. In most cases, this is what is lacking in the functioning of intermediary structures in the agricultural market of our country.

Distribution marketing policy is a set of measures for planning, implementing, and controlling the physical movement of products to satisfy consumer demand and obtain the appropriate profit for the enterprise.

Planning the distribution of goods is considered as a systematic development of measures and decision-making regarding the physical movement and transfer of property rights to goods (services) from the producer to the consumer, including transportation, storage, and execution of transactions. Distribution functions are carried out through distribution channels. Decisions regarding the distribution of goods significantly affect the company's marketing programs and all its production and

commercial activities. Since the intermediary structures that make up the structure of most product distribution channels can ensure the performance of many marketing functions, the planning of sales activities will depend, first, on the chosen distribution channel, the number of intermediaries, the way they are encouraged, or vice versa, their influence on the price and product policy of the enterprise.

The choice of product distribution channel is one of the most important decisions of the enterprise. Of course, it takes a long time to build strong and reliable relationships with distribution channel participants. As a rule, all participants of the sales channels are involved in the planning and implementation of the strategy, while the capabilities of manufacturers vary depending on their influence. It is also necessary to consider the fact that there is a factor of getting used to the product supplier in the final consumption markets [9].

The choice of the distribution channel also affects the company's costs and profits. This will again depend on the selected distribution and sales scheme. The total profit can increase if sales organizations ensure the successful sale of a larger volume of products. However, it may decrease if the enterprise's activity will depend only on financial flows from wholesale intermediaries. At the same time, the latter situation is the most typical for agricultural markets.

Marketing management of the enterprise involves the formation of a complete system of strategic, tactical, and operational planning of activities, organization of their implementation, control over their implementation and revision of the results and content of their implementation, which in turn make up the marketing policy of the enterprise [4, 10]. At the same time, the category of marketing policy is not limited to the implementation of optimal activities in the field of product sales. It covers practically all spheres of production and commercial activity of the enterprise, namely, sales activity, production activity, formation of strategy in the field of goods and pricing, management of enterprise costs, management of material and technical supply, personnel policy, and other areas. At the same time, the key concept of managing the company's marketing activities is to focus on the dynamics of the needs of the target consumer audience and the dynamics of the market conditions in which the company operates.

The distribution channel is a set of entities that perform all the intermediary functions of the physical movement of goods and the transfer of ownership to anyone in their promotion from the producer to the consumer.

The main functions performed by the participants of the distribution channel include:

- information — collection and processing of information obtained as a result of marketing research and necessary for planning and organization of distribution and exchange processes;
- promotion (sales promotion) — development and distribution with the help of communicative means of persuasive appeals in order to attract buyers;
- establishing contacts and conducting negotiations — establishing and maintaining contact with potential consumers, reaching an agreement on the price and other issues to ensure the transfer of ownership rights or disposal of the goods;
- order — conclusion of agreements with other channel participants on the purchase of the manufacturer's goods;
- financing — the refinement and distribution of funds necessary to cover the costs of the operation of the distribution channel;
- adaptation of the goods to the requirements of the consumers — activities for the maintenance of the goods in the process of delivery;
- risk acceptance — assuming risk (responsibility) for all processes occurring in the distribution channel;
- physical movement of goods — organization of transportation and storage [6].

When forming (developing) the distribution channel, it is necessary to consider the requirements for services accompanying the supply of goods from the primary consumers, that is, what services and performance are expected. In distribution channels, there are certain factors influencing the level of services provided:

- the volume of the product lot;
- delivery waiting time;
- convenient location (physical proximity of the product to the consumer);
- an assortment of products within the channel;
- auxiliary services (loan provision, delivery, etc.).

The distribution channel begins to be formed by defining the company's goals in a specific target market. When choosing goals, it is necessary to proceed from the possibilities of achieving the desired level of profitability of one's own business, performance of functions by intermediaries, etc.

Competitors' channels also influence the channel structure and external factors (state of the economy, legal restrictions, etc.).

When forming distribution channels, a manufacturing company must decide how many intermediaries to use at each channel level. Three approaches are possible depending on the type of product and company policy.

With intensive distribution, manufacturers of goods of mass commercial demand seek to ensure the availability of their goods in as many intermediaries as possible.

With exclusive (exceptional) distribution, manufacturers strictly limit the number of intermediaries. Often, this is accompanied by the conclusion of exclusive dealer agreements, according to which a limited number of intermediaries have the right to sell goods within a particular territorial market without the right to sell competitors' goods.

The selective (sampling) method involves using more than in exclusive distribution but not the maximum number of intermediaries. He can choose the most suitable mediators for the conditions of his activity, establish strong long-term contacts with them, and expect a high level of performance from the mediators. Selective distribution allows the manufacturer to achieve the most outstanding sales efficiency of his products and is the most appropriate for the product market considered in the work.

The main areas of distribution channel management are selecting channel participants, their motivation, and performance evaluation. Therefore, measures to manage these channels should be developed and implemented after selecting the most effective channels.

The main criteria for selecting intermediaries can be the experience of the intermediary, economic results of cooperation with him, solvency, compatibility when working with other organizations, and reputation. Intermediaries will perform their functional duties to the best of their ability if they are constantly motivated. Specific incentives are embedded in the working conditions of intermediaries within the distribution channel. However, they need to be reinforced by observations, help in difficult situations, and approval of the activities of intermediaries.

There are three options for building relations between the manufacturer and intermediaries. For the most part, this is the manufacturer's cooperation with intermediaries. At the same time, the manufacturer applies powerful incentives ensuring a higher rate of profit, concluding agreements on special terms, etc.

The second form of cooperation is a long-term partnership. The manufacturer clearly defines what he wants to receive from the distributor. At the same time, the manufacturer determines the terms of execution of agreements depending on the results of the intermediary's compliance with partnership obligations.

Finally, the third way of interaction is distribution planning, in which the manufacturer, in cooperation with the intermediary, makes the sale of its products the most effective. However, this form still needs to acquire the appropriate level of development.

It is advisable to evaluate the activity of channel participants according to the following indicators: fulfillment of the sales norm, average level of stocks, level of transport service, and efforts to increase the efficiency of promotion and sale of goods.

Conclusions and prospects for further research

Management of the enterprise's marketing, in general, and its sales activities, in particular, involves the formation of a complete system of strategic, tactical, and operational planning of activities, organization of their implementation, control over their implementation, and revision of the results and content of their implementation, which in turn make up the enterprise's marketing policy. At the same time, the category of marketing policy is not limited to the implementation of optimal activities in the field of product sales. It covers practically all spheres of production and commercial activity of the enterprise, namely, sales activity, production activity, formation of strategy in the field of goods and pricing, management of enterprise costs, management of material and technical supply, personnel policy, and other areas. At the same time, the fundamental concept of managing the company's marketing activities is to focus on the dynamics of the needs of the target consumer audience and the dynamics of the market conditions in which the company operates.

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