

13. AGGRESSIVE MARKETING IN MODERN BUSINESS

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The information about the nature and main tools of aggressive marketing strategy is provided. The paper investigates the relationship between modern companies and consumers, sellers and buyers. It provides the evidence of the effectiveness of aggressive marketing techniques and their potential business-related and societal benefits.

Aggressive marketing is a proactive marketing approach, involving assertive tactics of reaching out to potential customers and actively pursuing engagement with one's business. Its aim is to bring a certain brand or product to consumers' attention in a crowded marketplace – the current state of modern business.

Researchers state that great quantities of the contemporary marketing strategies (including aggressive techniques) treat potential buyer-seller exchanges as discrete events, not as ongoing relationships. It is done to maximize short-term sales, which comes at the cost of customer experience. Executive incentives are predominantly aligned to short-term profits valuable in a competitive environment, rather than long-term brand image. Thus, for companies it is more relevant to maintain a constant flow of information and content to create a sense of urgency and educate leads.

It is necessary to state that the effectiveness of aggressive marketing and the information stream is ensured by the fundamental patterns of human psychology. The main points to note are as follows:

1. Fear of Missing out (FoMo) – anxiety brought about by limited-time offers;
2. the Baader-Meinhof Phenomenon – frequency illusion;
3. social proof – herd instinct;
4. anchoring – reliance on the first or regularly seen piece of information, etc.

Consumers' dependencies and behavior patterns are perpetually utilized through a variety of channels. Aggressive marketing techniques in modern business cover such digital marketing channels as social media, websites, search engines, emails in addition to the traditional ones (telemarketing and printed materials). The main tools of enticing likely customers are auto-play videos with sound, pop-ups, full-screen advertisements, advertisements disguised as parts of the content. Large campaigns target the audience through highly-responsive and collaborative ecosystems:

- approximately 70 % of organizations use social media as their primary marketing approach (Figure 1);
- 82 % of businesses actively implement video marketing;
- 70 % of marketers invest in Search Engine Optimization (SEO) [1].

The application of aggressive marketing methods as a whole can increase conversion rate by 25–60 % and sales by 10–25 % on average.

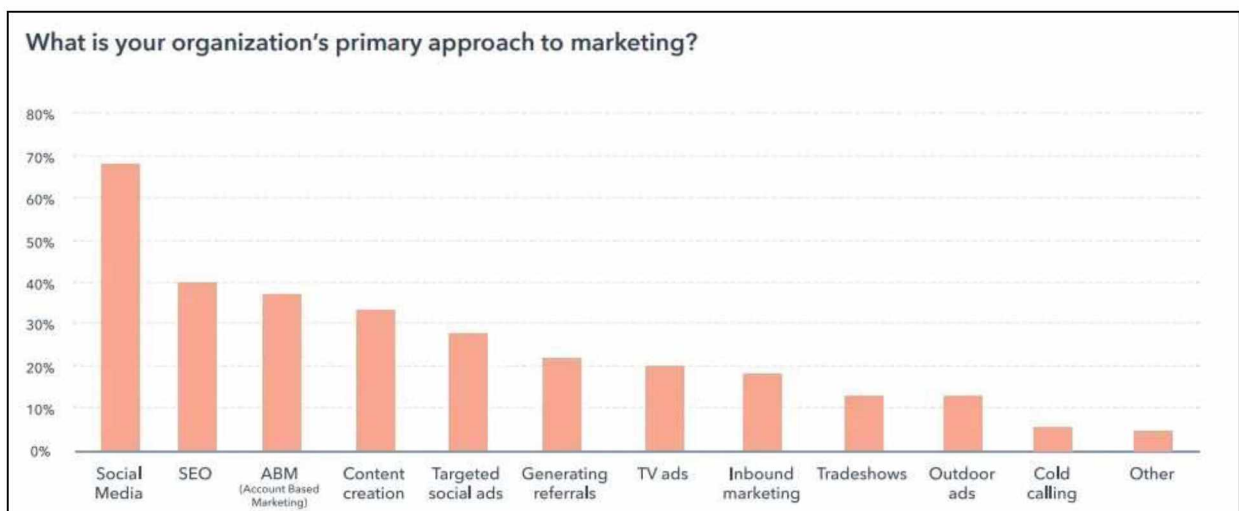


Figure 1 – Organizations' primary approach to aggressive marketing

In order to scientifically prove the significant impact of aggressive marketing in contemporary business practices, a study has been conducted by Ali Ghanbarzad and Alireza Moghadasi adopting the Rokkan and Haugland model [2]. Using a questionnaire in Likert scale designed for 30 managers of a firm named PET

Technologies, structural equation and analytical modeling, researchers created a table, illustrating the survey results (Table 1).

Table 1 – Estimation of aggressive marketing effects on a relationship-oriented environment

The effects of various factors	Standard β	Standard error	t-value	R ²	Sig.	Result
The effect of aggressive marketing	0,66	0.21	3.1	0.44	P<0.01	Confirmed
The effect of price leadership marketing	-0.34	0.13	-2.58	0.12	P<0.05	Confirmed
The effect of focus leadership marketing	0.26	0.11	1.96	0.05	P<0.05	Confirmed

The standard beta (β) value of 0.66 suggests that aggressive marketing has a strong positive effect on the examined outcome. The t-value of 3.18 is greater than 2, indicating that this effect is statistically significant. The p-value is less than 0.01, which is typically considered strong evidence against the null hypothesis. Therefore, the impact of aggressive marketing is confirmed. The table also suggests that aggressive marketing has a significant and positive impact on the outcome being measured, while price leadership marketing has a significant but negative influence, and focus leadership marketing has a significant but less positive effect, compared to aggressive marketing.

Due to the fact that usage and implementation of the proactive and aggressive marketing strategies under consideration are not only profitable, but also mathematically preferential, nowadays there are a plethora of real-life cases when various companies' and even whole industries' aggressive campaigns attain significant outcomes. For instance, Weight Loss Industry uses emotional messaging (shame, fear of rejection) and targets body insecurity with before/after imagery and Instagram filters. As a result, \$72 billion industry is expected to reach \$295 billion by 2026 [3]. Fast Fashion Brands (Uniqlo, H&M, Topshop, Fashion Nova) promote overconsumption and appeal to desire for status and belonging. These brands' limited-time offers often create false scarcity, which is why fast fashion makes up 65 % of all clothing purchases. Qualitative and quantitative analyses show that Fast Fashion Market size was valued at \$122,257 million in 2021 and is projected to reach \$283,457 million by 2030, growing at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 10.13 %, inter alia, due to the active implementation of aggressive advertising methods.

As for the legal base in terms of aggressive marketing, several European countries and Belarus in particular uphold the EU Directive on unfair commercial practices. It regulates unfair business practices occurring before, during and after business-to-consumer (B2C) transactions [4]. According to the directive, companies are obliged to provide accurate information to enable consumers to make an informed and conscious buying decision. Untruthful messages, misleading practices and borderline illegal aggressive marketing tactics are forbidden by both international and local laws. However, harmful aggressive marketing accusations can often be vague and uncertain from a legal point of view due to several reasons, which are dissimilar legal frameworks, lack of admissible proof, freedom of speech laws and subjectivity.

The provided evidence suggests that aggressive marketing, while at times unethical, forceful and even illegal, works indubitably well. It leverages human psychology to drive profits, helping modern businesses develop and reach a larger audience. However, today's companies have the opportunity to use aggressive marketing campaigns to increase social awareness about serious issues by utilizing gained power of their reach and influence, promoting solutions to social injustice, encouraging their audience to take action. Existing precedents of this include "The Truth Initiative", which is an anti-smoking campaign in the USA, and Patagonia's Environmental Campaigns, during which the outdoor clothing company has run several aggressive marketing campaigns focused on environmental conservation, including donating 100 % of their Black Friday sales to grassroots environmental organizations. By raising social issues using aggressive marketing modern businesses are likely to not only attract new consumers, but to keep and retain them as well.

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