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**OPPORTUNITY TO INCREASE COMPETITIVENESS  
IN HOLDING GROUP THROUGH MARKETING PLANNING  
IN BULGARIA**

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***Abstract:** Holding groups are the most common manifestation of economic groups. They usually combine companies on the basis of contribution to each other's activity. In these cases, the phenomenon is defined as holding. These are one of the most important players on the market and this is the legal form through which nowadays the world's leading companies operate. The holding as a manifestation of economic groups is a fact in Bulgaria - large holding groups, set up with private and public capital, operate in Bulgaria. The main goal of the study is on the basis of leading theoretical marketing planning concepts to offer opportunities for increasing competitiveness in holding groups.*

***Keywords:** holding, competitiveness, marketing, marketing planning.*

**I. Introduction**

A holding company is a public limited company, partnership limited by shares or limited liability company, which aims, in any form, to participate in other companies or in their management, performing or not its own production or trade activity.

Companies within the holding company are dependent are called subsidiaries, unlike the parent company. Subsidiaries are companies in which the parent company (the holding company) owns or controls directly or indirectly at least 25% of the shares or can be determined directly or indirectly more than the half of the members of the management board<sup>1</sup>.

A holding company seeks to gain benefits from independently operating companies. This is a result of the ability to concentrate resources intended for a common goal, such as marketing. Integration of forces and funds, and reverse redistribute of the results for the individual holding companies leads to a synergistic effect. At first glance it is

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<sup>1</sup> Бузева Т., Холдинг, София, 2006, с. 36

obvious that the analysis of the funds can be used not by one but by all participants in the holding, this is effective from the of view point of the cost of marketing research. Similar are the case of studying economic, political, social and technological trends in the within wider environment.

## II

A key question is which parts of the business are covered within the holding. Marketing for the holding only makes sense given that it is a holding company, developing from within, which systematically create their own elements in the organizational chain. From this position it is clear that it is a homogeneous structure of the holding, which can effectively use the advantages of marketing, developed at central level. Remains the major problem of how to satisfy the customer. That is the meaning of holding arrangement and marketing strategy concerning the entire holding. In marketing strategies mutually affect vision, mission, strategies, creativity and innovation, knowledge and co-created values of the holding. In this context, it acts itself marketing.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, holding leadership should organize marketing activities to link their efforts to larger forms or vice versa - to divide them. Given the existence of divisions, subsidiaries and production units, it is appropriate to reap the benefits of higher volume or vice versa - to focus on defining narrower program for entrepreneurship; Flexible joint research and development of the market for the exchange of experience and more. At the same time it is appropriate to influence any entity specifically according to its mission and nature, ie and to differentiate managerial work, and dispose of bureaucratic formality and conventionality. The management of marketing activities in the holding company, has the task of transferring the burden of development and thus to increase and accelerate the formation of profits and capital strength of the holding. From this it appears that the possible holding of active tasks in terms of marketing activities are many. However, they have their limits, which could develop into destruction created benefits. Practice shows that the grading of benefits distinguishes successful multi-sector production and sales of other items. It turns out that "the targeting of holding interest is effectively necessary and significant. It gives shape holding ultimate sense."<sup>3</sup>

Typical complex connections and varied activities in the holding objectively lead to higher requirements for specific items to the management of marketing activities. This suggests that in general terms the process of constructing a marketing system in the marketing functions of holding companies could be characterized by the following main aspects relating to conceptualization, creation and deployment.

## III

Assuming a starting perspective of Weber, it is necessary integration between different views in order to use the various concepts for the formation of a system, it is therefore necessary decisions on the balanced use. Because the conceptual examination of the marketing system implies a review of its functional differentiation, institutional

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<sup>2</sup> Кашай Щ., Маркетинговата стратегия на фирми от холдингов тип, Абагар, 2003, с. 314

<sup>3</sup> Кашай Щ., Маркетинговата стратегия на фирми от холдингов тип, Абагар, 2003, с. 299

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arrangement and instrumental arms in the context of marketing objectives, greater use acquired concepts associated with functional differentiation and institutional representation of the marketing planning system.<sup>4</sup>

**Concept-oriented accountability** is one of the concepts associated with functional differentiation and institutional performance of the marketing system. Used when the information pursue goals that can be achieved using data derived primarily from the balance sheet. Attention focuses on the indicators in monetary terms. Appropriate to apply that concept has priority when corporate profits, without taking into account differences in the objectives of the various business organizational systems. This approach can be characterized as profit-oriented or limited information based primarily on accounting data. Therefore, the concept refers primarily to the operational level in the holding and partly strategic and, when it comes to the potential of success. Using the concept based on accountability in the holding company, it is appropriate to limit to ancillary control and coordination tasks.

In a broader perspective reveals a **concept based on the information**. This concept expands the framework of the previous concept taking into account the global holding target system. Expanding base of relevant marketing system, as used unless accountability and other quantitative and qualitative information, by all business organizational subsystems. The main task here is coordination of receiving and processing the necessary information. "In other words, the business focuses on information sources"<sup>5</sup>. In the case of the holding it is appropriate to use that limited concept, that support marketing management, as it ensures the provision of management information for decision-making relating to marketing activities.

**Another concept is based on coordination**, it is based on differences between the management system and the implementation system. A special case of that concept is to build a vision, **based on planning**. P. Horvath consider coordinating subsystems planning, control and information support, and presents system-sistemoobvarzvashtata coordination. Under the system-coordination mind creating systems and structures which promote the coordination of tasks. Under sistemoobvarzvashta coordination means coordination of activities that take place within a system architecture to solve the problem, and storage and adaptation data link between subsystems.

It based concept, planning, due to the opportunities it offers, and the specifics of the research subject would be most appropriate to be used as a foundation for building a marketing system.

Therefore conceptual perspective, the vision that by marketing planning system ensures separation of marketing activities in the subsystems, the relationship between them and the latter are arranged in space and time. The existence of any separate marketing activities or subsystem is part of the planning system, in this regard the marketing system used some internal resources planning system has certain rights, responsibility for specific results (in natural-substance information and value terms).

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<sup>4</sup> Готтхард Пич, сп. Проблемы теории и практики управления, 2001, бр. 3, стр. 102

<sup>5</sup> Монева, И., Икономическа и информационна среда за определяне на справедливата цена на активите, пасивите и капитала във финансовия отчет, Научни трудове XIX международна научна конференция за млади учени, 22-24 юли 2010 г., с. 19

In developing a marketing planning system between marketing and planning system to build organizational relationships that are ordered in time and space. These ties between marketing and planning system are implemented in order to ensure joint action of individual marketing activities, ie integrated their existence due to the execution of one or several purposes.

Marketing planning includes those marketing activities that lead to a predetermined series of marketing activities. On the one hand, the marketing system carries out activities in connection with marketing plans function related to solving problematic situations, including those which it performs within the chosen behavior.

Holding could use marketing planning to make a choice regarding the system of marketing activities, including a variety of target states set of actions and consistency of implementation. This will constitute the multiple options of behavior. Among these are a group of possible behaviors that marketing system perceived as favorites. Of these, only one is selected, the so-called. selected behavior.<sup>6</sup>

In this light field of the preferred options is an area of increased likelihood of realization of a particular behavior, ie set of activities carried out by the marketing system. By marketing planning is the transition from the zone of possible variants of behavior in the zone of the preferred embodiments using a system of criteria for assessing the actual condition of the marketing system. The transition of the preferred options of behavior to a specific option chosen is based on the ranking of these criteria in order of priority based on the interests and needs of the marketing system. The expected result is the ability of the system to such actions, which are not only related to the implementation of a set of functions, but also to optimize the choice of solutions in alternative situations.

Another important element of choosing the behavior of the marketing system is the definition of marketing activities to ensure reaching the target state. Marketing planning should ensure and obvious need for determining the trajectory of transition from actual to target condition of course in parallel flexibility behavior.

Resources as an element of choosing the behavior of the marketing system are peculiar limiters series of marketing activities. The marketing plan should specify the types and amounts of the necessary marketing resources, as well as their potential sources and the allocation of these resources. Refining constraints associated with resources include the drafting of marketing budget.

#### IV

Strategic orientation linking the administration of the marketing planning process to the implementation of the following sequence<sup>7</sup>:

**The first stage** is connected to analyzes and assessments concerning the boundaries of marketing activities in the course of their modeling.

**The second stage** covers the design and choice of marketing activities on the basis of planned marketing efforts. Based on analyzes carried out in the first stage, formulate

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<sup>6</sup> Стоянов В. и колектив, Организационно проектиране в стопанските единици, Варна, 1987, с. 59

<sup>7</sup> Mayer E, Controlling Konzepte: Perspektiven fur 90-er jahre, Wiesbaden, 1987, p. 145.

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goals to reach and establish standards for control and then perform several design options relating to ranking of marketing activities: pessimistic, optimistic and realistic and the subsequent election of the most realistic from them.

**The third step** in the modeling process of marketing activities is their realization. The stage includes realization by budgeting core activities. Most rational option is used as the basis for the development and control of the marketing plan. Often this criterion determines whether the marketing plan reaches the desired target states through selected marketing activities, according to the company's marketing budget.

That consistency helps to ensure that the marketing system in the organization of the marketing planning process in holding groups:

- flexibility - to ensure operational flexibility associated with the possibility of substitution of one activity to another, as well as numerical flexibility, expressed in the ability to quickly increase or decrease the number of marketing activities and, of course, financial flexibility, which is able to maintain functional and numerical form of flexibility. On the other hand, must provide a certain degree of stability in order to maintain a semblance of order and direction of the activity;<sup>8</sup>
- comprehensiveness - planning system should provide a wide enough range of marketing plans in order to respond adequately to any problematic situation;
- coordination - through marketing planning to coordinate, on the one hand, individual marketing activities, which presumably are interrelated and other activities of the marketing system with the other organizational units;
- clarity - marketing plan needs to be structured in a way suggesting clarity and logic. It should specify the target pursued able to determine appropriate marketing activities and outline the boundaries within which allowed certain freedoms to those activities.

### **V. Conclusion**

In conclusion, we can summarize and specify the most significant contribution of modern marketing that helps the management of the holding groups to realize the importance of changes in its governance by moving the center of gravity of the product to the market and the consumer to start change their way of thinking "inside-out" to "outside-inside".

The marketing function in the holding company structure is manifested in the very style of managing. The right thing is if marketing on a holding level affects the individual companies. Appropriate marketing approaches, analyses and conclusions can stimulate the management of individual companies, introduce realistic elements in the planning process and can better bind production together in the managing holding company.

Marketing planning is primarily a method, a way of thinking, so its various features and tools can be of service to improve management efficiency in every area of socio-economic development of society and the companies of holding type in particular.

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<sup>8</sup> Димитров Н. и Църев Н., Балансови проблеми на планирането на народното стопанство, Варна, 1987, с. 6

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