
Current trends in the development of social marketing in Ukraine

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To cite this article:

Ihnatenko Olha, Yesmakhanova Alua, Sovershenna Iryna, Petrovskyi Oleksandr. Current trends in the development of social marketing in Ukraine. *International Science Journal of Management, Economics & Finance*. Vol. 4, No. 1, 2025, pp. 31-39. doi: 10.46299/j.isjmef.20250401.04.

Received: 12 30, 2024; **Accepted:** 01 30, 2025; **Published:** 02 01, 2025

Abstract: The article deals with the history of origin and trends in the development of social marketing in Ukraine. Different views on the interpretation of social marketing are considered. The emergence of social marketing is studied, the purpose and types of social marketing, key approaches to its characterization are defined. It has been determined that social marketing is an effective tool for developing and achieving business goals, increasing sales of products and services of enterprises, a new creative approach to the realization of business goals, an effective tool for product promotion. The best examples of social marketing demonstrated by leading companies in Ukraine during the war were studied. The largest fundraisers and private companies that provided the most money to the Armed Forces and humanitarian aid during the war were identified. The key trends in the development of social marketing in Ukraine are identified: uniting business around victory, partnership, cooperation of enterprises to help the Armed Forces and address the humanitarian needs of society; shifting the focus of business social responsibility to charity, corporate volunteering, fundraising activities; increasing the role of the employer in the development and support of social programs in times of war; further digitalization of the entire social sphere, improving the provision of social services to the population; focus on inclusiveness and barrier-free access; creation of a comprehensive system of veterans' reintegration. It is determined that in the field of social services for veterans, mobilized military personnel and disabled persons of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, internally displaced persons and people affected by war, and migrants, marketing is the process of research, development, promotion and implementation of such services. The objectives of social marketing are to analyze and popularize the world's best practices of doing business and protecting

human rights during the war, monitor and evaluate the development of social responsibility in Ukraine, and disseminate the experience of leading companies in veterans' reintegration for use by business entities in Ukraine.

Keywords: social marketing, concept of social marketing, inclusiveness, barrier-free, reintegration of veterans, digitalization of the social sphere, welfare state.

1. Introduction

If we recall the evolution of marketing concepts, we will see that the concepts of social and ethical and partnership or relationship marketing are the most relevant now in Ukraine, during the ongoing Russian invasion. Today, businesses compete with each other not only on the basis of product quality, price, and service, but also on their social responsibility to the community and society. Before the war, Ukrainian marketer Andriy Fedoriv interviewed Itzhak Adizes, an expert in business efficiency. When asked what, in his opinion, is the future of management and marketing, Itzhak Adizes replied that in his opinion, it is love, responsibility to society, unification of enterprises, integration for joint problem solving.

2. Analysis of research

The study of problems, directions and trends in the development of social marketing is devoted to the works of domestic and foreign scientists, in particular: O. Kalinichenko, V. Mazurenko, M. Oklander, V. Poltorak, E. Romat, G. Tulchynsky, L. Chervinska, H. Hakansson, M. Baker, F. Kotler, J.-J. Lambin, M. Porter, and others.

The scientific literature is still full of ambiguous and contradictory definitions of social marketing. According to some scholars, it is the use of marketing tools in the social sphere. Another part of scientists believes that it is about studying markets and marketing activities within the society as a whole social system [1, p.4]. R. Bartels interprets social marketing as the use of marketing technologies in other, non-marketing areas [1, p.5]. Some researchers, on the one hand, distinguish between commercial and non-commercial marketing, on the other hand, distinguish several types of non-commercial marketing. One of these special varieties is social marketing, which is used by public organizations that do not pursue commercial goals [1, p.6]. There is also no single view on the periodization of marketing concepts.

3. Object of research

The object of research is the process of social marketing development. **The subject of the study** is the trends in the development, transformation and features of social marketing in Ukraine during the war.

4. Purpose of the article

The purpose of our article is to find out the current trends in the development of social marketing in Ukraine, to consider the best practices of social marketing for their further implementation in the activities of business entities.

5. Research methods

The study was conducted using a systematic approach with the use of general scientific and special methods in the following areas: description of the emergence and trends of social marketing (methods of logical, historical analysis, dialectical method). For theoretical generalizations,

conclusions and proposals, the methods of system analysis, generalization and specification were used.

6. Presentation of the main research materials

As you know, *the social sphere* includes education, healthcare, housing and communal services, passenger transport and communications, consumer services, culture, and sports. Social organizations, being involved in market relations, also need to use marketing.

In the second half of the twentieth century, at the beginning of the transition from industrial to post-industrial society, the concept of social and ethical marketing emerged. The development of productive forces contributed to the emergence of a mass consumption society and created conditions for the humanization of social thought.

The concept of *social marketing* is believed to have been introduced in the 1970s by Philip Kotler. He argued that marketing principles are equally valid for selling products as well as for selling services and ideas. While everyone associated marketing with the sale of food products, he was the first to say that marketing is the sale of any product. Inviting tourists to your city is marketing of a settlement, a certain territory, warning people against smoking is marketing of a healthy lifestyle. He called all this social marketing [2, p.5].

Varieties of social marketing include: educational marketing, healthcare marketing, sports marketing, environmental marketing, cultural marketing; marketing of social actors (both individuals and organizations), religious marketing, charity marketing; marketing of ideas and social programs; marketing of social activity promotion [1, 3].

As you know, the *goal of social marketing* is to help improve the lives of individuals and society as a whole. The combination of marketing goals with solving social problems of society has led to the development of the social marketing concept.

Social marketing is the adaptation of commercial marketing approaches to social projects aimed at improving the welfare of the target audience or the welfare of the whole society [3, p.5].

The concept of social marketing is interpreted by scientists in different ways. Summarizing all the definitions, we can distinguish the following approaches to understanding its essence:

- is a marketing concept through which enterprises meet the needs of their target audience, ensuring the welfare of potential consumers and society as a whole;
- it is a type of enterprise activity aimed at implementing social programs, helping socially vulnerable groups of the population, supporting social initiatives, etc.

In the process of development of the subject of social marketing, three key approaches to its characterization have crystallized:

- 1) Social marketing is considered as a special case of classical marketing, associated with the presence of exchange processes in the field of social relations;
- 2) Social marketing is seen as socially oriented marketing that characterizes the specifics of a particular business;
- 3) Social marketing is considered as a technology for promoting socially important initiatives and solving problems [1, 3, 5].

In any case, there is a universal rule for all businesses and brands: Be good, be socially responsible, and people will be drawn to you. Good deeds and selfless actions sell 100 times more effectively than advertising. When a business thinks not only about its own profit but also about the local community and population, it strengthens contact with its audience, and this is how strong relationships, partnerships, common positions and worldviews are built.

Social marketing is becoming a trend today, an effective tool for business promotion. It is a new, creative approach to realizing marketing goals and social change. As part of this approach, a company must identify the needs of its target audience and meet them in the best possible way, more effectively than its competitors.

One of the first examples in the field of social marketing was demonstrated by American Express, which donated 10 cents from each card transaction to the fund for the restoration of the Statue of

Liberty in the United States. In 4 months, they raised \$1.7 million, the number of cards used almost tripled, and the frequency of customer requests for new cards almost doubled [1. p.9].

In Ukraine, during the Russian aggression, many companies demonstrate impressive, best practices of social marketing. There are ratings of funds and companies that have raised the most money for the Armed Forces [5]. On February 24, 2022, the National Bank of Ukraine opened a special account to support the defense forces. In total, since the beginning of the full-scale invasion on December 1, 2024, this special account has received more than UAH 39.4 billion in equivalent [6].

The United24 platform, the Come Back Alive Foundation, and the Serhiy Prytula Foundation are also leaders in fundraising. For example, Serhiy Prytula's foundation has raised more than \$165 million since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, as of January 1, 2024. The People's Bayraktar Foundation's project to raise funds for the purchase of drones raised more than UAH 600 million and purchased a satellite for the Armed Forces of Ukraine [7]. In 2023, the United24 platform started raising funds for humanitarian demining and the needs of education and science. As of November 30, 2023, the 10 largest foundations and initiatives together raised UAH 63 billion in donations during the full-scale war [5] (Table 1).

Table 1. Top 10 largest fundraisers [5]

№	Name of funds and initiatives	Donations, UAH billion
1	National Bank of Ukraine	21,5
2	World Central Kitchen (WCK)	13,9
3	United24 platform	8,5
4	Come Back Alive Foundation	5,3
5	System Capital Management	3,5
6	Sergey Prytula Foundation	3,2
7	ARD Telethon, Germany	2,1
8	Victor Pinchuk Foundation	1,8
9	Razom Foundation, USA	1,7
10	Kyiv School of Economics Foundation	1,5
	All together	63

As for private companies, from February 2022 to February 2024, Nova Poshta, Kernel, and Epicenter provided the most money to the Armed Forces and humanitarian aid. Also, companies owned by Rinat Akhmetov, Victor Pinchuk and Petro Poroshenko donated the most money to the Armed Forces and humanitarian needs. In total, these three companies allocated about UAH 48 billion. CSR Ukraine maintains a catalog of business contributions to the victory in the Russian-Ukrainian war [5]. Experts talk about the formation of a new culture of donors in Ukrainian society and about Ukraine as a country of donors, about the transformation of society towards humanity, about a new corporate culture of victory based on the unity of business and the army. Businesses have rallied around the victory and addressing the humanitarian needs of society, and the focus of business social responsibility during the war has shifted to charity, corporate volunteering, and fundraising for the needs of the Armed Forces and the war victims.

The current marketing trend in Ukraine is also to *focus on inclusiveness and barrier-free* - the philosophy of a society without restrictions, creating an environment where everyone feels comfortable. According to Oschadbank, Ukraine is currently home to approximately 29 million people, of whom more than 3 million have various physical, sensory, and mental disabilities [8]. Given the full-scale war in the country, this figure is only growing every day.

NGO "Social Unity" represents the interests of people with various forms of disability. Adhering to the principles of barrier-free and humanity, it implements projects aimed at ensuring equal rights and opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing people; people with complete or partial vision loss; people with musculoskeletal disorders; people with mental disorders, and others [9]. Relevant

ministries, regional state administrations, city councils, state and municipal organizations, as well as other socially responsible institutions and businesses have joined the cooperation with the NGO. The experience and recommendations of the NGO "Social Unity" formed the basis of the National Strategy for Creating a Barrier-Free Space in Ukraine for the period up to 2030, initiated by First Lady Olena Zelenska and approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on April 14, 2021, No. 366-p. [10].

Many Ukrainian companies are now joining this initiative and implementing inclusivity and barrier-free programs, creating equal conditions for all their customers.

For example, the Foxtrot appliances and electronics chain is promoting the Foxtrot Barrier-Free project, adapting and adapting its customer service to remove communication, psychological, and physical barriers to service. From now on, deaf visitors can get professional advice in sign language by calling online interpreters and make a purchase without communication and psychological barriers [11].

Many Ukrainian companies are also *working on reintegration programs for veterans*. According to the results of the study "Reintegration of Veterans", more than half (60%) of veterans who do not continue their service experienced some difficulties in transitioning to civilian life, did not have the proper tools or did not receive sufficient services for a smooth transition to civilian life [12]. Veterans often experience problems due to psychological trauma, post-traumatic stress disorder, bodily injuries, difficulties with employment, and are confused due to the loss of ties with family and community. Therefore, veterans' reintegration programs should take a comprehensive approach and provide assistance in overcoming the obstacles veterans face on the way to reintegrating into civil society. This includes employment and career development, psychological assistance for veterans and their families, and the provision of quality mental and physical health services.

The Ukrainian Marketing Association developed and presented in September 2024 the Strategy for the Transition and Integration of Ukrainian Veterans into Education and the Workforce, which focuses on the return of former military personnel to civilian life through education and employment. The goals of its implementation include improving access to quality and inclusive education in the short and medium term, increasing the employment rate of veterans, developing veteran entrepreneurship and strengthening the social adaptation of veterans (Fig. 1) [13].

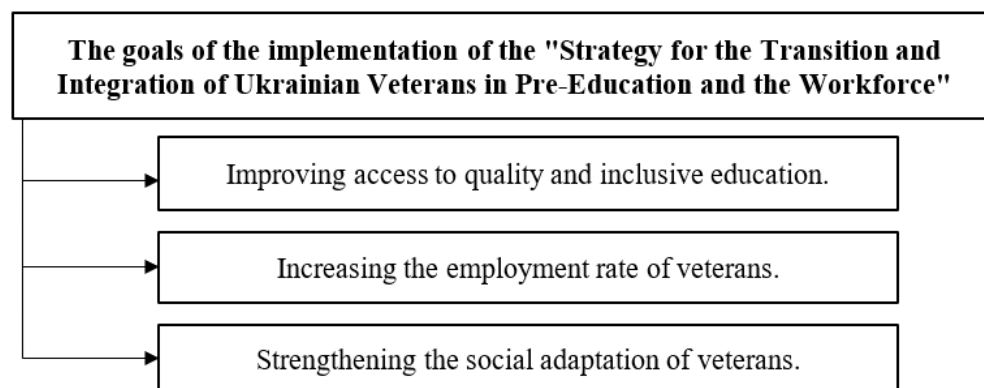


Fig. 1. Objectives of the Strategy for the Transition and Integration of Ukrainian Veterans into Education and the Workforce [13].

The best example of veterans' reintegration is the experience of the Foxtrot electronics and appliances network, which is developing the Veteran Friendly project (training and internal courses) [11, 14].

The experience of MHP in the field of agricultural and food technologies is valuable, as it launched the MHP Razum, a comprehensive support program for mobilized and veterans of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, as well as their families, in social, psychological, and physical recovery. The program was launched in May 2022 and will continue until the end of the war (+ 5 years) [14].

For mobilized employees, the company provides the following benefits

- monthly financial assistance in the amount of salary;
- Provision of technical equipment, cars, clothing, bulletproof vests;
- constant communication and honoring;
- medical support in case of injury;
- assistance to the family in solving everyday issues;
- assistance to the family in the search for the missing person.

Each defender has his or her own reintegration plan, ranging from 6 months to 1.5 years. The plan includes legal support, physical and psychological rehabilitation, professional adaptation, and assistance in developing social ties (Fig. 2).

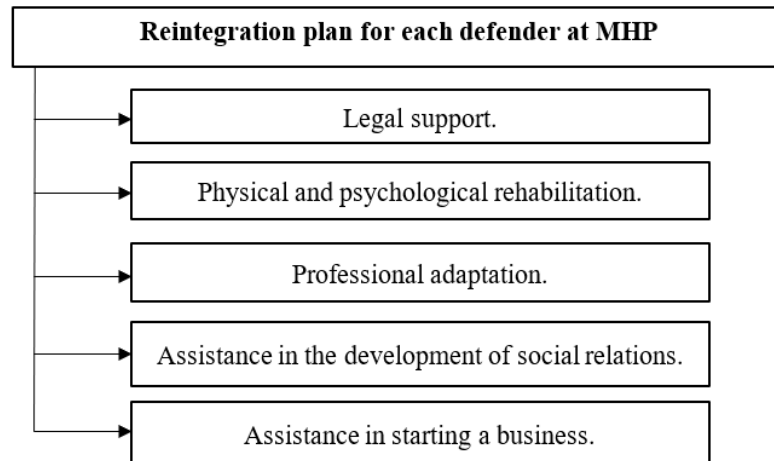


Fig. 2. A plan for reintegrating a defender into MHP [14].

In addition, MHP cooperates with communities and public associations to stimulate the development of veteran-owned small and medium-sized businesses. For example, in April 2023, the MHP-Community Charitable Foundation, together with the Ukrainian Veterans Fund under the Ministry of Veterans of Ukraine, implemented the program "It's Worth Doing Your Own". As part of the project, veterans and their families received 10 grants of up to UAH 1.5 million each to develop their own businesses [14].

The logistics company Nova Poshta has an extensive and effective program to support its mobilized colleagues. For this purpose, the company created separate positions to keep employees in touch with the defenders of Ukraine. Their duty is to learn about the needs of the military every day: equipment, thermal imagers, radios, etc. Every month, the company buys military equipment for them for UAH 3 million.

Nova Poshta has also created a corporate volunteer movement called "Ours for Ours," in which employees organize collections for the needs of their mobilized colleagues' units [14]. Nova Poshta also organizes training for volunteers, supports procurement processes, delivers equipment and cars, etc.

Since the first days of the full-scale invasion, mobilized and demobilized colleagues have been receiving constant psychological support from military psychologists, as well as family and child therapists for military families.

The program to support the families of fallen Nova Poshta colleagues provides that each family receives a one-time payment of UAH 60,000, psychological and legal support. Each child of a fallen defender receives monthly financial support from the company in the amount of 10,000 hryvnias, as well as a grant of 12,500 dollars for education at any university in the world until they reach the age of majority [14].

Also, since 2024, Nova Poshta has had a comprehensive support program for demobilized employees (Fig. 3).

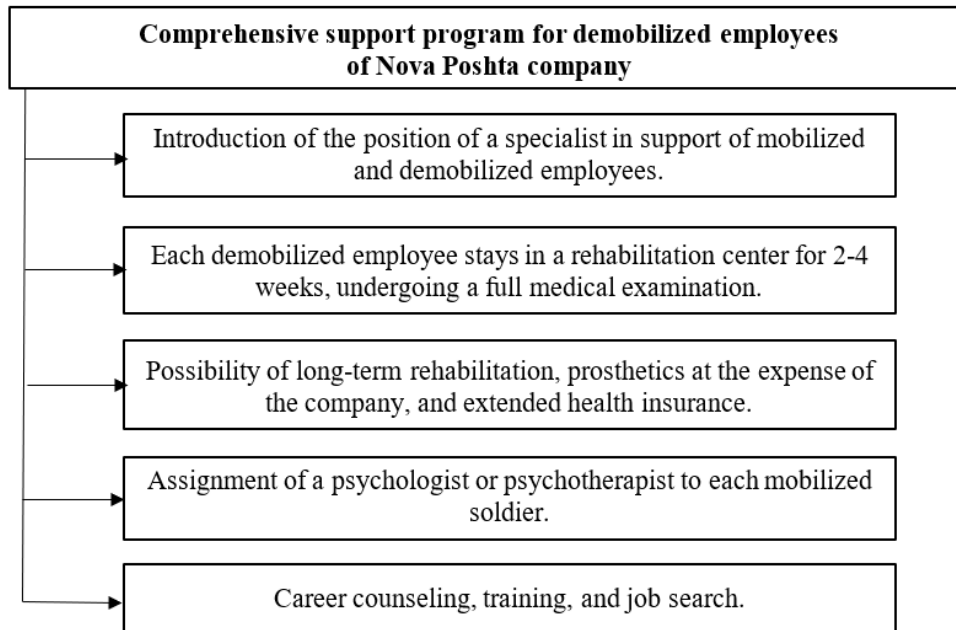


Fig. 3. Comprehensive support program for demobilized employees of Nova Poshta [14].

The program is based on the Veteran's Way guidebook developed by the Ukrainian Veteran's Fund, as well as the principle "Nothing for a veteran without a veteran."

Nova Poshta's veterans' support program includes rehabilitation, medical examination, extended health insurance, prosthetics at the company's expense; selection of the optimal position and training if necessary.

The company is also building an ecosystem of small and medium-sized businesses around it. The Nova Poshta Business School is an intensive educational project created specifically to support small and medium-sized entrepreneurs. Since 2016, the company has been forming a community of Ukrainian entrepreneurs [14].

It is obvious that social marketing today goes beyond the usual marketing, creating a new unique story by combining business and social needs in projects. Such projects quickly resonate with the audience, favorably distinguish businesses from competitors, and change consumer attitudes toward the brand. As a result, the company gets more loyal customers. According to a Nielsen study, 66% of survey participants confirmed that they are willing to pay more for goods or services from socially conscious companies [13].

Currently, there is a *trend towards digitalization of the entire social sphere, improving the provision of social services to the population.*

Education is now provided online if needed, many online courses are available, and they compete for consumers on social media. You can find a doctor and make an appointment online. Medical centers and clinics promote their services online, on their websites and in social media. People also pay for utilities online, in apps, from a smartphone or computer. Charitable foundations raise funds for the needs of the Armed Forces on social media, and fundraising platforms operate there as well [15].

The massive adoption of the online side of business over the past few years has dictated its own trends in the social sphere. Lockdown and war have moved organizations and people online. Of course, business and government and municipal authorities have begun to use this trend closely. Administrative service centers, the Tax Administration, and the Pension Fund provide online services and are constantly improving.

Diia is a domestic application that puts all the necessary documents in one place, in your smartphone. The portal provides all services online, quickly and conveniently. And it is constantly being improved by the Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine. Currently, the digitalization of services for war veterans and their families continues. Active military personnel, veterans, their

families, and families of fallen soldiers can receive up to 12 services through a single application on the Diia portal. Electronic services have been created: automatic granting of combatant status, obtaining an extract from the Unified State Register of War Veterans [16].

7. Prospects for further research

In Ukraine, social marketing during the war is developing and has significant potential. For the sphere of social services for veterans, mobilized military and disabled people of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, internally displaced persons and people affected by war, migrants, marketing is the process of research, design, development, promotion and implementation of such services created to meet the specific needs of these target market segments. Marketing in the field of such services allows to identify ways and directions of redistribution of part of the profit to improve the quality of services provided and better meet the needs of their consumers.

Analysis and popularization of the world's best practices of doing business and protecting human rights during the war, monitoring and evaluation of social responsibility development in Ukraine, dissemination of the experience of leading companies in reintegrating veterans for use by business entities in Ukraine are also topics for further research. In addition, in the context of a full-scale war, there is a need to adjust and supplement the Concept for the Implementation of the State Policy in the Field of Promoting the Development of Socially Responsible Business in Ukraine for the Period up to 2030 and the Action Plan for its Implementation, adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on January 24, 2020, No. 66-p. [17].

8. Conclusions

Thus, companies that are conscious organizations that profess the philosophy of social marketing, are friendly to people and communities, are more positively perceived by the general public. Social strategy helps to strengthen corporate reputation and improve the company's image in the society.

The main trends in the development of social marketing in Ukraine are:

- 1) uniting business around victory: partnership, cooperation of enterprises to help the Armed Forces and address humanitarian needs of society, shifting the focus of corporate social responsibility to charity, corporate volunteering, and fundraising activities;
- 2) increasing the role of the employer in developing and supporting social programs in times of war;
- 3) further digitalization of the entire social sphere, improvement of social services to the population;
- 4) focusing on inclusiveness and barrier-free society - a society without restrictions, an environment where everyone feels comfortable.
- 5) development of reintegration programs for veterans.

Correct, clear definition of marketing tasks in the social sphere and their effective implementation allow business entities to achieve their goals. The development of social marketing, improvement of social service delivery, and development of social responsibility of business brings our country closer to a "social state" - a socially oriented, intrinsically valuable state that recognizes a person as the highest social value, provides social assistance to individuals in difficult life situations, and whose policy is aimed at creating conditions that ensure a decent life, well-being, and free development of a person. In general, social marketing in Ukraine is becoming a trend and transforming into a systemic socio-cultural phenomenon.

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