Czech University of Life Sciences Prague

Faculty of Economics and Management

Department of Management

Bachelor Thesis

Evaluation of Blogging as a mean of Marketing Communication in Kazakhstan

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Faculty of Economics and Management

BACHELOR THESIS ASSIGNMENT

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Thesis title

Evaluation of Blogging as a mean of Marketing Communication in Kazakhstan

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Objectives of thesis

The aim of the thesis is the evaluation of the state of blogging usage in the Kazakhstan country. The aim will be to uncover the theoretical background first and then to evaluate what is the main scope of the bloggers, how the public perceive bloggers and what is the value of bloggers for cooperating brands. The research will consist of certain research questions that will be answered through the results of the thesis. At the basis of this research and identified state the author will conclude recommendations for both bloggers and companies.

Methodology

The first theoretical part will be based on the literature review in the field of marketing communication and online communication tools with the aim at blogging.

The practical part will uncover the marketing communication commonly used in the Kazakhstan country, the current state and the development of blogging in the this country. The thesis will introduce brands and bloggers operating at the Kazakhstan market. The following research will be aimed at identification of perceptions of all three sides – public/customers, bloggers and companies cooperating with bloggers. The author will use quantitative research methods based on questionnaire surveys.

The results and conclusion will be based od the methods of deduction and synthetical technics.

The proposed extent of the thesis

30-40 pages

Keywords

Marketing, Marketing communication, Consumer, Consumer Behaviour, Blogging, Bloggers, Brand

Recommended information sources

KOSTELIJK, E. – ALSEM, K J. *Brand Positioning : Connecting Marketing Strategy and Communications. [elektronický zdroj] /.* Milton: Taylor & Francis Group, 2020. ISBN 9781000025064.

KOTLER, P. – KARTAJAYA, H. – SETIAWAN, I. *Marketing 4.0 : moving from traditional to digital.* Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley, 2017. ISBN 978-1-119-34120-8.

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TUTEN, T L. *Principles of marketing for a digital age.* Los Angeles: Sage, 2020. ISBN 978-1526423344.

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Declaration

I declare that I have worked on my bachelor thesis titled "Evaluation of Blogging as a mean of Marketing Communication in Kazakhstan" by myself and I have used only the sources mentioned at the end of the thesis. As the author of the bachelor thesis, I declare that the thesis does not break any copyrights.

In Prague on 15.03.2023 _____

Evaluation of Blogging as a mean of Marketing Communication in Kazakhstan

Abstract

The current state of blogging in Kazakhstan was the subject of this bachelor thesis.

The theoretical part provided an overview of historical development, the foundational concepts of marketing, and features of online communication platforms. The thesis then goes on to discuss the basics of the marketing mix and its key elements, including pricing, product, venue, and promotion (4P). The subject of the next chapter is internet marketing communications in particular and marketing communication technologies in general. The last chapter of the theoretical section, which is equally important, centres on blogging as a tool for marketing communication, as well as its benefits and drawbacks.

The practical part focuses on the examination of blogging and how Kazakhstani society views it. It takes the form of an online survey on the Google Form.

 The thesis suggests that social communication tool such as blogging is essential, but it also has both positive and negative repercussions.

The results of the survey show that people prefer using the Internet as their primary information source. As a result, blogging is a tool that individuals mostly use to obtain information online. The respondents had a positive opinion of blogging; they believe it has more positive effects than negative ones.

Keywords: Blogging, Communication, Instagram, Marketing, Marketing Mix, Place, Price, Product, Promotion, Social Media, Website

Hodnocení blogování jako nástroj marketingové komunikace v Kazachstánu

Abstrakt

Předmětem této bakalářské práce byl současný stav blogování v Kazachstánu.

Teoretická část poskytla přehled historického vývoje a základních pojmů marketingu a vlastností online komunikačních platforem. Autor dále probírá základy marketingového mixu a jeho klíčové prvky, včetně ceny, produktu, místa a propagace (4P). Předmětem další kapitoly je marketingové komunikační technologie obecně a internetová marketingová komunikace konkrétně. Poslední kapitola teoretické části, která je neméně důležitá, se zaměřuje na blogování jako nástroj marketingové komunikace a také na jeho výhody a nevýhody.

Praktickou část tvoří zkoumání blogování a toho, jak jej vnímá kazašská společnost. Probíhá formou online průzkumu na Google Forms.

V práci se ukazuje, že nástroj sociální komunikace jako blogování je nezbytný, ale má také pozitivní i negativní dopady.

Výsledky průzkumu ukazují, že lidé preferují používat internet jako primární zdroj informací. Výsledkem je, že blogování je nástroj, který jednotlivci většinou používají k získávání informací online. Respondenti měli na blogování pozitivní názor; věří, že má více pozitivních účinků než negativních.

Klíčová slova: Blogování, Cena, Instagram, Komunikace, Marketing, Marketingový mix, Místo, Produkt, Propagace, Sociální média, Web

Table of content

Introduction

Social nteraction holds a very special place in the lives of both individuals and modern society. It is tied to almost every aspect of communication, whether directly or indirectly. With the invention of writing, printing, electronic communications like the telephone, radio, and mass media, the capacity to communicate over time and space has greatly increased.

The relevance of the thesis' topic stems from the fact that communication is one of those significant social phenomena that fundamentally affects the growth of social relationships and actively shapes public opinion. The Internet is a communication tool that has no limits in terms of physicality, geography, administrative boundaries or censorship.

A new era in the evolution of communication has begun with the emergence of the Internet. It evolved into a tool for international communication; its widespread use and accessibility of technology encourages the establishment of new opportunities and modes of communication and creates a new environment for information exchange. A blog, chat rooms, numerous forums, Skype, teleconferences, social networks, mail, and many other forms of online communication have emerged because of the Internet.

It should be mentioned that there are currently not many academic publications on blogging as a social communication tool; however, scholars devote a lot of attention to the study of marketing issues due to the growing competitiveness and complexity of tactics for advertising the products and services.

The "buyer's market" has taken the place of the "seller's market," so it is necessary to grasp newer, more sophisticated, and efficient methods of market activity.

Philip Kotler, Peter Ferdinand Drucker, David Cravens, Nigel Piercy, Robert Woodtruff, are among the prominent and notable authors who helped to shape the idea of socially responsible marketing.

1 Objectives and Methodology

1.1 Objectives

The main objective of the thesis is to evaluate the state of the blogging usage in Kazakhstan. The partial aim is to uncover the theoretical background of marketing and blogging first and then to evaluate the blogging in the country and how bloggers are perceived by the public. The research consists of the research question that is answered through the results of the thesis. As the conclusion, the author concludes recommendations for bloggers and public.

1.2 Methodology

This bachelor thesis is divided into two parts.

The first part is theoretical; it contains literary research and analysis of trustworthy and expert sources, including books, analytical articles from scholarly journals, research papers and reports on marketing communication and online communication tools.

The second part analyses the current state of blogging in Kazakhstan from the public's perspective. Since there are various platforms and websites for blogging on Internet, the author decided to narrow down the research and evaluate the blogging and bloggers primarily on Instagram.

The following research questions are put in the practical part:

- How respondents feel about blogs?

- How often and why people use them?

- What are the most popular topics and aspects of life that are covered in blogs?

- What are the most well known bloggers in Kazakhstan?

-How much of an impact blogs have on society as a whole?

- What ae the benefits and drawbacks seen from a respondents' perspective?

The analysis uses primary data and is conducted in the form of questionnaire survey. The survey questions are available in the Annex 1. The survey outcome shows the general attitude to blogging, their level of trust to bloggers, benefits and drawbacks, and the most interesting topics. The main research question is whether public generally perceives the bloggers positively or negatively. The analysis is performed on 267

respondents. The survey has been conducted online in September-October 2022. The questionnaire was distributed with the usage of snowball technique and online as well, by sharing the link on the social media platforms, mainly on Facebook and Instagram.

The survey in its structure is divided into two parts and consists of 16 questions. The first part is devoted to the internet usage in Kazakhstan and consists of 8 questions. The first 3 questions are general and inquire about age, gender and occupation.

The last 5 questions inquire about the most preferred and most trusted sources of information, the most interesting topics and the purpose of internet usage.

The second part is devoted to blogging in Kazakhstan and consists of such questions as awareness of certain Kazakh bloggers, their impact on audience, the public general attitude to bloggers and benefits and drawbacks.

The list of bloggers is composed based on the rankings available on several sources online, they are mentioned in the Bibliography. The questionnaire itself, the pictures of Instagram bloggers' pages and the links are presented in the Annex 1 - Questionnaire.

2 Theoretical part

2.1 Marketing

Marketing can be characterized as a variety of actions produced through planning. Activities like creating promotional offers, pricing structures that take into account regional needs, and making goods and services available to clients both domestically and internationally are known as marketing activities. The primary tasks that must be accomplished are identifying and satisfying the demands of consumers (Churchill, 2017)

2.1.1 History of development

In current world practice, marketing did not emerge immediately. It is the outcome of many years of managers' ideas on the aims, targets, and strategies for developing production and sales. Since ancient Rome, and possibly even before, various methods of sales promotion, advertising, and public relations techniques have been used.

Back in the second half of the 18th century, the prominent political economist Adam Smith stated in his book "*The Wealth of Nations*" that the producer's primary concern is meeting the demands of the consumer (Mupepi, 2017)

Some scholars claim that the period following the "Great Depression" that ravaged the West between 1923 and 1933 is when marketing first emerged, while others think it was the early 1950s. However, it has a much earlier history (Brown, 1994; Church, Godley, 2014; Brian, Shaw, 2002)

According to Peter Drucker, Japan is where marketing first emerged. He asserts that marketing initially occurred in Japan around 1650, when the first Mitsui family member arrived in Tokyo and established what is regarded as the country's first department store. There, he adopted a strategy that was 250 years ahead of what the biggest trade companies were doing:

1) became a buyer for his consumers, buying and then supplying those products and goods that they needed;

2) looked for means and sources for their production;

3) introduced the principle of an unconditional refund for the returned goods;

4) significantly expanded the range of products for customers (Drucker, 1973).

Midway through the 19th century, marketing started to take shape in the West. Cyrus McCormick initially raised the idea that marketing should be a core business activity. Although he is best known for creating the first combine harvester, he also pioneered modern marketing disciplines like market research and analysis, pricing policy concepts, and after-sales service. All of this contributed to the success of his company "International Harvester" (Wasson, 1983).

America is where marketing first became a recognized academic field. A brief marketing course started being offered at the Universities of Illinois and Michigan in 1901. At the University of Pennsylvania, W.E. Kruse and others taught the "*The marketing of Products*" course in 1905. At the University of Wisconsin, R. Butler started teaching "*Methods of Marketing*" as a permanent course in 1910 (Jones, Tadajewski, 2016)

As a result, the United States is regarded as the origin of contemporary marketing. During that time, marketing was mostly associated with the sale of goods: attention was paid mainly to advertising, trade, and sales organization. Later on, it became clear that this approach had some constraints. The crisis of 1929-1933 also played a significant role in this, after which marketing finally lost its purely sales orientation. The growth of heavy industry during World War II served as a spur for new production management principles and approaches. In a market where there was an excess of effective demand compared to supply, mass production was rising and it has helped to put the marketing strategy into practice and build up more marketing expertise. However, beginning in 1948, marketing was viewed as the fulfilment of other forms of economic activity that controlled the flow of goods and services from the producer to the end or intermediate consumer (Jones, Tadajewski, 2016).

As a system, marketing was developed because of the rise of monopolies, which required more extensive and in-depth market research as well as improved market business organization. The design of its organizational structure happened concurrently. The first commercial marketing organization was founded in 1908, and many of the biggest companies at the time started to establish marketing research departments.

The American Marketing Association (AMA), which currently combines around 23,000 teachers, researchers, and members of the corporate sector, was founded in 1973 based on the National Association of Marketing Teachers (NAMT), which was established in the United States in 1926. Similar groups and associations started to emerge in Western Europe and Japan a little later, such as European Society of Marketing Research Professionals (ESOMAR), The European Marketing Academy (EMAC), and others.

The globalization of marketing has been underway since the late 80s and early 90s. The development of the concept of marketing has been greatly influenced by technological and scientific advancements that have resulted in an enormous diversity of goods, rapid rates of their replacement, and efficient production and marketing management.

2.1.2   Eras of marketing development

The evolution of marketing fits into the evolution of the development of the management concept, which has gone through the following stages:

2.1.2.1 Production era

For decades, the focus of businesses has been on manufacturing; in fact, a company's performance was frequently only assessed in terms of its production accomplishments. Production era ended before it even reached its zenith, and this occurred at the start of the 20th century. Those years were characterized by a lack of production capacity and active consumer demand. It is clear why industrial operations were given top priority in these circumstances (Kotler, Kartajaya, 2007)

It took some time for demand to develop for even horseless carriages. People were first simply terrified of motorized vehicles since they were noisy, kicked up clouds of dust on slick roads, were stuck in the mud, and impeded the movement of horses. In addition, the high speed of 7 miles per hour contributed to several accidents and other traffic problems. Therefore, early vehicle sales representatives had to use all kinds of crafty marketing tricks to persuade people to buy their new product, which ultimately succeeded since there was a clearly felt need for a new product (Kotler, 1973).

2.1.2.2 Sales era

From the 1920s to the 1950s, manufacturing methods in the United States and Europe advanced steadily, and production volume increased as well. As a result, manufacturers started to actively seek for consumers and to pay more and more attention to the efficient work of sales employees. During this time, businesses made an effort to match supply to the amount of potential customers who would purchase it. Sales-oriented businesses believed that customers would be reluctant to purchase products and services that did not appear necessary to them, and that the primary responsibility of the sales and advertising department was to persuade them to make a purchase. Although marketing departments at

that time started to emerge from behind engineering, finance, and production, they still frequently held supporting roles (Bartels, 1976).

2.1.2.3 Marketing era

A shift from a seller's market, where there were many buyers of a small number of goods and services, to a buyer's market, where there are more goods and services offered than there are consumers willing to buy them, is the best way to explain the marketing concept, a fundamental change in management philosophy (Williams, Page, 2011).

Strong buyer markets have emerged, requiring consumer-focused company models. Instead of only producing and selling goods and services, businesses suddenly required to go to the market with them. This realization served as the catalyst for the development of the marketing idea. When General Electric announced a new management philosophy in 1952, this idea first emerged and came to dominate the industry (Boone, Kurtz, 1999). The concept puts the marketing specialist at the beginning, not at the end of the production cycle and integrates marketing with every phase of the business. Therefore, marketing, through its research and analysis reveals to engineers, designers, and manufacturers what the consumer wants from a particular product, what price he is prepared to pay for it, and where and when he wants to buy it. As a result, marketing is given the essential power in the areas of production planning, inventory control, sales, distribution, and other related services. Marketing is no longer considered a follow-up task done after the production phase is complete. On the other hand, marketing starts to take the initiative in terms of product planning. Sales and marketing are no longer the same thing.

2.1.2.4 Customer relationship era

I n the final decade of the 20th century, the fourth marketing era began, and it is still holding strong in the 21st century. Organizations are now modernizing the customer orientation and taking it a step further by prioritizing the development and maintenance of connections with both customers and suppliers. This focus reflects a drastic shift from the traditional view of marketing as a straightforward transaction between buyer and supplier. Contrary to the previous strategy, relationship marketing is based on long-lasting partnerships that develop through time between buyers and suppliers, giving value to both sides. Manufacturers, retailers, and suppliers typically gain from strategic alliances and partnerships.

2.2 Marketing mix

Using various marketing strategies to produce a profitable outcome for a business is known as a marketing mix strategy. The term "marketing mix" is now widely used, even by ordinary people who are not involved in marketing. In addition, the reason for this is that it is simple and universal in use and does not need a deep understanding of its subtleties. This complex originally just had four components: product, price, place, and promotion. The model evolved into a 5P and even a 7P in the future when more components had to be added. Although this complex comes in a variety of forms, the first four remain unchanged (Goi, 2009).

Neil Borden, professor at Harvard University, is credited with introducing the marketing mix to the world. As a starting point, the scientist used the idea of James Culliton, his colleague from Harvard. The latter portrays marketers as "ingredient mixers," comparable to alchemists. Borden was so captured with this concept—which, incidentally, became quite popular in small circles of fellow scientists—that he even appropriated the idea of a marketing mix, which eventually included a sizable number of interrelated "ingredients," including: advertising, pricing, distribution channels, branding, personal selling, packaging, service, storage, logistics, billing, collection, and information analysis (Lipson, Reynolds, 2001).

However, the main work was eventually carried out by another scientist - Jerome McCarthy, who consolidated all the characteristics that were then available into 4 basic blocks that were based on a functional relationship with a certain marketing activity item. There is currently a notion that the marketing mix consists of all the elements that a marketer can influence and further improve in order to achieve a given outcome, namely high-quality promotion. This is a crucial consideration when it comes to event-activities because if each of the fundamental building pieces has not been well thought through, there is a significant likelihood that the target audience will only have a minor emotional reaction (Perreault, 2000).

2.2.1 Price

Since the organization's profit ultimately depends on it, there is no doubt that price is a main element of the marketing mix. It is based on the value the consumer puts on the product, the targeted profit, the product's cost, and the price strategies of competitors

Issues to be raised in this block:

What is the value of this product for the customer? Is there a price set for such products in this region? Are customers price-sensitive? Will a slight price cut help gain more market share? What kind of discount should be offered? What is the price compared to competitors' prices?

Solutions that can be reflected in the marketing strategy at the "price" level:

1) Pricing strategy for market entry (penetration)

2) Retail pricing - If the company is not the final link in the sales chain, it is essential to match the product's selling price with the desired retail price. Before the selling price reaches the intended buyer, it is subject to a number of mark-ups and surcharges, including VAT, wholesale mark-up, retail chain mark-up, etc. (Kemmer, Boden, 2012)

3) Pricing for different sales channels - gives various price levels for various suppliers in the supply chain (for example, volume discounts, bonuses for large wholesalers, etc.) (Chong, 2003).

2.2.2 Product

The product is what the company offers to the market and the consumer. A product can be either a physical product or a service. The product is the first step in the marketing mix.

Issues to be raised in this block:

What do customers want from this service/product? What needs does it satisfy? What features does this product have to meet these needs? Are there any features missed? Are there any expensive items that the consumer does not need? How and where will customers use it? What does it look like? What experience will customers get from using this product? What should it be called? What logo or brand name should be given to this product? How does this differentiate it from its competitors?

Solutions that can be reflected in the marketing strategy at the "product" level:

1) Brand symbols name, logo, and corporate identity

2) Product functionality - the necessary and unique properties of a product or service;

3) The quality of product in terms of the target market. The quality of the product should be built on the perception of consumers;

4) Appearance of the product - style, design, packaging;

5) Variability or product range;

6) Support and level of service (Tehrani, 2008).

2.2.3 Place

The place of sale ensures that the product is available to the target market and means that the company's product must be on the market in the right place (where the target consumer can see and buy it) at the right time (when the target consumer needs to buy it) (Singh, 2012).

Issues to be raised in this block:

Where are buyers looking for this product? If they are looking for it in a store, then in which one: a specialized boutique or a supermarket, online store, catalogue? How to evaluate the right distribution channel? What are the competitors doing and what differences are noticed?

Solutions that can be reflected in the marketing strategy at the "place" level:

1) Markets where the product is planned to be sold (including geographic expansion strategy)

2) Distribution channels through which the product is planned to be sold.

3) Type of distribution (exclusive, limited list of dealers or unlimited distribution)

4) Terms of distribution (discounts and bonuses for dealers, penalties, etc.)

5) Product display conditions and display rules (shelf level, target share of the shelf, number of facings on the shelf, duplication of facings, mandatory assortment, etc.)

6) Inventory management and logistics (safety stock levels, shelf life requirements, etc.) (Gummerson, 2002).

2.2.4 Promotion

Promotion is defined in the context of the marketing mix as any marketing communications that enable the customer to become aware of the product, develop knowledge about the product and its essential features, evoke a wish to purchase the product, and encourage repeat purchases. Advertising, point-of-sale promotions, SEO, PR, direct marketing and other marketing communications are all forms of promotion (Tehrani, 2008).

Issues to be raised in this block:

Where and when to convey the marketing message to the target audience? How to reach the target audience – by advertising in the media, outdoor advertising, mailing lists, PR campaigns, Internet? When is the best time for promotions? Is there seasonality for the product? Are there other environmental conditions that determine the period for this market segment? What promotional activities are the competitors doing? How does this affect the choice of advertising actions?

Solutions that can be reflected in the marketing strategy at the "promotion" level:

1) Promotion strategy: pull or push

2) Required marketing budget and SOV in the segment

3) Target values of knowledge, consumption and brand loyalty among the target audience

4) Participation in specialized events and shows

5) Communication channels through which it is planned to contact the consumer

6) Geography of communication

7) PR strategy and event marketing

8) Brand media strategy

9) Promotional events throughout the year and sales promotions (Richter, 2012)

2.3 Marketing communications

The importance of marketing communications has greatly grown over the past few years. To launch new products to the market, it is not sufficient to merely provide a high-quality product. Providing the end user with information on the advantages he will experience if he gets the product is a crucial component. Consumers and businesses can develop a relationship through marketing communications in order to spur demand and raise brand awareness. The process of distributing information to the target audience about businesses, their brands, products, and services through a variety of channels and instruments is known as marketing communications (MC). A business must consider numerous channels via which it can develop and sustain contact with customers as part of the marketing communications. Marketing communications assist in creating a compelling and consistent perception of the business and its products as well as obtaining consumer feedback (Holm, 2006).

Today, the essence of marketing communications is the long-term management of the sales process in stages:

- Before purchase;

– At the time of purchase;

- The period of use of the purchased goods;

– The subsequent period and the possibility of purchasing another product of the same brand.

2.3.1 Marketing communication tools

Due to the existence of different needs and, accordingly, different consumers, the business needs to develop plans for all types of market segments and niches, up to the individual customer. However, the process does not end with the creation of information distribution channels; it also needs a mechanism for gathering feedback. Relationship building is successful when certain marketing communications are used (Gurau, 2008):

1. Branding. It takes a lot of work to develop, implement, and advertise a particular concept or product (or a collection of products under one brand) on the market. The primary goal of branding is to create associations among potential customers about the brand, the concept and logo, and the design of a particular company (Chang, 2020)

2. Direct marketing. This type of marketing means direct appeal to customers. The primary goal is to get feedback from customers and develop relationships with them. For this, technical communication channels like telephones, cell phones, e-mail, leaflets, and catalogues are used (Roberts, Berger, 1999).

3. Advertising. It establishes the relationship between the advertiser and the target consumer, the major goals of advertising is to inform about the product, its qualities and advantages, and terms of purchase as well as to encourage я making a purchase. Paid communication channels, such as external interaction (billboards), radio, television, the internet, and product placement—which suggests hidden advertising of products— are also used (Mondschein, 2010)

4. Public relations (PR). It is a set of measures to introduce and create a positive image of an (idea, product, service, enterprise) in the value range of a social group and to further consolidate the image of the product.

5. Publicity. It aims to promote the product and brand using various methods, which may include article publication, promotions, regular advertising, and other methods.

6. *Sales promotion*. This is one of the fundamental elements of MC, encouraging sales through lotteries and competitive contests, offering benefits and discounts, organizing tastings and demonstrations, and using a variety of materials at points of sale (POS

materials). Sales promotion can be targeted at both the wholesale market and the individual customer.

7. Loyalty program. It implies a set of measures aimed at re-purchasing services and goods in the future by regular customers and new ones. The advantage of this type is that the client is already familiar with both the brand and the products, but can receive additional discounts, participate in private promotions, receive gifts and accumulate bonuses. The loyalty program implies the presence of a special discount or bonus card, which the client receives after filling out a questionnaire with his contact details, which can later be used by the company for direct marketing.

8. Personal sales. Personal selling. These sales happen through direct contact between the seller and the buyer. Establishing contact, the seller responds to questions from the customer about the features of the product, gives the chance to learn more about the product and make a decision on its purchase.

9. Trade presentation. This method includes various activities to promote the product or brand (large-scale events and specialized exhibitions).
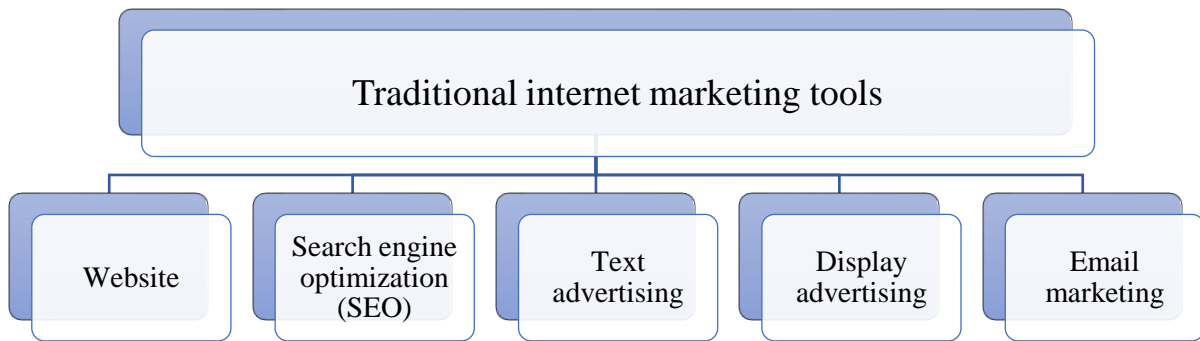
Modern scepticism of consumers puts into question the initiatives of marketers, nowadays it is not easy to attract and maintain interest in a particular product or brand. Confidence in market positions is shaky even for giants. High quality products are not sufficient to maintain a high level of sales and occupy a niche. Marketing communications give the opportunity to not only sell products but to support the sale with engaging and insightful messages that meet the needs of the consumer.

2.4 Internet marketing communications

2.4.1 Traditional marketing tools

Traditional advertising in the recent decades has faced a serious rival in the form of Internet advertising due to the advancement of information and communication technologies. Naturally, print advertising, various brochures, pamphlets, and booklets continue to draw in clients, but events that promote the business and its products online became much more important part of media plans for businesses looking to succeed. Below is the Figure 1 – Traditional internet marketing tools that shows several online marketing tools (Nabieva, 2021):

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│            Traditional internet marketing tools                │
└──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
  ┌─────────┐  ┌──────────────┐  ┌─────────┐  ┌─────────┐  ┌─────────┐
  │ Website │  │ Search engine│  │  Text   │  │ Display │  │  Email  │
  │         │  │ optimization │  │advertis.│  │advertis.│  │marketing│
  │         │  │    (SEO)     │  │         │  │         │  │         │
  └─────────┘  └──────────────┘  └─────────┘  └─────────┘  └─────────┘
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Source: own processing

Websites perform a wide range of tasks, from coordinating business communications (corporate resources) and online shopping (online stores) to facilitating individual self-expression (network diaries) and uniting people based on interests (community-forming resources).

SEO (Search Engine Optimization) is the process of modifying the program code, content, site structure, and manipulating external elements to satisfy the needs of the search engine algorithm and to improve the position of the website in the search results for a specific user requests. Companies hire experts to analyse and buy keywords from search engines so that when requested, the company's website comes out on the first page in search results.

Online text advertising includes mainly text advertising messages (text blocks) incorporated within the body of the page's main text. Such advertising can appear to be an essential component of the page. It also loads considerably more quickly. Text message-based contextual (search) advertising is one particular sort of text advertising.

Search engines are the tools for finding information on the Internet. They index sites using special programs (search robots). When visitors submit a query, the search engine ranks indexed sites according to their relevance and other metrics. It is vital to optimize the site for search engines and use a number of network promotion strategies in order for it to appear on the first page of results for specific client search queries.

A sort of Internet advertising placement known as **contextual advertising** is based on the principle that the content of the advertising materials should match the context (or content) of the Internet page on which they are placed. This method of ad placement is more intelligent and relevant than banner ads. The context may be text-only or may also contain

visual or audio components. On websites, blogs, email services, and other online content, contextual advertising is frequently present.

Display advertising is a type of advertising on Internet resources aimed at visual perception by the user and recognition of the advertised brand.

Banner is a fixed-size image advertisement that typically has animation and serves as a hyperlink to a specific Internet resource. With a significant financial commitment, banner advertising can increase visits. Banners are typically used to advertise promotional resources. A "peel-down" mouse-responsive banner is frequently utilized. When folded, it takes up very little space, mimics the folding of a piece of plain paper, and does not bother site visitors. When the mouse is clicked, the "corner" opens and presents an advertisement module. One benefit of a peel down over a regular banner is that it adds more advertising space to the website.

Rich-media is a new generation advertising format. This format is interactive commercials created using Flash technology. Thanks to rich-media, it became possible to use animation, sound, multilinking (links from one banner can lead to different sections of the site), the possibility of interactive communication with users, and many other advantages that are not available for traditional banners.

Along with the aforementioned online advertising strategies, there are also so-called **aggressive marketing techniques** like pop-ups, Trojan horses (viruses), and tracking tools. Users might link a company's promotion tactics to its brand and image, therefore aggressive ways of getting users' attention or gathering user data are rarely utilized.
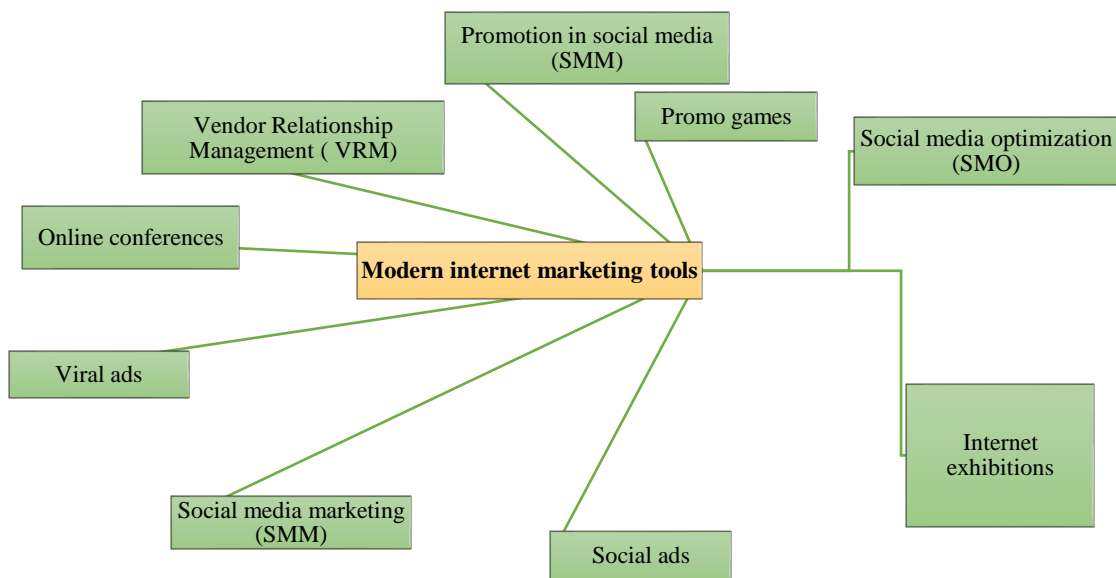
E-mail marketing must be mentioned when discussing conventional methods of internet marketing tools. Modern email campaigns send individualized letters to the list of recipients' private addresses. Advertising in thematic mailing lists is frequently more successful than conventional banner placement on websites. Email is a direct broadcast push tool that targets a particular user base. If earlier the businesses used manual email sending, now the range of software is introduced in order to effectively create, manage and monitor the email campaigns.

2.4.2 Modern marketing tools

For each corporate organization, marketing is a crucial function. However, the marketing environment is always changing and actually getting more sophisticated every day, so the business needs to be sure that it can keep up, otherwise it risks falling behind. It can be

incredibly exhausting to stay on top of evolving trends, but there are many new technologies available for using the Internet to promote products. New tools are released every day, and each one is better than the other is. Many businesses find these tools to be very effective as they give quick results. Such tools include the marketing calendars, budgeting tools, sales forcing tools, leads generation & management tools, marketing automation tools and marketing analytics, as shown on the Figure 1– Modern internet marketing tools.

Figure 1 - Modern internet marketing tools

Source: own processing (based on book of Dodson, 2021)

Promotion in social media is a series of actions designed to draw visitors to the website from blogs, social networks, etc. It is, is designed to increase the popularity of the website or specific publication. Promotion in social media can be divided into three areas:

Social Media Optimization - a set of purely technical measures aimed at changing the content in a way that it can be used as easily as possible in online communities (forums, blogs);

Social Media Marketing – promotion of the posts, websites or any other thing in social media networks;

Social Ads – integrated clickable advertisement in social media networks (Evans, Bratton, 2021).

Viral marketing - one of the most challenging, yet effective, strategies for reaching a large audience. The task is to create an odd or humorous video, a hidden element on the website,

an odd photo or a post on social media. Content should be so unique or amusing that users would freely share it on social networks and tell their friends about it (Anderson, 2022).

2.5 Blogging as a tool of marketing

Information technologies have become a significant part of a modern person's life in the light of the advancement of scientific and technological progress. Online resources now replace the majority of traditional media. Libraries, theatres, and museums—traditional forms of communication—are being gradually replaced. On the Internet, one may network, watch video tutorials, attend seminars, and get practically any question answered. One can also post job openings, buy goods, and offer and receive services, even public ones. Organizations and businesses are also Information technologies. A website and social media groups are now essential for a business to engage in successful commercial activity as they help save time and resources and retain feedback from the customers. Email has a number of advantages, including the ability to receive and transmit information and make management decisions more quickly. Additionally, using email makes working with business correspondence more convenient due to the functionality of electronic data processing. (Hanson, 2020)

The Internet is currently undergoing intense development, it evolved into a trading platform designed to bring together suppliers and consumers of different goods and services in a common information and trading space, significantly reducing the commercial costs for suppliers and increasing the accessibility and diversity of the product line for customers. It can be seen from the development of operations such as online exchanges, internet banking, and online stores, to the development of the electronic markets and cryptocurrencies (Grubor, 2018)

Social network structures become more complex along with the growth in online purchases and sales as well as the volume of the national Internet market. As a result, the global network transforms into an independent marketing environment with details that are not completely grasped yet, but it also requires the creation and more in-depth study of Internet marketing tools. Promotion of a website, product, or service in the information space is the primary objective of every Internet marketing tool, assuming the context of commercial marketing, not the general promotion of any idea. However, the promotion strategies for each tool differs. Due to the abundance of informational marketing tools, each

of which has a variety of benefits and disadvantages, modern businesses sometimes struggle to make a confident decision in favour of one or more of these strategies.

Blogging, the process of creating and promoting your blog, is one of the promising and successful methods of Internet marketing. It is an online diary where an individual, a group of individuals, or a business reflects the information they would like to share with the user. (Daermyer, 2019).

Traditionally, a diary is intended for private use only, therefore the primary distinction between a blog and a diary is the focus on public distribution and interaction with Internet users. The two primary components of blogging are advertising and gaining commercial benefits from network members' viewing it. Contrary to diaries, where events and thoughts are presented impartially but independently, the main issue with using blogs for marketing is that information in blogs may not reflect reality because the blogger has a financial stake in maximizing the promotion of the advertised goods and services. To date, there is no clear answer who is the creator of the first blog, and who was the first to use the term "blog". Tim Berners-Lee, the inventor of the HTML language and several innovations in the IT field, is most likely responsible for the first web diary (Stone, 2002).

By thematic focus, blogs can be categorized as political, educational, musical, household, sporting, etc. By the number of contributors, one may distinguish author, collective, and corporate blogs. By the nature of multimedia, there are text blogs, video blogs, photo blogs, podcasts, and others.

Table 1 - Types of blogs

Name	Main content
Text blog	The primary method of data communication is text.
Video blog	Information is transmitted via video recordings
Musical blog	Consists of music video files and audio files
Podcast	Creation and distribution of non-musical audio and video files
Art blog	The subjects of discussion in such blogs are paintings and drawings.
Photo blog	Mainly consists of photographs published by the author
Micro blog	Short messages and notes, usually allowed to comment

Source: own processing

Table 2 below presents a general overview of promotion tools in the information environment, which may be used to assess blogging, highlight its unique characteristics, and compare them with the benefits and drawbacks of other marketing tools.

Table 2 - Promotion tools

Promotion tool	Short characteristics
Contextual advertising	Promotional text messages located on the same page as the search box and appearing when certain keywords are entered
Digital display advertising	Advertisements that appear as static or animated banners and movies on different websites, mainly big portals.
Content marketing	Marketing technology for creating and distributing in-demand content to attract the target audience
E-mail newsletters	Messages received by e-mail for the purpose of delivering advertising content to the user
Search Engine Optimization and Promotion (SEO)	A set of measures aimed at promoting the site in social networks and search resources for input queries
Viral marketing	Launching hidden advertising in the form of images, text, video files, a website, and other entertainment materials, and directing this advertising for distribution among users in popular information resources.

Source: own processing

Compared to other marketing techniques, blogging is a cutting-edge and underutilized method of advertising the necessary websites, products, and services. Due to the novelty and unique style of the blog, users are more open to the advertising message contained inside, often even not realizing that this is an advertisement. Due to its distinctiveness and in order to be used effectively, blogging requires significantly more creative effort to produce unique content than other marketing tools do (Sajjad, 2020)

As a result, compared to contextual advertising and email newsletters, blogging is a less aggressive form of promotion. However, blogging is frequently more effective than other Internet marketing techniques. In their articles and videos, bloggers provide their evaluation of any good or service in an approachable way, drawing customers' attention to

the offered goods. This distinctive format is the key factor in the popularity and efficiency of blogs. Blogging partially adopts viral marketing strategies: the user receives material from the blog that contains hidden advertisements, which he then distributes to family, friends, co-workers, etc., thereby spreading advertisements based on the network

Consumable goods are rarely the major topics of blogs: more often bloggers publish reviews of technological innovations and software; they also share their impressions of traveling abroad, their thoughts on recently purchased cars, movie reviews and others. In other words, since the Internet serves as the primary platform for blogging, authors are compelled to post material that will be of high interest to Internet users worldwide. Based on everything mentioned above, it can be concluded that blogging is a cutting-edge, efficient, and demanding method of promotion. As a result, Table 3 below lists the advantages and disadvantages of utilizing blogs as a primary tool for marketing and business (Hans, 2021).

2.5.1 Advantages and disadvantages of using blogging as a primary marketing tool

Table 3 - Advantages and disadvantages of using blogging as a primary marketing tool

Advantages	Disadvantages
Blogging is a modern and effective means of promotion in the Internet environment.	For non-Internet users, blogging affects only through intermediaries on the principle of viral marketing.
Compared to other Internet marketing tools, blogging is often more effective than, for example, contextual advertising and search engine optimization and promotion	Blogging requires more time and creative energy than any other form of Internet marketing, as bloggers need to constantly monitor and generate content
Blogging provide bloggers with high passive (and sometimes active) income	A lot of time, effort and money goes into developing and promoting a blog
Bloggers can network and gain public speaking experience, and can influence on his audience	Some users will approach advertising information with suspicion, presuming the blogger has financial interests.
Blogging provides an opportunity to improve - expand the interests and improve writing talent	For high quality and engaging content, effective blogging demands charisma, literary talent, and a spacious mind.

The expansion of information links and globalization are both factors contributing to the rapid development of blogging nowadays. The following elements contribute to this phenomenon's favourable dynamics:

- An increase in the number of bloggers;

- Increased popularity of blogging among Internet users;

- The simplicity of setting up and maintaining a blog;

- The ability to publicly express the opinion on any subject (Romney, 2017)

The existence of "fake" blogs, where paid articles with advertising content are disguised as personal impressions, has historically been one of the major disadvantages of using blogging for marketing objectives. The existence of such a phenomenon negatively affects both the consumer who has purchased a product/service that does not meet the requirements, and other bloggers. Despite some scepticism of bloggers because of their bias toward advertising, there is no reason to think that blogs will become less important as a marketing tool or that bloggers will not be able to make money through their engagement in advertising in the future. (Bratton, 2022)

It may be concluded here that there are dozens of different marketing tools. It takes competence and skills to handle the tools of promotion on the Internet in a high-quality manner. Blogging has plenty of advantages and drawbacks, as any other marketing tool does. However, it is fair to assume that many media professionals now believe that blogging is an effective tool to represent him/herself on social media platforms and to promote products and services through those social networks.

While some platforms are already outdated, others are still in use. The practical part focuses on the analysis of bloggers in Kazakhstan from the perspective of the audience on the Instagram, since it is still in use and is very popular platform in Kazakhstan, among few others. By conducting a survey among the respondents, the author analyses how bloggers are perceived by the audience in general – whether negatively or positively.

Practical Part

Even while blogging is still a relatively fresh concept in Kazakhstan, its social importance is expanding every day. Additionally, bloggers themselves are increasingly setting trends and making news. Moreover, this is despite the fact that blogs were initially developed as a tool for communicating, expressing one's viewpoint, and posting personal information. It has gradually transformed into a tool that influences people's consciousness and touches practically all aspects of public life.

When the question whether blogs are considered mainstream media came up a few years ago, bloggers and their blogs were particularly actively discussed in Kazakhstan. Then ultimately, it was concluded that the blog does not belong to the media. On the other hand, some bloggers in Kazakhstan have an audience that is several times larger than that of traditional media.

As traditional media increasingly mention blogs and bloggers, the blogging in Kazakhstan is now more and more considered as a source of information.

On the other hand, it is important to note that bloggers occasionally neglect to verify the information they write and even purposefully falsify it. Blogging is not only a hobby but also a profession that pays well in Kazakhstan. This part will focus on bloggers in Kazakhstan, their role in the society and their perception by the audience.

2.6 Survey: Internet Usage

This study has been conducted in September-October 2022 using a quantitative questionnaire method. The purpose of the study is to analyse blogging as a tool of social communication and its impact. The main research question is whether public generally perceives the bloggers positively or negatively.

In order to fulfil the tasks set, during the survey 267 respondents were interviewed, of which 61% were women and 39% were men. The respondents were divided into several age groups. The snowball technique of random sampling was used to choose survey respondents. The snowball technique is a variation on random sampling that relies on the assumption that practically every target group representative can name one or more individuals who belong to this group. As a result, the initial step was to look for the first respondents, who then recommended further respondents.

The step of developing survey questions was the most crucial and challenging. In order to examine the data later, it was important that the questions be written in an easy-to-understand way.
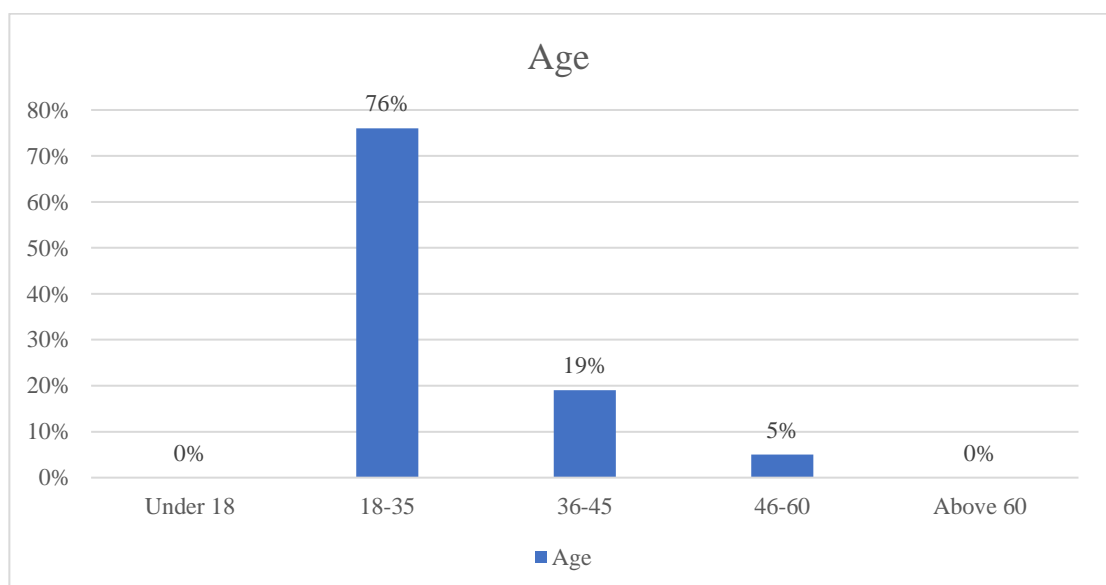
Google Forms was used to conduct the research online. Respondents were found with the help of Instagram social media platform and the previously mentioned snowball technique. A message was created specifically for the respondents asking them to participate in the questionnaire, along with information about the purpose of the survey and an estimated timeframe.

Many respondents said they lacked the time, while others merely chose to disregard the message. Finding respondents was not too difficult, in general.

2.6.1   Age

Respondents between the ages of 18 and 35 make up 76% of all responses, followed by those between the ages of 36 and 45 (19%) and those between the ages of 46 and 60 (5%). People under the age of 18 and those above the age of 60 were not included in the poll. Such age limitations may be caused by the fact that this age group engages in blogging the most and that young people are more active online in general. The age distribution is shown in Figure 2 - Age.

Figure 2 - Age

Source: own processing

2.6.2   Occupation

In terms of occupation, as shown below on the Figure 3 – Occupation, the majority of respondents are employed - 64%, students - 18% or self-employed 13%. Only 5% of those surveyed are unemployed. There were no retired persons among the respondents.

Figure 3 - Occupation

Source: own processing
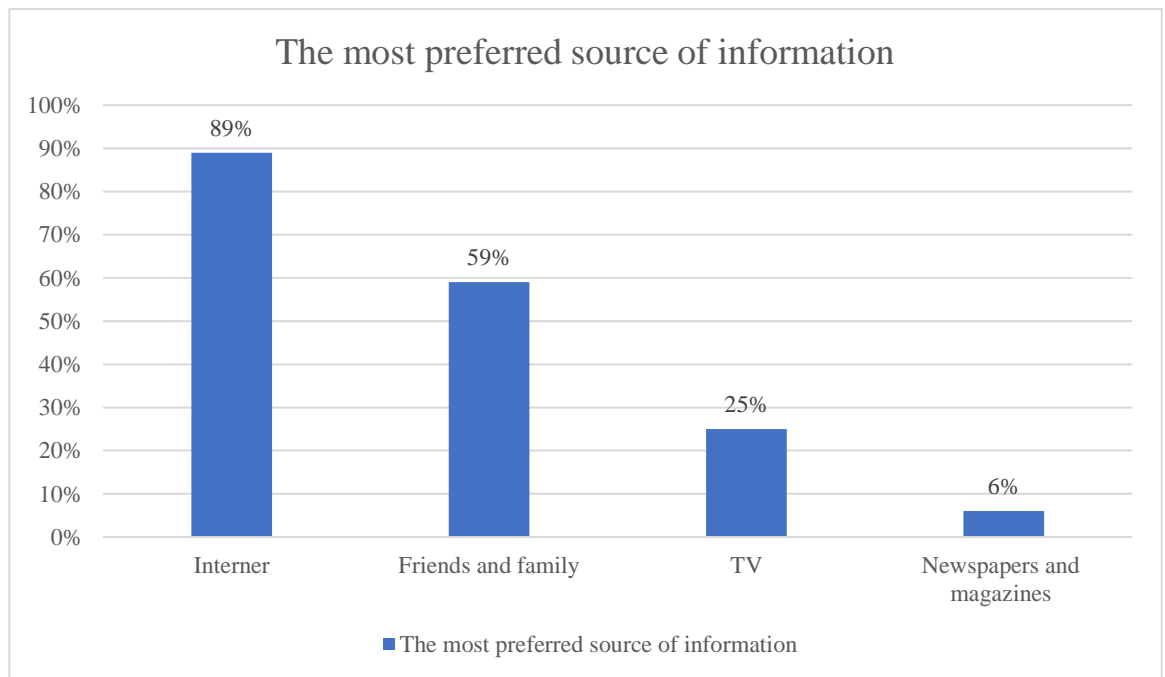
2.6.3   The most preferred sources of information

The world around us requires dealing with information regularly. In people's lives, information has always been of utmost importance. It helps to assess the situation accurately and to make decisions carefully. Information is how each of us builds up our personal knowledge bases.   Millions of people's lives are being fundamentally affected by information technology.

There are many different information resources available today. The Figure 4 – The most preferred source of information below shows what sources of information the respondents prefer the most. The total percentage exceeds 100% as the respondents are allowed to choose several (maximum 3) options of answers. As it shows, the most preferred source of information is internet - 89%, 82% of the respondents prefer to get the news from internet on the daily basis.

The friends and family follow the internet as a source of information, totalling in 59% of respondents. This can be explained by the respondents' ages, as peer groups are important reference groups for young people.

It is also important to note the unpopularity and low demand for informational sources like magazines and newspapers (6%) which are noticeably less effective and less quick to post fresh news than the Internet. Television is the favoured information source for every fourth survey participant (24%).

Figure 4 - The most preferred source of information

Source: own processing

2.6.4 The most trusted source of information

The Internet is the most reliable source out of all those mentioned - 74%. This can be explained by the fact that on the Internet it is possible to compare various points of view. However, more than half of respondents trust family and friends as a source of information - 56%, and 24% of respondents trust television, which is approximately three times fewer than the percentage of respondents who trust the internet. The Figure 5 – The most trusted source of information below shows that newspapers and magazines are still in the lowest places. It is also important to note that 15% of respondents of the survey do not trust any sources of information. It should be noted that the Figure 5 more

or less reflects the Figure 4 – The most preferred source of information; it testifies that people prefer to obtain the information from the resources they trust the most.

Figure 5 - The most trusted source of information

Source: own processing

If we examine the data from previous years, we can see that for a very long time, people trusted television the most (Gunter, 2005). Today, however, Internet usage is increasing while TV watching is declining. Internet users have way more options than TV viewers do. Internet users can type anything into the search box and it can be found on the Internet very quickly.

The Internet also gives people access to a wide range of news sources, each of which presents its own perspective on the current events. A modern Internet user can form his point of view on the issue based on a comparison of many different viewpoints thanks to the various perspectives offered in online resources.

2.6.5   The most interesting topics

Internet allows the user to find an information of any type. The following Figure 6 – Topics of the most interest below shows what topics are of the most interest of respondents.

The most popular topics were public and social topics (41%), beauty and health (38%), business, money and economics (34%), sports and entertainment (31%), books and education (28%) and technology (27%).

The interest in these topics can be explained by the fact that the object of the study was the able-bodied and active part of the population, for which these topics are especially pertinent. A big aspect of young people's lives is entertainment. On the student bench today, young people are already attempting to make a name for themselves among prospective employers. They are therefore interested in everything that has to do with education, money and business. The least popular topics are fashion and design, hunting and fishing and auto-industry. Those are hobbies and that is why might be of secondary interest.

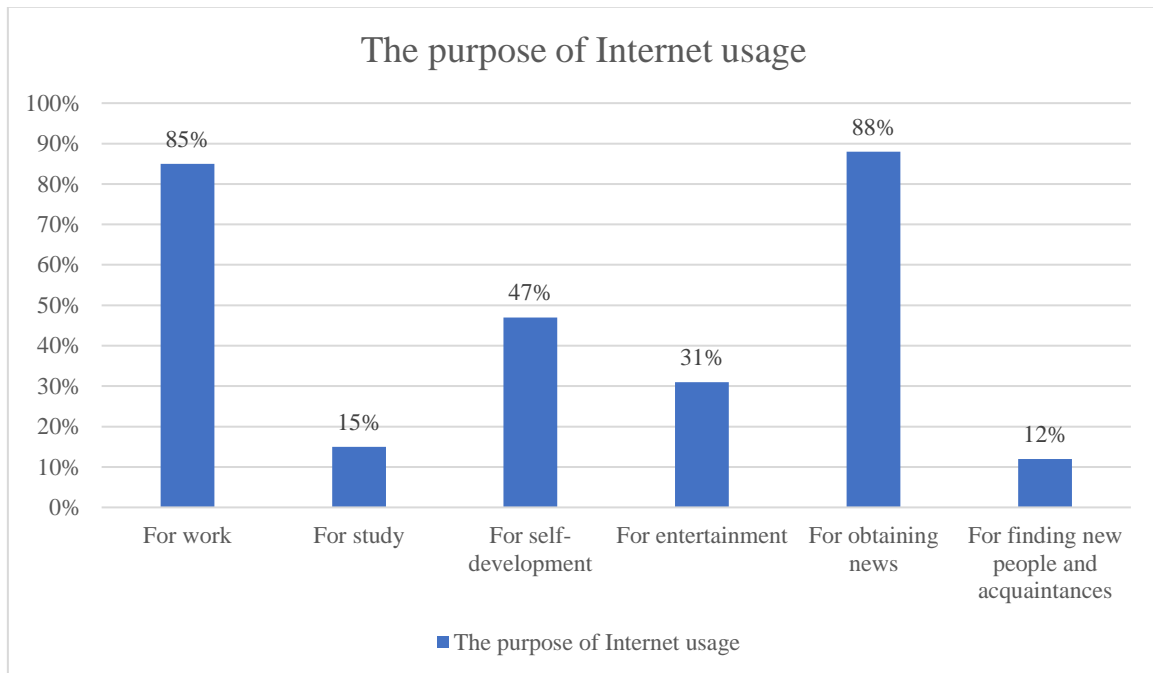*Figure 6 - Topics of the most interest*

Source: own processing

2.6.6 The purpose of internet usage

The Internet has become an integral part of our everyday lives. The following Figure 7 – The purpose of Internet usage shows the main purposes why respondents use Internet.

Figure 7 - The purpose of Internet usage

Source: own processing

As the Figure 7 – The purpose of Internet usage above shows, most of the respondents use Internet for work (85%), and only 15% use it for study. This can be explained by the fact that only 18% of respondents are students. Impressing is that almost half of the respondents (47%) use the internet for self-development and one third of all respondents (31%) use it for entertainment. The vast majority (88%) use Internet also to obtain news, and only 12% of respondents use Internet as a meaning to find new people and acquaintances.

Summarizing all that has been written above it can be said that people are now less likely to believe the information they receive from television, the Internet is currently the primary source for finding information. The majority of people use the Internet for both informational, business and recreational purposes.

2.7 Survey: Blogging

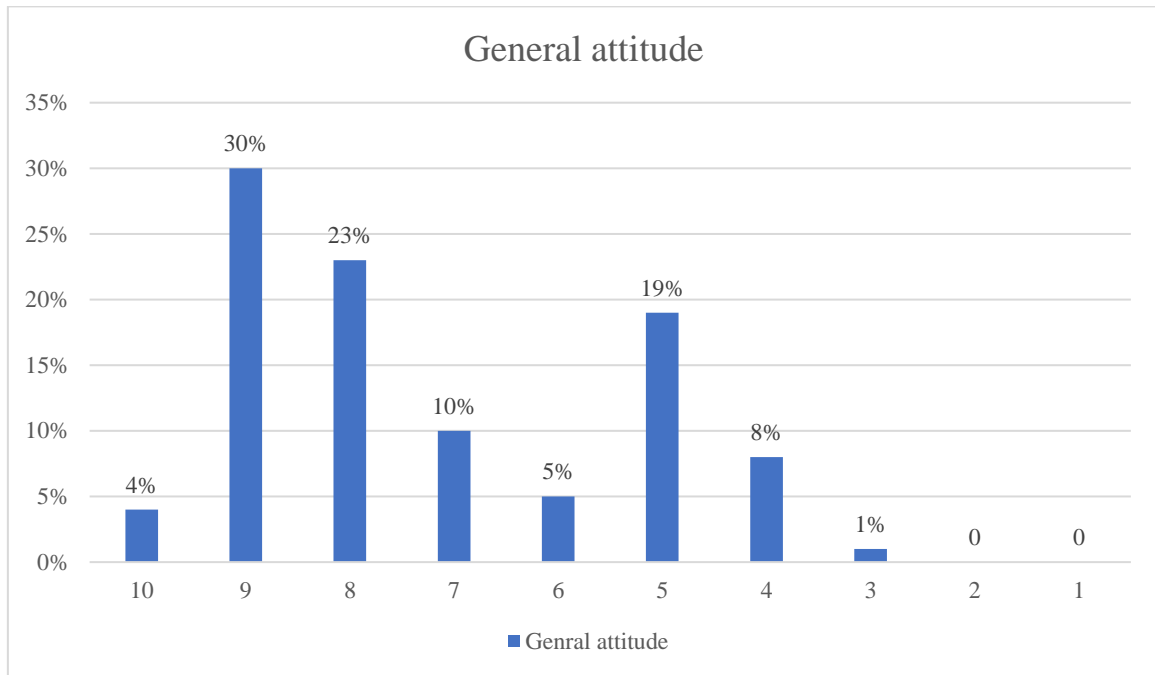This section will be aimed at respondents' perception of the blogs and its usage.

2.7.1 General attitude

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the best attitude toward blogs and 1 being the worst, this chapter will examine the general attitude of respondents toward blogs.

The survey revealed that respondents have a generally favourable opinion of blogs, perhaps because blogs replace a significant part of news resources.

As it can be seen from the Figure 8 – General attitude of respondents to blogs below, the majority of respondents have either very good (10) or moderate (5) attitude toward blogs. There were no respondents who would have totally negative attitude towards blogs, however, there are 9% of respondents, mainly older than 35yo, that consider blogs worse than moderate, which may signal that those people might have less interest and time for blogs. Despite this, in general, the attitude of respondents towards blogging can be regarded as positive. It is interesting to see that respondents tend to avoid giving extreme ratings. It is also reasonable to assume that positive attitude is associated with a variety of topics and opinions of bloggers; and less positive attitude is associated with bloggers that purposefully sway and manipulate with public opinion in order to promote specific businesses and foster particular societal feelings.

Figure 8 - General attitude of respondents to blogs

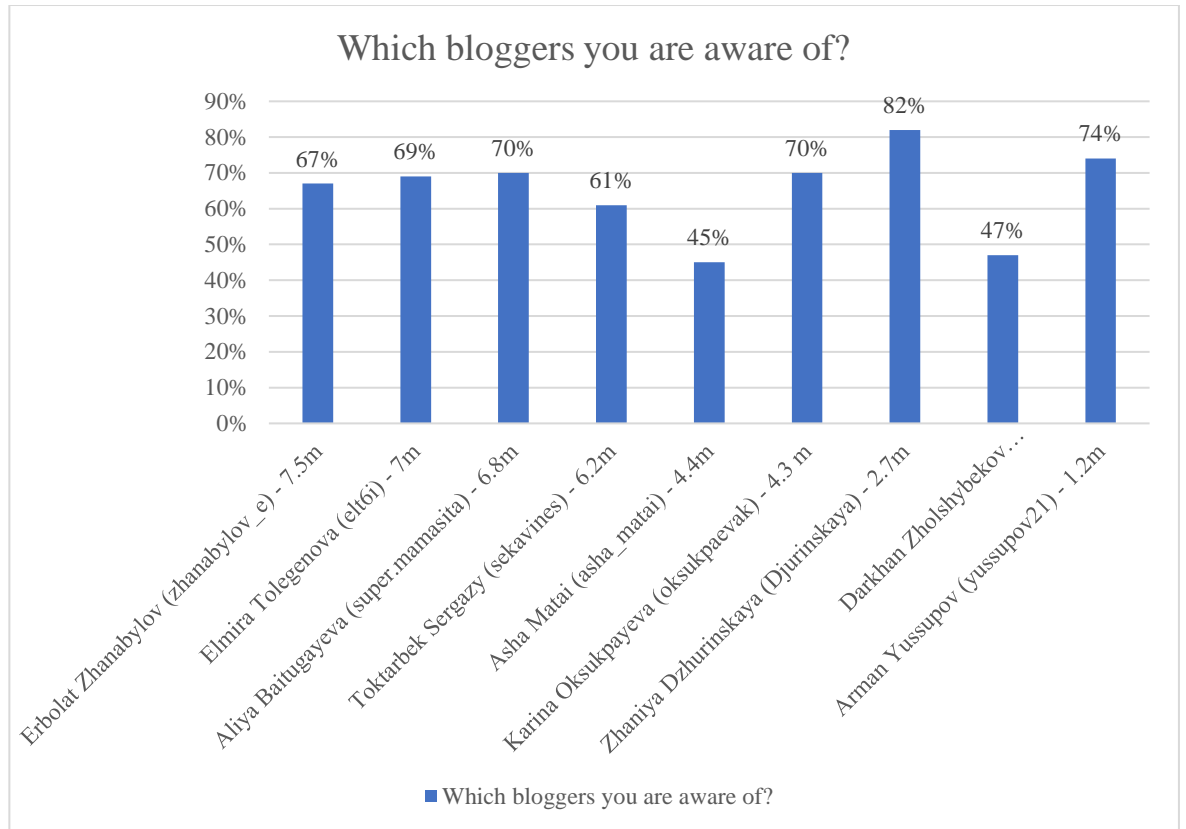*Source: own processing*

2.7.2 Awareness of Kazakh bloggers

Numerous Internet users today have their own blogs. Documenting the thoughts, impressions and reflections, covering an information campaign, providing important information, finding new clients, finding like-minded folks are just a few of the motives for having a blog.

A blog will have a high rating if it is widely read, has many comments, and the author presents the material in an engaging manner. Definitely, the content is crucial - the more engaging the posts are for the intended audience, the more satisfied readers will be with the blog. The most well known and largest (by audience) Instagram bloggers are listed in the following query. The list was compiled using a variety of online resources and then verified on the Instagram page. The Figure 9 – Awareness of certain bloggers below shows which of these bloggers our respondents are aware of.

Zhaniya Dzhurinskaya, who is known to 72% of respondents, is the most well liked blogger, according to the survey outcome. She posts about her lifestyle and works as an

actress. People are usually curious about the lives of famous people; reading blogs gives them an inspiration and the chance to learn more about their favourites.

Figure 9 - Awareness of certain bloggers

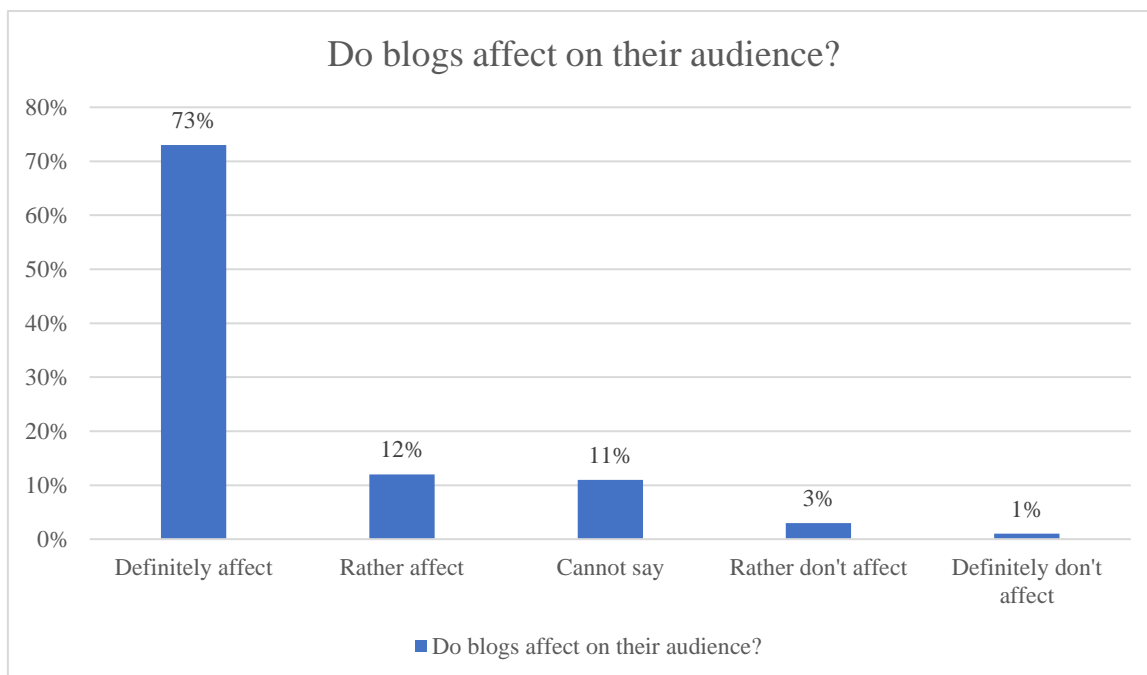*Source: own processing*

2.7.3 Other bloggers

This question was in an open format, suggesting adding the Kazakh bloggers that are not listed in the previous question and why do respondents follow them. Among few answers were a singer and lifestyle blogger Damelya Sweet (@damelya_sw_), entertaining blogger Aikhanym Alikhan (@aikhanym_alikhankyzy), actress Ayim Seitmetova (@aiymsm), producer and actress Bayan Maxatkyzy (@bayanmaxatkyzy), blogger Meirzhan Turebayev (@meirzhach_tv) and others. Among the reasons, what is their motivation to follow exactly these bloggers were the trust and honesty of bloggers, interesting and useful content and the opportunity to inspire and get business ideas.

2.7.4 Bloggers' impact on audience

In Kazakhstan, blogs have gained a lot of popularity and successfully compete with the media as platforms for public discourse as well as sources of news and analysis. Bloggers challenge the government and society with serious issues that affect us all and that we encounter every day in our homes and workplaces. , the following Figure 10 – Bloggers' impact on audience shows the respondents' opinions if and how blogs affect the audience.

The survey's findings show that 73% of respondents think blogs have an impact on society. An intriguing finding was that 11% of respondents were undecided, and 7% think blogs have no impact on society. It can be therefore stated that a large part of the respondents is aware of the influence blogs have. In addition, given the positive attitude shown above in Figure 8, it can be assumed that blogs are not perceived as a threat to society or a risk; rather they are seen as a helpful tool in daily life.
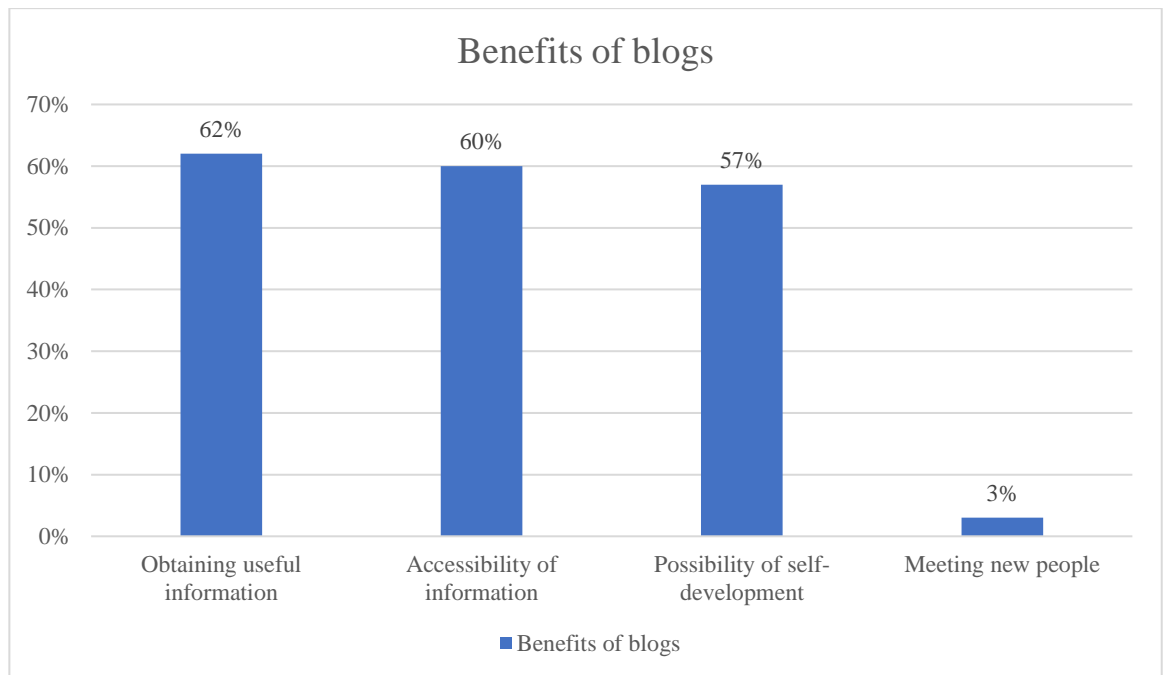
Figure 10 - Bloggers' impact on audience

Source: own processing

2.7.5 Benefits and drawbacks

Knowing that the majority of respondents trust blogs have a positive attitude towards them, the following Figure 11 – Benefits of blogs below demonstrates the benefits and drawbacks of blogs.

A roughly equal number of respondents highlighted the benefits of blogs including obtaining useful information (62%), information accessibility (60%) and the opportunity for self-development (57%). Only 3% of respondents think that having a chance to meet new people through blogs is a benefit. Perhaps this is because blogs do not serve for dating purposes.
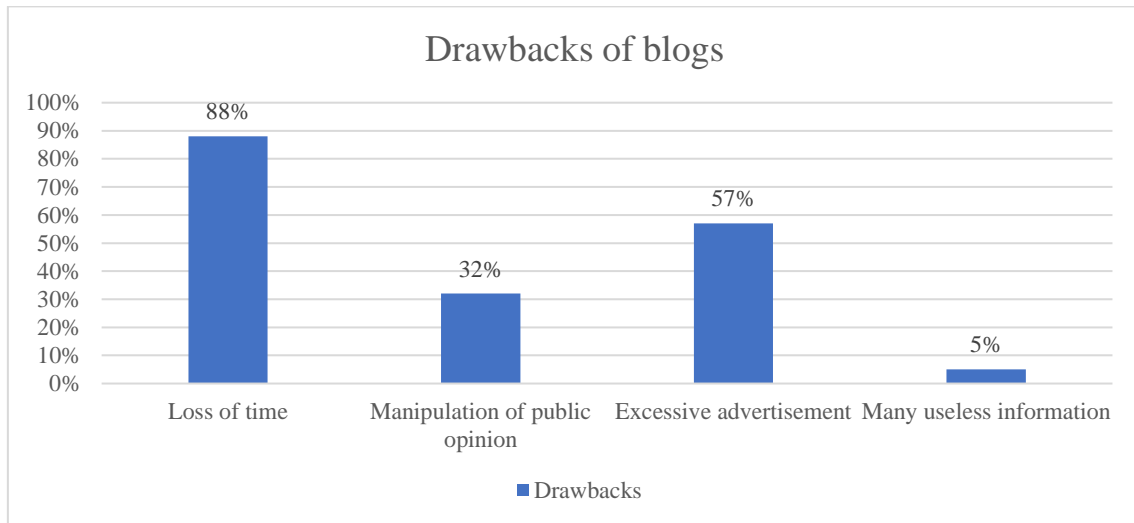
Figure 11 - Benefits of blogs

Source: own processing

The Figure 12 – Drawbacks of blogs below represents what respondents think about disadvantages of blogs, according to their opinion. While examining the drawbacks it is apparent that the primary one, according to 88% of respondents, is the waste of a significant amount of time, while 57% think blogs promote too much advertisement and 32% of respondents highlight that blogs can also be used to manipulate public opinion. Only 5% think that blogs offer many useless information.

Figure 12 - Drawbacks of blogs

Drawbacks of blogs

	Loss of time	Manipulation of public opinion	Excessive advertisement	Many useless information
Drawbacks	88%	32%	57%	5%

Source: own processing

2.8 Results and Discussion

To conclude, the answer for the research question is that bloggers are generally perceived positively. The Internet has become a global phenomenon in modern culture because it can be used to both find information and make money. Because it connects hundreds of thousands of networks worldwide, it has a broad audience reach. It is the biggest computer network. A large majority of respondents believe that blogs have a more positive than negative influence on audience behaviour and actions, confirming the assumption that this influence is significant. However, the swaying of public opinion has not gone unnoticed, demonstrating blogs' power over readers' choices and opinions.

The majority of respondents stated that they read blogs primarily for informational purposes, possibly because blogs are rapidly taking the place of other media.

267 respondents were interviewed in the above-mentioned survey, among which the majority were women - 61%, and the rest 39% are men. Among 267 respondents, there are 203 respondents aged between 18-35, which consists the majority. The rest are students (48 respondents), self-employed (35 respondents) and unemployed (13 respondents).

As it was found out, the most preferred and most trusted source of information is internet, followed by the friends and family and then by television with quite a significant difference.

Respondents ranked are public and social topics first, followed by beauty and health, business, money and economics, sports, entertainment, literature and education, and technology.

The interest in these topics may be explained by the study's focus on the young and active segment of population, for whom these topics are particularly relevant. Young people's lives include entertainment substantially, as they are attempting to pitch themselves to find better jobs, better conditions and better comfort. As a result, they have a keen interest in anything related to business, finance and socially important topics. The auto industry, hunting and fishing, fashion and design are the least popular topics.

The majority of respondents have either a very positive or a moderate opinion toward blogging. There were no respondents who had a wholly negative opinion of blogs, but 9% of respondents, mostly over the age of 35, thought that blogs were worse than moderate, which may indicate that these respondents have less time and interest in blogs. Despite this, respondents' attitudes toward blogging can often be viewed as good. It is interesting to note that respondents generally hesitate to rank things in absolute values. It is also plausible to

infer that bloggers with positive attitudes tend to write on a variety of subjects and hold diverse perspectives, while bloggers with negative attitudes tend to do so on purpose.

Users intend to speak up because of the information openness. This urge could be satisfied thanks to blogs, which also enabled the interaction two-way: users of Instagram, for instance, could interact with the blogger directly by commenting to his publication.

In addition, the sense of "involvement" is the major factor in why people feel good about bloggers. Subscribers start to trust the blogger and think of him or her as a virtual friend because the blogger literally lets them into his life every day. Stanley Milgram, an American social psychologist claims that people have a tendency to gravitate toward others who belong to "their" group (Milgram, 1977).

If a blog is widely read, has plenty of comments, and the author writes about the subject in an interesting way, it will receive more subscribers and more popularity. Content is undoubtedly important. The author provided a list of very well known and popular (based on audience size) Instagram bloggers. Majority of bloggers are familiar with many of those listed.

The followers follow bloggers because they think that he/she is "just like me", share common goals and values. Bloggers and opinion leaders encourage these emotions by frequently sharing personal information and thoughts. They strengthen subscribers' loyalty and expertise by providing recommendations, going livestream etc. The author checked all Instagram pages of bloggers mentioned in the questionnaire and it was clear that blogging is perceived as a job that is taken with all seriousness: bloggers look well presented, upbeat and educated.

Further, the majority of respondents apparently think blogs have a significant impact on society. It would be a mistake to claim the opposite. Bloggers are inherently integrated into network communications, accurately and swiftly catching the current agenda, sensing the moment that could spark a wave of network debates, and using the information "buzz" to draw in the audience. That is why bloggers with big audience should tread cautiously when making statements and posting content online. After all, people who trust their opinion are eager to listen to what they have to say, and products that bloggers mention in their posts eventually become very popular.

In general, the findings paint a picture of a fork in a road, representing the potential for two possibilities regarding the expansion of bloggers' impact in public life. It suggests that the role of blogging in society is not yet fully defined. On the one hand, there is a

possibility that the public's interest in blogging may decline, leading to a rise in apathy towards blogs. This could happen if bloggers fail to adapt to changing audience needs and preferences or if the public becomes overwhelmed by the sheer volume of blogs available online. In this scenario, the influence of bloggers in shaping public opinion and behaviour would be diminished.

On the other hand, there is a possibility that the line between traditional media and blogging will continue to blur, leading to the incorporation of blogs into mainstream society. This would involve bloggers being given a designated space alongside traditional media outlets, and being recognized as a legitimate source of information and opinion. This scenario is more likely given the increasing digitalization of every aspect of modern life, and the fact that younger generations are more likely to consume content online.

If the second scenario plays out, bloggers could have a significant impact on society, and their opinions and recommendations could carry even more weight than they do now. This would require bloggers to maintain high standards of credibility and transparency, as well as to adapt to changing audience needs and preferences. It would also require traditional media outlets to recognize the importance of blogging and to incorporate it into their operations.

Overall, the finding that the expansion of bloggers' impact in public life highlights the importance of continued research into the role of blogging in society.

3 Conclusion

The bachelor thesis dealt with the state of the blogging usage in Kazakhstan.

The theoretical part described historical evolution, outlined the fundamental ideas of marketing, and as well as characteristics of online communication tools. Next, the thesis explains the fundamentals of marketing mix, and its essential components, such as price, product, place and promotion (4P). The following chapter focuses on marketing communication tools and specifically on internet marketing communications. Last, but not least, the final chapter of the theoretical part focuses on blogging as a tool of marketing communication, its advantages and disadvantages.

The practical part consists of an analysis of the blogging and its perception by the public in Kazakhstan. It is performed in the form of an online survey on the Google Forms platform. There were 267 respondents, with the prevailing share of respondents aged between 18 and 35.

As a result, blogging can be regarded as a marketing communication tool. It can be used to voice one's opinion on specific topics and events, garner the interest of other bloggers, maintain an active presence in the blogging community, position one's image, and engage in dialogue with the public.

The bachelor's thesis objectives have been attained. The author reviewed the methodological literature on the research problem and examined blogging as a tool for marketing communication. The author also examined its characteristics, the reasons why people visit blogs, the frequency with which they visit, and the functions of blogs from the viewpoint of the public. The author also identified preferred topics and evaluated the extent to which blogs have an impact on their audience from the respondents' points of view.

According to the findings of the thesis, blogging can be described as a set of actions the person undertakes within the context of his blogging, performed at various intervals and undertaken to express his own opinion on specific topics and events, as well as to catch the attention of the audience. Blogging is a crucial form of social communication, but it also has both beneficial and harmful effects.

The survey findings indicate that the Internet is the most preferred information source. Thus, blogging is an online resource that people mostly use to gather information.

Respondents view blogging favourably; according to them, it has a beneficial rather than a negative impact.

The findings of this survey can be used for the creation of a commercially successful blog. The data collected from the study will be helpful to fully grasp what the audience expects from blogs, making it possible to properly meet their expectations.

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5 List of Figures and Tables

6 List of abbreviations

AMA - American Marketing Association

EMAC - European Marketing Academy

ESOMAR - European Society of Marketing Research Professionals

MC - Marketing communications

NAMT - National Association of Marketing Teachers

POS - Points of sale

PR - Public relations

Appendix

Annex 1 – Survey questionnaire

Блоггинг

(без совместного доступа) Сменить аккаунт

* Обязательно

Age / Возраст *

◯ Up to 18y / До 18

◯ 18-35

◯ 36-45

◯ 46-60

◯ 60 and more / больше 60

Gender / Пол *

◯ Female / Женский

◯ Male / Мужской

Occupation / Род занятий *

◯ Student / Студент

◯ Employed / Трудоустроен

◯ Unemployed / Безработный

◯ Self-employed / Самозанятость

◯ Retired / На пенсии

What are the most preferred sources of information? (maximum 3 options / Какие источники информации являются для вас наиболее предпочитываемыми? (максимум 3)   *

☐ Family and friends / Семья, друзья, знакомые

☐ TV / ТВ

☐ Newspapers and magazines / Бумажные газеты и журналы

☐ Internet / Интернет

☐ Другое: _____

How frequently you receive information from various sources? / С какой частотой вы достаете информацию из нижеприведенных источников?   *

	Семья, друзья и знакомые / Family, friends	Газеты и журналы / Newspapers and magazines	ТВ / TV	Интернет / Internet
Каждый день / Everyday	○	○	○	○
Раз в два-три дня / Once per 2-3 days	○	○	○	○
Один раз в неделю / Once a week	○	○	○	○
2-5 раз в месяц / 2-5 times a month	○	○	○	○
Раз в месяц / Once a month	○	○	○	○
Никогда / Never	○	○	○	○

What information sources you trust the most? / Каким источникам   *
информации вы доверяете больше всего?

○ Семья, друзья и знакомые / Family, friends

○ ТВ / TV

○ Газеты /журналы / Newspapers, magazines

○ Интернет / Internet

○ Никаким / Nothing

What topics are of the most interest for you? / Какие темы интересуют больше   *
всего у источников информации?

☐ Технологии / Technologies

☐ Политика / Politics

☐ Общественные и социальные темы / Social topics

☐ Бизнес, деньги и экономика / Business, money, economics

☐ Красота и здоровье / Beauty and health

☐ Книги и образование / Books and education

☐ Мода и дизайн / Fashion, design

☐ Охота, рыбалка / Fishing and hunting

☐ Авто индустрия / Automative industry

☐ Путешествия / Travelling

☐ Спорт и развлечения / Sport and entertainment

☐ Другое:

Why do you use internet? / Для чего вы используете интернет? *

☐ Для работы / For work

☐ Для учебы / For study

☐ Для саморазвития / For self-development

☐ Для развлечений / For entertainment

☐ Для получения новой информации / To get news

☐ Для нахождения новых людей и знакомств / To find new people and acquaintances

Do you follow bloggers on social media? / Следите ли вы за блоггерами в социальных сетях? *

○ Да / Yes

○ Нет / No

○ Другое: _____

What is your general attitude to bloggers from 1 (worst) to 10 (best)? / Какое у вас общее отношение к блоггерам от 1 (наихудшее) до 10 (наилучшее)? *

○ 1

○ 2

○ 3

○ 4

○ 5

○ 6

○ 7

○ 8

○ 9

○ 10

Whom of these Kazakh bloggers you are aware of? Какие из этих блоггеров вам знакомы? *

○ Ерболат Жанабылов (zhanabylov_e) - 7.5m

○ Эльмира Толегенова (elt6i) - 7m

○ Алия Байтугаева (super.mamasita) - 6.8m

○ Токтарбек Сергазы (sekavines) - 6.2m

○ Аша Матай (asha_matai) - 4.4m

○ Карина Оксукпаева (oksukpaevak) - 4.3 m

○ Жания Джуринская (Djurinskaya) - 2.7m

○ Дархан Жолшыбеков (darhanzholshybekov) - 2.6m

○ Юсупов Арман (yussupov21) - 1.2m

Please add other Kazakh bloggers that you follow and that are absent in previous question / Добавьте блоггеров (максимально 5), которых вы фолловите и которых нет в предыдущем списке

Мой ответ

Why do you follow them? / Почему вы их фолловите?

Мой ответ

How do you think whether the bloggers affect on their audience? / Как вы думаете, влияют ли блоги на свою аудиторию? *

○ Definitely affect / Определенно влияют

○ Rather affect / Скорее всего влияют

○ Cannot say / Не могу сказать

○ Rather do not affect / Скорее всего не влияют

○ Definitely do not affect / Определенно не влияют

What are the main benefits of blogs? Какие основные преимущества блогов? *

☐ Many useful information / Много полезной информации

☐ Possibility to subscribe to multiple bloggers on one platform / Возможность подписаться на несколько блогов на одной платформе (например Инстаграм)

☐ Possibility to advertise the products and services / Можно рекламировать свой товар

☐ Possibility to win prizes in competitions and giveaways / Можно выигрывать призы на розыгрышах

☐ Другое:

What are the main drawbacks of blogs? / Какие основные минусы блогов? *

☐ Many useless information / Много бесполезной информации

☐ No concentration due to format on Instagram / Отсутствие концентрации из-за формата подачи информации (короткие видео, посты)

☐ Big loss of time / Большая потеря времени

☐ Political propaganda Политическая пропаганда

☐ Unfair advertising / Недобросовестная реклама

☐ Другое:

Отправить   **Очистить форму**

Google Формы