

Czech University of Life Sciences Prague

Faculty of Economics and Management

Department of Management



Bachelor Thesis

Marketing communication of Selected Company

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BACHELOR THESIS ASSIGNMENT

Alla Petrosyan

Economics and Management
Economics and Management

Thesis title

Marketing Communication of Selected Company

Objectives of thesis

The objective of the thesis is to formulate, based on the research findings, a conceptual proposal of improvement in marketing communication of the given company.

Methodology

The thesis will consist of two parts. First part should deal with elementary theoretical overview. It should deal with the theory of marketing communication including principles, models and its evaluation. The theoretical part of the thesis will be based on the critical review of information gained from study and comparison of relevant resources. The fundamental, empiric part will be focused on specific marketing communication in a given company. Data for the empiric part will be gained using appropriate data collection techniques. Based on the research, the relevant conclusions of the thesis must be drawn.

Recommended structure of the diploma thesis:

1. Introduction – an explanation of the topic importance.
2. Thesis objectives and methodology – main objective of the thesis will be divided in the partial objectives based on the knowledge gained from the study of the marketing communication theory. Appropriate methods of data collection and analysis will be explained in the methodology of the thesis.
3. Literature review – critical review of current knowledge in the field of the marketing communication, its models and tools.
4. Specification of the selected organisation – profile of the given company.
5. Practical part – analysis of data gained from own research according to the methodology.
6. Evaluation of results and recommendation – formulation of own proposal of improvements.
7. Conclusion – review of main results and evaluation of the contribution of the theses.

8. References

9. Appendices



The proposed extent of the thesis

30-40 pages

Keywords

marketing communication, direct marketing, advertising, branding, public relations, consumer behaviour

Recommended information sources

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Declaration

I declare that I have worked on my bachelor thesis titled "Marketing communication of Selected Company" 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 copyrights of any their person.

In Prague on 22.03.2020

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Marketing communication of Selected Company

Abstract

The topic of this bachelor thesis is marketing communication of a selected company, i.e. Zero Waste shop in Moscow. This shop focuses on selling products without package and at the same time helping to solve environmental issues. The theoretical part of the thesis covers marketing terms and explains Zero Waste concept, which provides the background for the practical part. The emphasis is put on the marketing communication mix and explanation of its elements.

Practical part starts with the overview of the selected company and its present marketing communication on social media. The questionnaire was used to get the information about customers and their preferences. The gathered data was then analysed and presented graphically and verbally. Based on the outcomes from the research, the proper recommendations for the improvement of the marketing communication in the selected company were proposed in the last chapter.

Keywords: green marketing, marketing communication, online marketing communication, Zero Waste, social media.

Marketingová komunikace zvoleného podniku

Abstrakt

Tématem bakalářské práce je marketingová komunikace zvoleného podniku, a to konkrétně obchodu Zero Waste shop v Moskvě. Tento obchod je zaměřen na prodej zboží bez obalu a také na pomoc v řešení problému životního prostředí. Teoretická část vysvětluje marketingové pojmy a filozofii Zero Waste, které byly potřebné pro zpracování praktické části. Důraz je kladen na pojem marketingového komunikačního mixu a jeho nástrojů.

Praktická část se začíná charakteristikou zvoleného podniku a jeho marketingovou komunikací na sociálních sítích. Dotazník byl použit pro získání informací od zákazníků o jejich preferencích. Sbíraná data pak byla zpracována a představena slovně a graficky. Na základě výsledků výzkumu, v poslední kapitole byla představena doporučení pro zlepšení marketingové komunikace vybraného podniku.

Klíčová slova: zelený marketing, marketingová komunikace, online marketingová komunikace, Zero Waste, sociální síti.

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1 Introduction

During the last decade, consumers were getting more responsive to the problems concerning environment, hence many companies are taking the solving of those problems as a target. They use sustainable business practices and produce eco-friendly products. As more people care about environment and its safety, the higher is the demand for the eco-friendly or so called green products. Eco-friendliness is associated with production, which doesn't harm environment and with distribution based on ecological technologies, practices and standards. Saving and reusing resources is one of the manifests of sustainable consumer behaviour nowadays. Many people implement it through decreasing the amount of package they use; therefore reducing waste they produce (Kumar & Anand, 2014).

In Russia, these ecological trends just have started to develop over last few years. There is a huge problem with waste and ecology. The solutions are starting to develop now, and it is exciting to learn how green companies operate on this market.

2 Objectives and Methodology

2.1 Objectives

The main objective of this bachelor thesis is the proposal of recommendations for the improving the marketing communication of Zero Waste shop in terms of Moscow market. To achieve this purpose, it is necessary to cover the following objectives:

- Identify who is the current customer of Zero Waste shop.
- What are the preferences and needs of the current customer?
- Find the solution for the maintaining a loyal customer base.
- Develop the social media profiles.

2.2 Methodology

The literature review of this bachelor thesis defines the terms such as marketing communication and its elements, and then continues with the overview of green marketing and its mix. It also covers the topic of zero waste concept and environmental awareness. The articles from academic journals used for this thesis were obtained from EBSCO database. They were chosen by using specific key words: green marketing, zero waste, marketing mix, marketing communication, environmentally friendly, customer loyalty. The filter was used to get the full text publications and articles published in the period from 2014 until 2019. Key words must have been mentioned in the annotation of an article. Published books from such authors as Philipp Kotler, Riccardo Benzo, John Egan were used for the literature review as well. The books were primarily used for explanation and deeper understanding of marketing and terms related to it, such as marketing mix and communication.

After literature review, the thesis proceeds with the overview of Zero Waste shop, its product portfolio and analysis of current competitors.

Products from the portfolio were grouped into four categories based on their purpose. There is no information about the quantity of each item presented in the shop, only the names of unique items are mentioned. The data was acquired from the official website of Zero Waste shop.

Two competitors are presented in the analysis. They were chosen by the following criteria:

- Their product portfolio should contain food without package and reusable items.

- They should present themselves as zero waste stores (e.g. on the social media).
- They should be located in Moscow.

Then the thesis proceeds with a paragraph about marketing communication on social media of the company. It includes the analysis of Instagram profile during the one year, from September 2018 until November 2019. The average amounts of likes among all publication during each season were calculated. The most popular and the least popular publications were analysed based on their content. There is much less information about Facebook profile in the thesis, because it contains less information and the profile itself is less active. All the information was obtained through constant observation of the profiles of Zero Waste shop and its official website.

The questionnaire was used as method of data collection in practical part. It was designed for current customers of Zero Waste shop. The first four questions are categorical. The rest of the questions are about customer's preferences, motivations and opinions about Zero waste shop, which enrich the data for the further analysis. All the questions are closed-ended and multiple-choice. The questionnaire is included into appendix.

In order to reach the customers, the questionnaire was sent to followers of Instagram profile of Zero Waste shop in a form of personal message. This method was chosen, because there was no possibility to contact them physically. Messages were sent to users, who have the open profile. Also, Instagram policy don't allow to send high number of same messages in order to prevent the users from spam. Due to this rule, the number of contacted people was lower than expected. In addition, a lot of them were not the actual customers, as some received messages were saying "I don't know what is Zero Waste shop" or "I don't understand the subject". Most of the messages were ignored. The targeted sample size was 100 people. In the end, the number of contacted people was 480 and 91 questionnaires were returned. The process of data collection took 2 weeks, from 10.11.2019 until 24.11.2019.

The collected data was then analysed with the help of contingency tables and graphical interpretation of each question's answers. It made the received date more transparent and easier to process.

In addition, the practical part is aiming to answer following *research questions*:

- *Do customers use any loyalty programs and how actively?*
- *Which social media is used by customers and how frequently?*

- *Which kind of information on social media is the most interesting for customers of Zero Waste shop?*

3 Literature Review

The literature review defines marketing communication and its elements, as that is the main topic of this thesis. Then it continues with overview of green marketing and zero waste concept.

3.1 Marketing communication

Marketing communication can be described as a set of strategic messages and communication tools used by a company to influence the perception of the value of a brand. Generally, marketing communication is a process of transferring information about product to the well-defined target audience in the most efficient way.

Marketing communication is a special type of communication, aiming to create connections between the organization and its audience through delivering this information, and through emotional and pragmatic influence (Chris, Fill & Turnbull, 2016).

Marketing communication is one the elements of the marketing strategy, its aim is cooperation with customers and other members of market, as well as creating demand and sales promotion. It is connected with the planning process and the process of marketing implementation itself.

It is important to mention, that the role of marketing communication is constantly growing. In the conditions of high-competition market, it is not enough to create and sell a product itself. In developed countries, there are hundreds options of the same product in the supermarkets. Almost all of the products have the same quality, price and other features. Therefore, producers and sellers have to implement communication tools to sell the product in the most effective way and make it more unique (Romat & Senderov, 2017).

Each company should have its own communication system and its marketing communication mix.

Marketing communications consist of the means by which organization informs, persuades, and reminds consumers (either directly or indirectly) about the products it sells. This area of marketing is most rapidly changing one.

As the role of marketing increases, the role of marketing communication grows as well. It is important to propose a high-quality service or product to a customer, but it's not enough for increasing profit and sales volume. The product itself must bring a message to the consumer, which makes it more attractive, so consumer will be willing to repurchase the

product in future. This is what marketing communication primarily serves for (Kotler, 2012).

3.1.1 Advertising

Advertising is a targeted impact on the buyers' consciousness, implemented through the public representation of the goods and services (their properties, characteristics, emotions they cause, etc.) by various means of media distribution.

The word "advertising" became widely used in mass media in recent years and it affects all the aspects of people's life and became its non-excludable attribute (Chris, Fill & Turnbull, 2016).

Advertising can be represented and understood in a number of ways, such as:

- Collection of materials with the purpose of informing people about product or service;
- Messages, addressed to the consumers through mass media;
- Specific element and function of marketing;
- Communication between customer and the seller;
- Special events, aiming to sell the product;
- Commercial pressing on customer.

Advertising is information about product or service which is spread out in any non-personal form by any means of communication, which is meant to increase, maintain or create more interest for the advertised product or service. Advertising is a non-personal form of communication with customers (Quesenberry, 2016).

3.1.2 Public relations

PR is a non-personal sales promotion technique, which uses mass media to spread the information about a product/service (Kotler, 2012).

Broom and Sha (2013) defined public relations as a management function, which aims to create and maintain mutually profitable beneficial relationships with the stakeholders.

Public relations is a special function of marketing communications, which tends to establish and maintain relationships with various target groups (consumers, investors, employees, external environment, etc.). Unlike advertising, which create all the communications around one exact product, PR builds communications between company

and society. Hence, PR helps to build trust relationship with the company, which increases efficiency of other communication tools, such as advertising, personal selling, direct marketing, etc. (Romat & Senderov, 2017).

The functions of public relations in the modern environment are follows:

- Establishment of mutual understanding and trust relationship between the organization and the public;
- Creating of a “positive image” of a company;
- Maintaining the good reputation of the organization;
- Extension of influence of the company by means of the proper propaganda and advertisement;
- Creating employees’ sense of responsibility and concern about company’s business.

3.1.3 Sales promotion

Sales promotion is one of the best tools for attracting new customers and hold the old ones, to stimulate purchases and the effectiveness of intermediaries (Akhter, 2014). This element of the marketing communication mix helps not only increasing sales but also builds customer loyalty to the brand.

Sales promotion is a technique forcing the customer to purchase or repurchase with short-term effect through personal communication and a system of market tools (Kotler, 2012).

Generally, sales promotion includes all the marketing activities, performed directly in the places of sale itself. Main forms of sales promotion are follows:

- **Price incentives** – short-term price decreasing. It can be implemented when: the producer wants to increase the sales volume in a few times and attract new customers; the organization wants to create a reputation of a cheap seller; the price plays a key role in the competition; there is need to sell the production as soon as possible.
- **Incentives by presents and free gifts** – customer receives additional goods for free. Gifts can have different purposes. They can serve to show how useful the product is, or otherwise, gift can serve for entertainment goals only.
- **Active promotion of a good or service** – includes all the activities, which involve customers to take part in it. It can be represented by competitions, games, lotteries. Usually the winner gets a present, which is a big motivation (Akhter, 2014).

Another form of sales promotion are loyalty programs. It is one of the most popular methods for building long-term relationship with the existing customers. Retaining customers helps to maintain a competitive advantage. Moreover, there are few more important benefits resulting from loyal customer's behavior such as positive word-of-mouth effect, higher stability of the business despite competitor's actions, more tolerance of small mistakes from the customer side (Chen, 2015).

There are several main types of customer loyalty programs:

- **Points program.** A customer gets points for the purchases made, afterwards they can be used as a reward such as a discount.
- **Cash back program.** A customer gets back a specific percentage of his spent amount and can use it for the next purchases.
- **Gifts.** A customer gets a gift in addition to the purchased goods; usually there is a minimum amount of a purchase.
- **Club card.** It gives specific benefits like discounts, seasonal discounts, and special offers for cardholders only.
- **Coupons.** A customer gets a coupon after the purchase and can use it for next purchase. It usually includes discounts or other special offers. Sometimes coupons are distributed by mail or e-mail (Egan, 2015).

3.1.4 Direct marketing

Direct marketing takes place when a company and its customers come into direct contact with each other to provide a transaction, instead of using intermediaries.

The main feature of direct marketing is highlighting the perspective customers and establish both-side communication between them and the company, and maintain this individual connection (Quesenberry, 2016).

Direct marketing includes:

- **Direct mail.** Direct mail uses postal letters through which an organization can promote its products and services. This kind of campaigns must be planned for target audience in geographically defined areas. The most frequent types of direct mail campaigns are: catalogues, postcard mails, self-mailers, envelope mailers.
- **Telemarketing.** A tool, which uses telephone to get in touch with clients in order to promote products and generate demand for them. Telemarketing is an

interactive method, used to create new customers in a large number. Such types of calls exist: cold-calling, warm-calling, follow-up calls, fund-raising calls.

- ***Text (SMS) Marketing.*** Text messaging is a very economical and quick form of communication. It allows to contact large clusters of clients individually through messages at minimum cost. There are different types of SMS marketing techniques: sales alerts on special dates, exclusive products offers; scheduled time reminders, delivery reminders; personalized messaging such as birthday wishes.
- ***Direct Selling.*** It is an effective way to build long and firm relationships with customers. "Direct Selling is implemented through explanation or demonstration of the products by a seller away from usual retail locations, generally in customers' homes, workplace and other locations. Some of its selling methods are door-to-door selling, person-to-person selling, internet-based selling, network marketing.
- ***Email marketing.*** Email marketing is a useful and easy method of reaching the existing customers. It is cheaper than any other direct marketing techniques. The most common form of email marketing is a e-newsletter. Company can receive customer's feedback through e-mails, usually personally and privately (Singh, 2015).

3.1.5 Online communication through social media

Internet has become a common tool of the international business. It is widely accessible information and communication source for organizations, also used for the marketing purposes. Nowadays, e-marketing is the fastest growing element of the marketing communication mix (Romat & Senderov, 2017).

There are various types of online marketing, below are the most popular of them:

- Email marketing
- Video marketing
- Blogging
- Social media.

For the further research in this thesis, the communication through social media is the most essential.

Social media or social networks were originally designed for communication with friends and sharing photos and videos. Nowadays, companies and firms use social media as a tool for communication with their customers. Data collected from social media can help in organizing marketing researches, create databases for advertising and promotion purposes.

A company can influence its customers and potential customers through social media. It is possible with the creation of a content, which will be attractive and which can catch the attention of the targeted audience.

Communication on social media must be systematic, it is important to understand, which products customers are interested in, and then communicate them effectively.

Many companies nowadays use social media along with traditional advertising. It is a perfect platform, which allows to raise awareness about brand or product.

Social media can introduce the product to potential customers, motivate them for the purchase and then maintain the relationships between customer and the company, brand or product (Chris & Turnbull, 2016).

Online marketing communication has its own advantages, such as:

- Internet functions seven days per week, 24 hours per day. During this time, a lot of potential customers can get information about the promoted products, while company representatives don't have to take part in this process.
- In the Internet, potential customers can get instant feedback from the company they're interested in. It is mutually beneficial for both sides, because a customer can get an overview about new product or service and the organization can understand customer's expectations and perceptions, and the whole process doesn't require any significant costs.
- Internet has another efficient option, which is targeting. It stands for the ads related to the user's search preferences, which appear on the web pages. It allows making the potential target market bigger and limiting advertising for uninterested consumers (Quesenberry, 2016).

3.2 Green Marketing

Before starting the analysis of green marketing, it would be useful to explain the classical approach of marketing.

During the years, the definition of marketing was changing and had many variations. According to Kotler, one of the most famous marketing researchers, it is a social and driving process, which helps individuals and groups get what they want by creating, offering and exchanging the products with others (Kotler, et al., 2010).

According to the latest marketing definition by AMA (2017), it is an activity, set of processes and institutions, serving for communication, delivery, creation and exchange of offerings, which have value for customers, partners, and society.

In other words, marketing is a complicated process of getting potential customers interested in a specific product or service. It includes research of the market, promotion, distribution and selling of the product or a service (Egan, 2015).

Environmental issues make a huge impact on marketing and management of many companies and firms nowadays. People are becoming more aware of problems concerning environment, which make them change their buying habits and think about future of the planet. At the same time, it makes companies change their marketing strategies and concepts as well.

Green marketing, also known as environmental or eco-marketing, is a form of modern marketing. Many people think that green marketing is just the promotion or advertisement, which serves to sell products positioned as bio. However, it has bigger meaning, such as thoughts, methods and processes, which fulfil the target and philosophy of a selected company.

A company implementing green marketing is a company, which produces and develops products that are meant to be environmentally friendly. It includes packaging and the disposal of a product, both will not have ill effects on environment.

Moreover, green marketing has to ensure consumers that the company works towards environmental improvement with the goal of increasing the sales (Padmavathi, 2015).

3.2.1 Green marketing mix

Marketing mix is a system, a complex of tactical marketing tools, with their help the marketing strategy of the company can be achieved. All the elements of marketing mix are manageable; therefore, company can regulate them and hold a stable position on the market and react to its changes.

Traditional marketing mix consists of 4 Ps: product, price, place, promotion. It was proposed in 1964 by McCarthy, who allocated different marketing activities into

marketing-mix tools of four kinds.

All the above-mentioned elements are defined by target market's needs and are correlated with them. Each element depends on the other elements and there is a tight interconnection between them. When elements are used systematically, it will allow getting a synergy effect. It means that simultaneous complex work of all elements will bring stronger effect than each one separately (Romat & Senderov, 2017).

But green marketing mix is different from classical marketing mix, particularly by environmental aspects integrated in every part of the mix. Marketers are challenged to change the marketing mix for greener due to changing trends and growth of environmental awareness among consumers. The more responsive the companies will be to the consumers' concerns, the better results will be achieved.

3.2.1.1 Product

In classical marketing, the firm is aiming to produce ideal product which will satisfy all customer needs and wants, while green marketing is mainly focused on production process and environmental impact of the product. Green products are usually defined by specific eco-design using green, white and pastel colours; package may be recyclable or reusable. However, the package may be missing at all. As it will end up as a trash, many green companies try to avoid using any package for their products (Padmavathi, 2015).

Green product is not only about functionality, safety, style, but also about minimizing the product's negative impact on environment during its whole life cycle. The whole production process of such products is environmentally sustainable. Companies producing green products tend to be responsible for reducing the environmental pollution.

According to Yang (2017), there are few main components which have to be considered by producers of green products:

- *Design*. It has to be safe for the environment and consumers.
- *Technology*. It must be environmentally friendly as well, while technology is the biggest pollutant of environment.
- *Value*. A value is what consumers are looking for in green products. Hence, producers should include high performance value in their products without risking its environmental safety features.
- *Usefulness*. A product should satisfy consumer needs and wants and be useful for environment at the same time.

3.2.1.2 Price

Production of environmentally friendly or green products associates with bigger costs due to installation of new equipment and technologies, sometimes even training staff which all in the end will affect the final price of a product. It is possible to compensate this cost by lower consumption of material and energy and decreasing costs for garbage utilization.

Price plays a determinant role in the process of buying product by consumers who are not ecologically inclined. Green price is usually taken as a premium price which is a sign of high quality to many consumers. Companies are responsible for making their customers environmentally aware so the price will become the least important factor in purchasing decision-making process.

For achieving more sustainable way of production and keeping available price, a firm sometimes must invest more in the production process. For example, low-energy light bulbs have higher price, but in a long term, they have lower cost because of their longer life cycle (Kumar & Anand, 2014).

3.2.1.3 Place

Place takes in consideration all actions, which make product available for customers. It can be type of transportation, distribution channels, etc. The place strategy is very important because there are still not many consumers who are willing to look for green products; the majority buys them only when they are available.

In green marketing, process of distribution is very important. It should be done with lower emissions and less package during the way to the customer. Companies should change their logistics by modifying distribution channels to make them more sustainable by using direct selling and save energy, or reuse package (Paul & Rana, 2012).

3.2.1.4 Promotion

The main goal of promotion is to present the product to consumers in a most qualified way, but in green promotion it is also about convincing customers that product is safe for environment and healthy enough.

Promotion of environmental product should maintain following principles:

- Information about the promoted product and environmental claims made by company should be precise.
- The benefits of the promoted product must be actually positive for the environment

and there is no place for fake facts in the promotion.

- Identifying specific attributes which are efficient for the environmental and human health safety, e.g. the package material specifications.
- Explaining the benefits properly for the consumers, especially who are not much aware of environmental issues.
- There is no place for unnecessary information, otherwise the customer will be confused.

The choice of a communication tool has a big meaning in the marketing communication. Moreover, in green marketing, using much advertisement (like billboards) can result in suspicion of greenwashing¹ by public. Another way is using email distribution, but sometimes it is not so effective because of the risk of spam. The most effective way is to mix sales promotion with the close communication with customers, which will bring positive image of a firm and its identity.

In green marketing, there are a number of special terms, which must be used in promotion to give clearer message to the customer, such as, environmentally friendly, biodegradable or recyclable (Solaiman et al., 2015).

3.2.2 Eco-label as a green marketing tool

Green marketing tools serve to increase awareness of green products' attributes and benefits. They guide consumers to purchase eco-friendly products.

Eco-label is one of the most significant green marketing tools. It is widely used to identify that the product is environmentally safe during its whole life cycle and safe for human health as well. Labels are visible on the package; they tend to deliver proper information from the seller to the customer. The presence of eco-label means that the producer has implemented specific norms and rules in the production process. These norms are stated and regulated by the independent third party, which supervises the production process (Kumar& Anand, 2014).

There are plenty of eco-labels worldwide, in Russia there are not so many right now. There are some imported goods with eco-labels sold, but the discussed company in this thesis

¹ Greenwashing –company's actions with the aim to convince public that it is green by PR and marketing, instead of implementing business practices for minimizing environmental impact (Paul & Rana, 2012).

does not sell anything imported. The list of eco-labels below are widely used in Russia and in Zero Waste shop as well:

1. *Vitality Leaf* is originally Russian eco-label registered by St.-Petersburg Ecological Union. It is the only Russian eco-label, which is internationally recognized. Procedure of certification complies with international requirements and ISO 14024 standard. Label is available for both food and nonfood products and services (Ecounion, 2019).



Figure 1, eco-label Vitality leaf. Source: ecounion.com

2. *Organic* – eco-label registered by National Organic Union in Russia in 2016 (National Organic Union, 2018).



Figure 2, eco-label Organic. Source: rosorganic.ru

3. *Ecocert Cosmos Organic* is the eco-label for cosmetic products only. Certified cosmetics must consist of at least 95% natural plant-based ingredients. It is used in 80 countries, including Russia (Ecocert Group, 2019).



Figure 3, eco-label Ecocert Cosmos Organic. Source: ecocert.com

3.3 Zero Waste

The term Zero Waste is used to define the lifestyle, which is aiming to prevent the waste creation. It is all about reduction of waste in the life environment of individuals, communities and enterprises and states because big amounts of waste bring a lot of negative effects on environment and human and animals health. Zero waste implies to reuse most of materials and resources available without waste creating and landfilling or incineration (Zero waste, 2017).

Zero Waste concept was first mentioned by Paul Palmer, a professor of Yale University, in 1970s. In his firm „Zero Waste systems Inc.“, he tried to find a way to reuse the chemicals which were created during the production of electronic systems. The firm finally succeeded in this area and became famous by its unique techniques. „Zero Waste systems Inc. “ contributed to integrate Zero waste philosophy into society (Veinbender, 2013).

The other version says that Australian politicians first used expression Zero waste in 1996 when they decided to prevent their country from landfills and incineration. There was a plan created for this purpose to achieve in 2010. Main idea of the plan was that landfilling and incineration are not the last solution of the waste problem. It is just the postponing of the real effective solution which harms environment and utilizes a lot of energy and resources (Zero waste, 2017).

Zaman (2015) proposed three steps to implement zero waste strategy into consumer society:

1. First step is about changing the way of production and resource extraction by zero waste principle.
2. Second step is about consumers. They have to consume and purchase products consciously with regards to the impact they make on environment.

3. Third step is about policy and economy. Green jobs opportunities and zero waste strategy plans must be made.

Bea Johnson (2016), the author of a book about zero waste life style, presents specific steps, which can reduce a big amount of waste, and the source of waste even before it gets to the household:

1. **Reject what we do not need.** This step plays the biggest role because over-consumption is one of the biggest sources of waste in modern society. Therefore, it is hard for people to reject purchasing goods.
2. **Reduce what we need and cannot reject at all.** There is a need to rethink the consumption of goods and find a way to decrease it. Reducing also helps to concentrate on the quality of goods instead of quantity and on experiences instead of collecting stuff.
3. **Reuse what we consume and what we can't reject or reduce.** The purpose of this step is to maximize the utilization of this product and escape the using of disposable products. By these means, we can save energy and resources, which are needed for the recycle process.
4. **Recycle what we cannot reject, reduce and reuse.** The aim of zero waste is not the increase of recycling but the decrease of it because by following previous steps there is no need in massive recycling.
5. **Rot or Compost.** It is a recycling if natural organic materials. If organic products go to the landfills, they cannot be naturally decomposed; on the contrary, there can be a lot of harmful materials and gases created.

3.3.1 Shopping without package

Zero waste philosophy has become globally well-known and consumers from developed countries are getting more aware of environmental and social externalities of grocery chains and other retailers. It leads to creation of new shops which follow zero waste philosophy and propagate it sometimes. Zero waste distribution eliminates any package. Zero waste shops are acting against usual way of selling products and let consumers buy groceries and other products for a weight which they prefer. Thanks to that option, consumers can buy exact amount which they need and avoid overconsuming.

In their research Beitzel-Heineke and Reefke (2017) found out typical characteristics of zero waste stores which differ them from other conventional stores. They sell particularly dry

products (rice, pasta, legumes, etc.), dairy products, jams or hygienic products (shampoos, liquid soap) are usually packed in glass which buyers can reuse, and fruits and vegetables as well without any package. One important detail is that the majority of assortment should be from local producers because it is the eco-friendliest way to sell.

Almost all the stores following zero waste concept function on the same principle. Customers should bring their own package (e.g. boxes, fabric bags, glass jars), otherwise they will hardly buy what they want. They can take as much as they need and pay according to the price per specific weight (see Picture 4). In the case when customers forget his own container, he can borrow it directly in the shop or use recyclable paper bags which are available in some stores. The founders of such shops try to make their suppliers follow zero waste concept as well because only like this the whole process will be sustainable and harmless for the environment (Fujdalová, 2015).

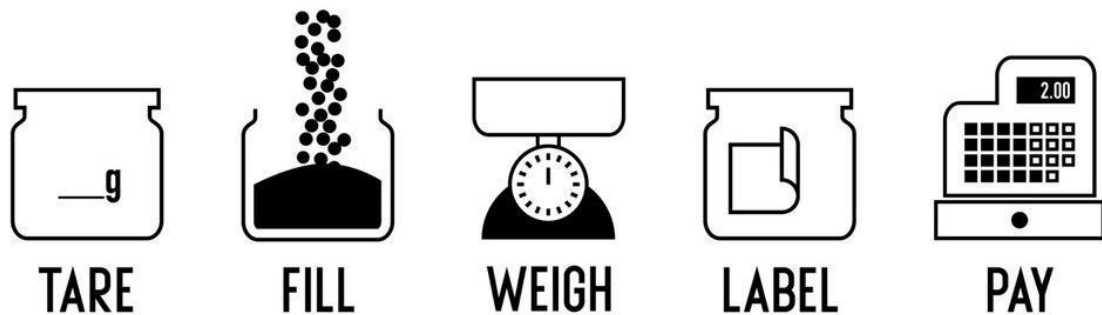


Figure 4, How does zero waste shop function? Source: Unpackaged, How It Works, 2017

3.4 Environmental awareness

Nowadays many consumers are aware of environmental issues and green products, but they not always buy environmentally safe products. Due to lack of education in environmental area, many consumers are not sure which products are eco-friendly. For the effective promotion of green and eco-friendly products, educating programs should take place and marketers should provide clear information concerning green products, sustainability and its importance for the future.

The barrier to buy green products exists mostly because of lack of educating information about environmental consciousness. There are many studies showing that the lack of knowledge has a direct impact on consumers' decision-making process (Yang, 2017). However, during the past five years, consumers have shown their concern about environment by changing their purchasing behavior. Concern is defined by their awareness

about environmental issues and their willingness to solve them. Hence, it is influenced by specific factors, such as information available to consumers, supply of green products and usually higher prices for the green products (Padmavathi, 2015).

4 Zero Waste shop

Zero Waste Shop was the first shop in Moscow which sells products without package.

It was founded by Larisa Petrakova in June 2018. She was inspired by the idea to minimize the amount of waste. As there is almost no waste-recycling system in Russia, she thought that strategy of not making any waste would be the most efficient.

There are no paper bags in the shop, because they are usually not reused and a high amount of wood and energy are utilized for their production.

As they sell only reusable bags, customers should come with their own bags for the products. It is very important for the owner that a customer won't have any waste after the purchase.

They also want to reduce printing receipts to zero. Now they can send them by email.

To reduce the amount of package the discussed firm usually negotiate with supplier and returns the package back to them after usage. With big producers it is not so simple because they have package for everything they produce and obviously they can't change their business processes for the one little customer. It is much easier with eco-supplier who support the same strategy.

The owner prefers to sell products with eco-certificates because the quality is as much important as the reduce of package.

Besides the goal of making profit, which is important for every business, the idea which stands behind Zero Waste shop is to help people in Moscow to minimize their negative impact on environment and reduce the amount of waste, especially plastic-based. One average Moscow resident produces nearly 500 kilos of waste yearly (Greenpeace, 2019). If even one person reduces its waste, the total amount of waste would also go down. And if there will be more firms like Zero Waste shop, people will have more possibilities to follow this principle.

4.1 Product portfolio

Zero Waste shop offers a wide range of products.

Firstly, there is **food** sold without any package, it includes:

- *Grains* (buckweat, bulgur, couscous, quinoa, white rice, red rice, basmati rice, wild rice, oats, polenta, pearl barley, corn grits, semolina)

- *Beans* (chickpeas, red lentils, green lentils, red beans, white beans, green peas)
- *Seeds* (chia, linen, pumpkin, mustard, sesame, sunflower)
- *Nuts* (almonds, cashews, hazelnut, peanut, walnut)
- *Dried fruits* (mango, raisins, dates, rose hip, barberry, Goji berries, dried apricots)
- *Spices* (oregano, cinnamon, nutmeg, black pepper, chilli, basil, cardamon, coriander, caraway, dried garlic, turmeric, ginger, paprika, marjoram, curry)
- *Oil* (olive, coconut, pumpkin, linen, sesame, almond)
- *Tea, coffee* (Brazilian and Colombian Arabica, assam tea, hibiscus tea, dark ceylon, matcha powder, cocoa powder)
- *Desserts* (biscuits, jam in a returnable jar, marshmallows, milk chocolate, dark chocolate). Some more fresh desserts are available sometimes and the offer changes frequently.
- *Other* (pasta, tofu, flour).

Reusable hygienic products are also available: *Toothbrushes, Metal razers, Cotton pads, Menstrual cups and pads, Kids diapers.*

Customers can also find **cosmetics**, but liquid cosmetics are sold in package, which can be returned to the shop after the product is completely used : *Soap, Shampoos, Face crème and body crème, Scrubs, Lip balms.*

In addition, the last section of products refers to **stuff for household** and everyday use: *Shopping bags available in different sizes and from different materials, Cleaning brushes and sponges, Washing powder and dishwashing gel, Wax wipes (replacement for the cling film), Glass and metal straws, Cases for phones and Pens from recycled plastic.*

Evidently, different products have different demand rate. As the owner says, the most popular products are grains and tofu; also straws, shopping bags, toothbrushes. Food is sold more often than other products; therefore, the quantity of food presented is higher than quantity of other products. This happens because reusable products can be bought only once by one person usually, that is what they should serve for. So customers are coming back mostly for food or cosmetics, e.g. refilled items (Afisha Daily, 2019).

4.2 Competition analysis

As people in Russia, especially in Moscow, are getting more environmentally concerned, the number of such companies like Zero Waste is also growing, but slowly. There are two shops in Moscow, which are similar by their concept and products to Zero Waste shop.

- First is *Kotomka*, it was founded in August 2019. It presents itself as zero waste and eco-friendly organization.

Differences, advantages and disadvantages:

Kotomka doesn't serve as a shop only, it also offers customers a coffee shop, where coffee, tea and fresh pastry are served. They don't offer any single use cups for the drinks. If the customer would like to take a drink away, he should bring his own cup.

Comparing the assortment, Zero Waste shop offers wider range of food, such as grains and tofu, while *Kotomka* offers more cosmetics. Precisely, there are few more brands of cosmetics, while Zero Waste shop has only one. However, *Kotomka* doesn't offer the possibility of reusable package of all cosmetics they sell. It means, that customers cannot return the package back. Some of creams presented are sold in a tubes, which are hardly reusable. Though, all the cosmetics from the portfolio has eco-certificates, *Kotomka* doesn't represent and follow zero waste concept for 100 percent.

- Second is *Urban Fauna*, it was founded in May 2019. It is presented as zero waste store, also focusing on high quality, organic, vegan and fair products.

Differences, advantages and disadvantages:

The main difference between *Zero Waste shop* and *Urban Fauna*, is that the last one also functions as a vegan bistro.

Assortment: *Urban Fauna* offer smaller range of package-free food than *Zero Waste shop* and *Kotomka*. The biggest part of the store makes cosmetics and hygienic products, but not all of them are reusable. The main feature, which differs *Urban Fauna* from two competitors, is that it sells a lot of single use stuff. For example, there are cotton swabs, dental floss made from silk, toothpaste in a tube, which cannot be recycled or reused. All these products are organic and have eco-certificates, but they will end up in a trashcan, which doesn't make them zero waste. In this case, it is questionable if *Urban Fauna* can be positioned as a zero-waste organization.

There is no information about customer loyalty programs available for the both competitors on their websites and social media profiles.

Location: To get from *Kotomka* to *Urban Fauna* will take 30 min ride by car and 40 min by public transport. *Zero Waste shop* is located far from both; it will take 50 min by public transport there from *Urban Fauna*. And from *Kotomka* to *Zero Waste shop* it takes 40 min by transport and 30 min by car. Therefore, there is no similar companies located in the same district or close districts to *Zero Waste shop*.

In addition, most supermarkets and markets could be considered as indirect competitors because they sell substitute products, but mostly with package, and for many people it is more convenient to buy food and other products there than visit Zero Waste shop.

4.3 Social media communication

Zero Waste shop actively uses social media as a tool of online marketing. It has profiles on Instagram, Facebook and VK, which were created at the same time as the shop was opened.

There is a big difference in the number of followers. In November 2019, Instagram profile had 28,1 thousand followers, while Facebook and VK page had almost the same number each, only 1400 followers. This is explained by the fact that Facebook is only on the fourth place among most popular social platforms in Russia. VK is still very popular, but it is used for other purposes, such as communication between users (Mediascope, 2019).

4.3.1 Instagram

The profile description on Instagram lets to know user that Zero Shop is the first shop in Moscow, which reduces plastic waste. In addition, it says that there are eco-products and products without package available in this store. There is also a link to the shop's website. On November 2019, Instagram profile has 340 publications. Most of the publications contain information about available products, but they are sometimes provided by additional tips for zero waste utilization. There are also posts about sustainable way of life, information regarding working hours or other organizational information. The text under photos is usually quite long, about 10-20 sentences.

During the last year, from September 2018 till November 2019, trends in likes were slightly changing. The table below shows the average amount of likes among all publications for each given season. There was a high increase in values between autumn 2018 and winter 2018-19. Then the values were changing, but not significantly. Summer 2019 had the highest value among all seasons.

Table 1, Average amount of likes on Instagram

	Autumn 2018	Winter 2018-19	Spring 2019	Summer 2019	Autumn 2019
Average amount of likes	356,25 likes	601,4 likes	574,3 likes	661,85 likes	605,86 likes

In autumn 2018, 3 months after the Instagram page was launched and the shop was opened, the average number of likes was 356,25. Publications were done once in 4-5 days, and the low amount of likes could be also caused by small amount of followers and low popularity of the shop. **The most popular publication gained 674 likes** during this period. The content of it was about wax wipes. It was an announcement that they were restocked, in addition there was overview of those wipes, for which purposes they serve. The number of comments was 58.

The least number of likes during autumn 2018 was 170. This publication was encouraging followers to take part in #nextgencupchallenge. The challenge was about creating a sustainable alternative for the plastic cup. Zero Waste shop organized a meeting for brainstorming on this topic and invited its followers to take part. The low amount of likes was caused by the type of challenge, it is definitely not for the wide audience. In addition, the picture used for this publication contained only text in English. Because of this, many people could skip it.



Figure 5. Source: Instagram zerowasteshop.moscow

Then, **in winter** number of likes grew up significantly. The average number grew up to 601,4. A lot of likes gained the series of publications which have started on 1st of January. They were dedicated to the zero waste habits. There were 14 publications with different advices given each day on how to become better in zero waste lifestyle. As people like to make resolutions and change their life style with the beginning of new year, this kind of presented information turned out very popular. However, **the most popular publicaton,**

which has 1387 likes, was pretty simple. It contained photos of the shop and update about restocked products. This number of likes was probably caused by the location, added to the photo. It was the location of a popular shopping center, so many people could randomly find this publication. As we can see, this action caused positive reaction. There are only 59 comments under this photo, which is pretty low. It proves the fact, that many likes could be given by random people, who are not aware of the shop. **The least number of likes (165)** was given to the publication made on December 31st with the wishes for the New Year. **In spring**, average number of likes went a bit down, but not significantly, from 601,4 to 574,3. However, the frequency of publications has grown. They were made once in 2-3 days. Here, **the most popular one had 1176 likes**. Unlikely, it wasn't in a form of a photo, but in a form of a simple picture with text, saying: "Why not is the waste recycling a solution?". Under the picture was a text about 5R. It gained 52 comments. Answering the question why exactly this publication has become the most liked, the cause could be again the location added to the photo. Location was "Moscow", so there is a high possibility that many random users could like it, as well as new followers could be acquired.



Figure 6. Source: Instagram zerowasteshop.moscow

The lowest number of likes in spring was 221. The publication was regarding the photo exhibition and lectures about sustainable lifestyle, which was held in Moscow in June. Only one comment was left under this publication. Again, the main text was in English, what could cause the low popularity among followers.

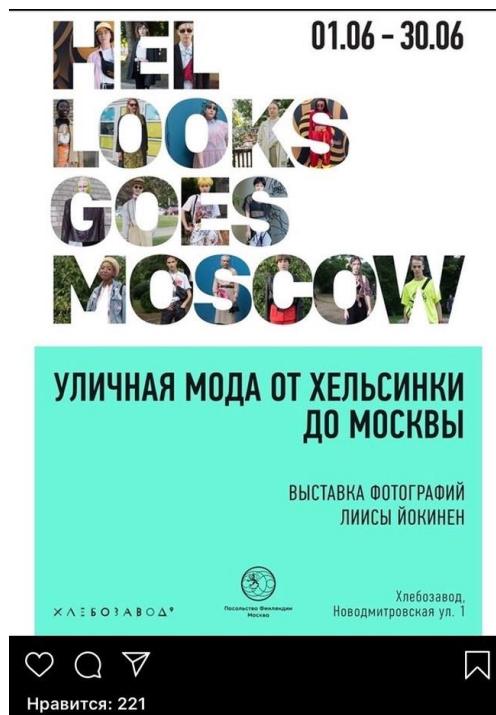


Figure 7. Source: Instagram zerowasteshop.moscow

The highest **activity was spotted in summer**. Average number of likes increased up to 661,85. The image of Instagram profile has changed, publications became brighter, a lot of green and yellow colours were used. The frequency increased to everyday or once in two days. The overview of summer photos is included into appendix.

Highest number of likes was 1151. Publication was in a form of a photo, presenting pens from recycled plastic, which are sold in Zero Waste shop. Under the photo is the information about the product and its price. There are 34 comments left.



Figure 8. Source: Instagram zerowasteshop.moscow

Minimum amount of likes was 350 this time. It was a post concerning the new dessert available in the shop. It is sold in the package which can be returned to the shop and then it will be returned to the producer and used again. There were 10 comments. The low number of likes may be caused by the fact, that the product is sold in package, because the profile shows that followers are more interested in package-free products. Furthermore, the picture itself doesn't seem to be attractive for followers, as it is not visible from the first sight what the product is about.

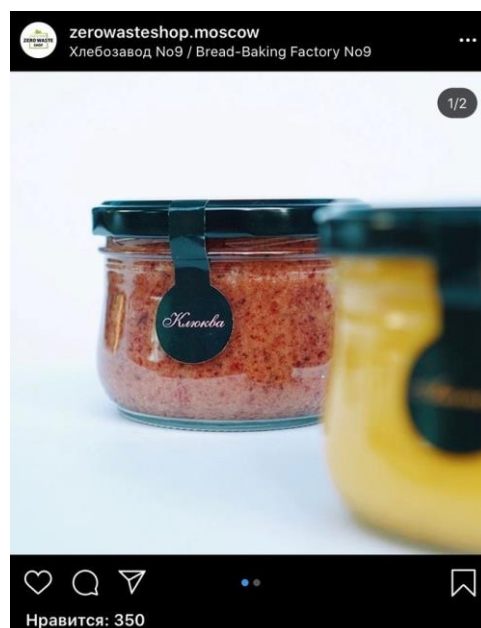


Figure 9. Source: Instagram zerowasteshop.moscow

In autumn, frequency of publications remains the same as in summer, everyday or once per two days. Average number of likes has a bit decreased to 605,86. More of pastel colours were used. The overview of autumn photos is included into appendix.

The most liked post this autumn is the most popular post during all seasons, **has 1527 likes**. The same as in spring, that post doesn't content any photo, only the picture with text. It says: „You don't do enough!“ The message under the picture says, that people shouldn't judge others, if they don't follow all zero waste rules. Instead, every step is important towards this lifestyle. In the end there is a sentence: „Share your achievements in the comments!“. This publication gained the highest number of comments – 334. It is an interactive publication, which shows, that many followers are interested in changing their lifestyle or their habits. The picture of it is included into appendix.

In the end, the **least liked autumn** publication was concerning Black Friday. It has 257 likes. Again, it is in a form of two pictures with the text, first one is saying: „Black Friday! Sale?“ and the next one is saying: „Offline Friday!“. The colours of the first picture is red, and the profile overview shows, that this colour is less popular than green, yellow or pastel. Also, the text was in English, which didn't show success for the second time. The content of this publication is against Black Friday, because it goes apart from Zero Waste concept. The message is to be conscious and to buy only what is truly needed.

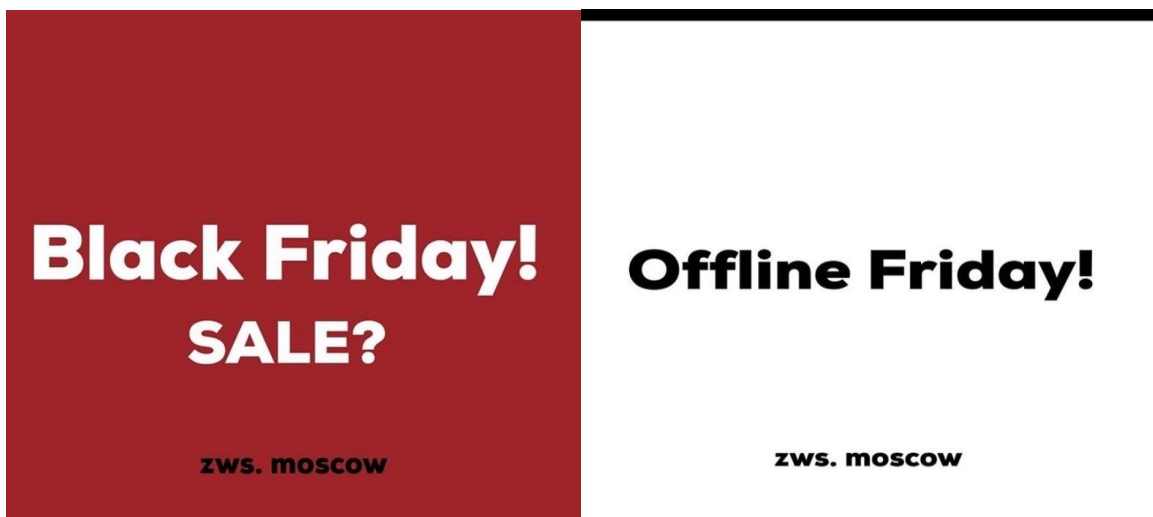


Figure 10. Source: Instagram zerowasteshop.moscow

One more opportunity, which Instagram provides, is InstaStories. They are available right in the beginning of the page and anyone can see it immediately. Zero waste shop profile has 19 saved Stories containing information about products, fresh deliveries, vacancies,

FAQ, customers' reviews. They also share Stories made by customers with other followers.

4.3.2 Facebook and Web

On Facebook page, a user can see the same publication at the same time as on Instagram. However, unlike Instagram page, on Facebook the amount of likes varies from 15 to 20. The official website of Zero Waste shop has the basic overview of the company, information about Zero waste concept on the main page; in addition, news related to the shop are available. Free vacancies are visible in the main menu. There are links to the social media pages in the right upper corner of the page.

4.4 Events

Zero Waste shop once organized an eco festival, where the products and the concept of Zero Waste was presented. It was held in summer 2019.

The visitors were able to see all the products presented, they could also buy vegan and vegetarian food produced from the products available in the shop.

There were few lectures about sustainable lifestyle, Zero Waste lifestyle, sorting of waste and ecology. Visitors were also taught how to sort waste there.

5 Practical Part

5.1 Questionnaire design

The questionnaire consists from 4 demographical questions and 10 questions about customers' preferences, needs and wants. Four questions had only one possible answer, another four questions had a possibility to choose few answers and two questions were in a form of a scale, where the respondent had to rate every given point.

The questionnaire was created with the help of the Google forms. It was distributed to respondents through Instagram in a form of personal message, which included the link to questionnaire.

5.2 Results and discussion

In this chapter, each question's results would be analysed, both graphically and verbally. The evaluation starts with the fifth question, the results for the first four demographical questions are included into appendix.

Question #5: Please choose your diet/meal preferences.

As Zero Waste shop has a big variety of food products, it was necessary to get a knowledge about customers' meal preferences or diet. They were allowed to choose up to 3 options, because usually people can combine vegan or vegetarian diet with gluten-free or no sugar.

Among 91 respondents, 47 % don't follow any specific diet. However, there are still many representatives of other diets. Group of people who doesn't consume gluten and group of vegans have equal number of representatives – 12%. 11 % account for people who don't consume sugar. The next large group are lacto-ovo vegetarians (they consume dairy products and eggs, excluding meat from their diet), which makes 9%. Pescatarians make 5 % from all respondents, their diet includes fish and excludes all dairy products, meat and eggs. And finally, the smallest group are lacto-vegetarians (beside plant-based products they can consume dairy products), they account for only 4 %.

The options Raw vegan and Ovo-vegetarian were not chosen by any of respondents.

From the contingency tables it is visible, that 13 out of 91 answers were in a form of combination of vegetarian or vegan diet mixed with gluten-free and/or zero sugar.

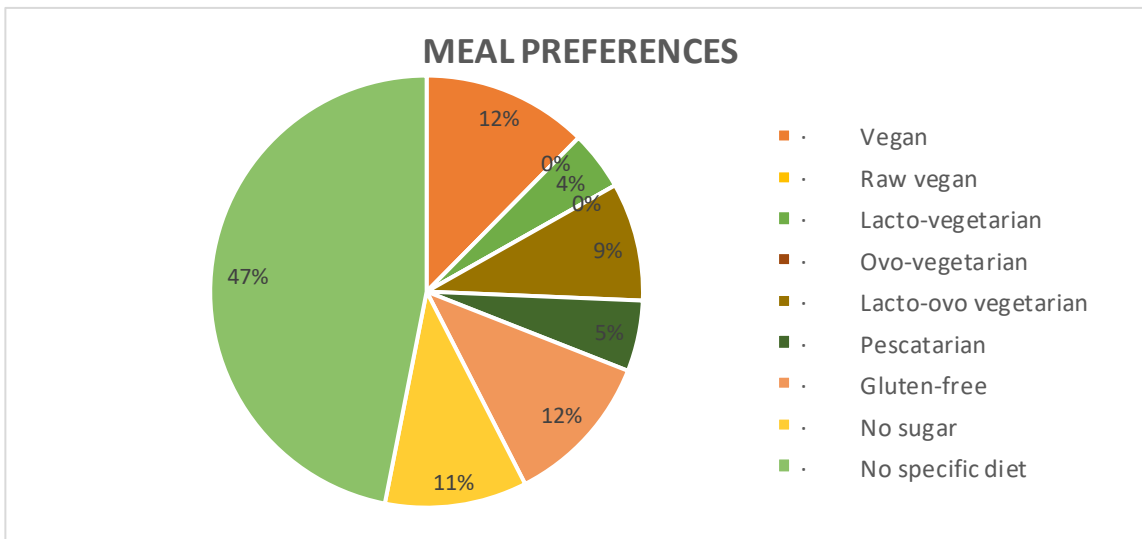


Figure 11. Meal preferences of respondents

Question #6: Please choose the reasons of buying products in Zero Waste shop.

Respondents were offered 5 options regarding the reason of being a customer of Zero Waste shop. They could have chosen from 1 to 3 answers. According to the outcome, the most popular reason is the care for environment and nature, which was chosen by 77 % of customers.

41 % of respondents have also chosen high quality of the offered products as an important factor that made them come here again. On the third place is the curiosity for something new (34 %). Then, friendly staff and atmosphere accounts for 32 % of answers and 22 % belongs to close or comfortable location of the shop. The least important criteria for customers tend to be friends' and family's recommendations.

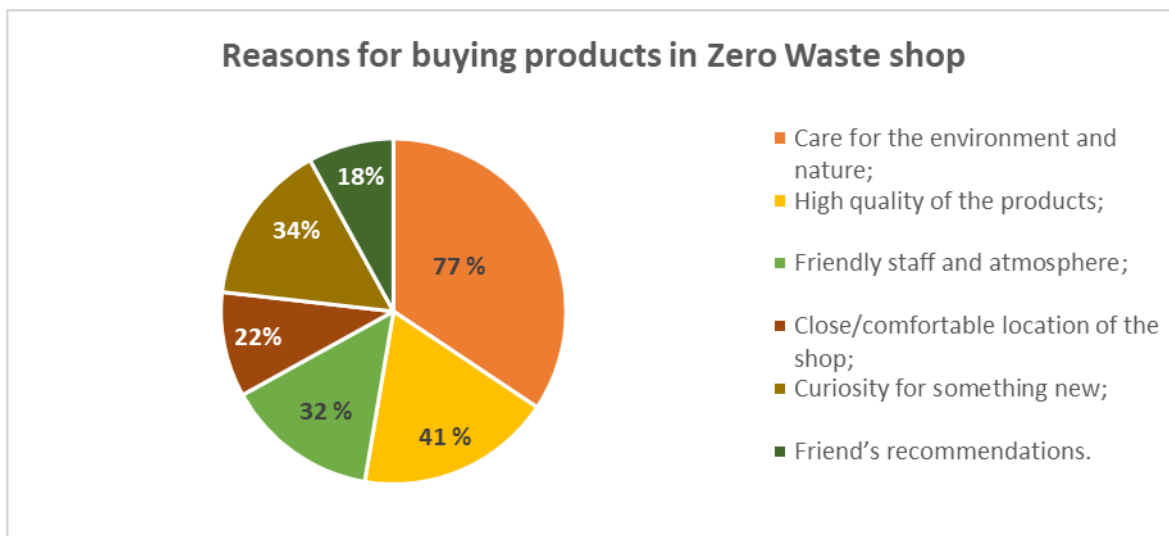


Figure 12. Reasons for buying products in Zero Waste shop

Question #7: Please rate the affordability of prices for each product type.

Another question is dedicated to the affordability of the prices for all types of products in Zero Waste shop. Respondents were given four main product groups: food, hygienic products, cosmetic and reusable household products. They should rate the price of each product group from 1 - the most affordable, to 5 - the least affordable.

Form the graph below we can see, that the majority of respondents gave 2 to the food (39 %). Cosmetics and hygienic products were given 3 (neutral) by 43 % and 40,7 % of the respondents accordingly. Reusable household products were also given 3 by 34,3 %, which is also neutral.

In addition, from the graphs it is visible, that food is the most affordable product type, and reusable household products are, on the contrary, the least affordable.

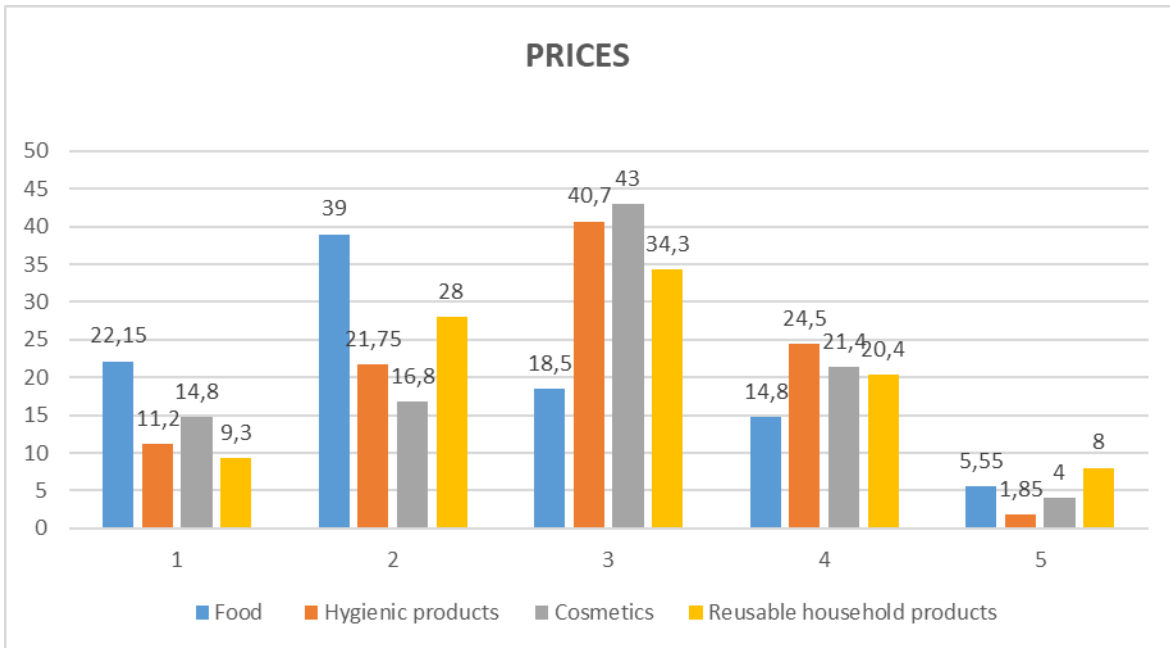


Figure 13. Affordability of prices in Zero Waste shop

Question #8. Please mark the eco-labels you know.

Here respondents should have chosen all the eco-labels they know from the three given possibilities: Vitality Leaf (a), Organic (b) and Ecocert (c). They could also choose the answer “None”. As we can see, the biggest part of respondents – 35 % - doesn’t know any of eco-labels. Then, 28 % are aware of Ecocert, which is widely used for cosmetics, and 25 % are familiar with the Vitality Leaf, which is originally Russian eco-label. Organic, another Russian eco-label, was selected by 12 % of responding customers.

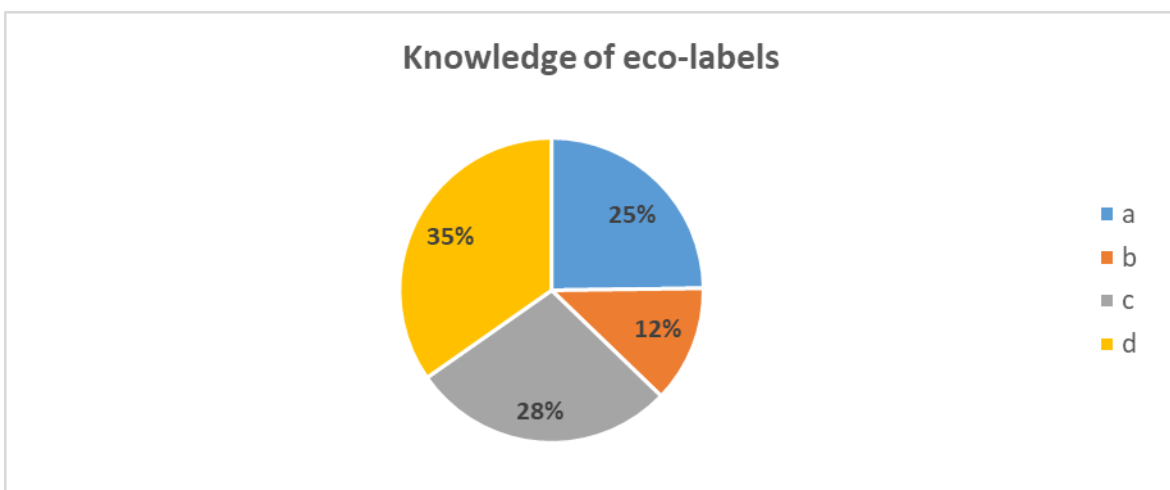


Figure 14. Knowledge of eco-labels

Question #9. If you know any of eco-labels from the previous question, do you pay attention to them while choosing products to buy?

After the gathering data about general knowledge of eco-labels, the next question is about customers' attitude towards them. Although, the majority of respondents confirmed that they don't know what is eco-label, the next biggest group was neutral towards them (30 %). Almost the same number of respondents (29 %) actually trust eco-labels. Only 10 % of responded customers preferred negative answer, meaning that they don't trust eco-labels.

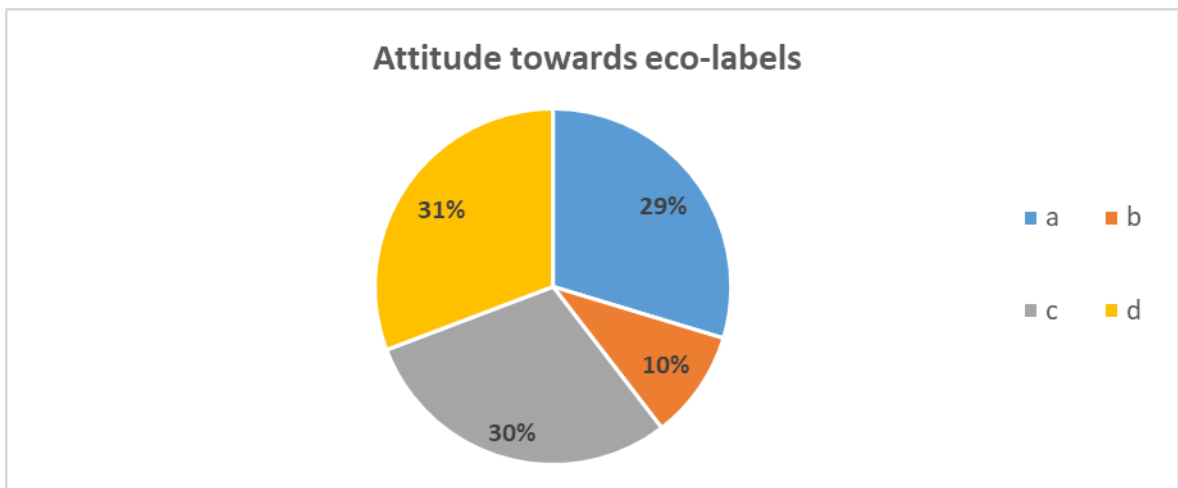


Figure 15. Attitude of respondents towards eco-labels

Question #10. Which information would you like to see on the social media of Zero waste shop?

In this question, respondents were able to choose, what kind of publications or information they would like to see on the various social media profiles of Zero Waste shop. They could choose one or two options form the given five: a) *Special offers and discounts*, b) *Information about employees*, c) *Information about new products*, d) *Information about producers and suppliers working with Zero waste shop*, e) *Environmental news*.

The biggest popularity equally gained two options: *Special offers or discounts* and *Information about new products* – both had 27 %. The next most important information for customers is *Environmental news* (19 %), and then *Information about suppliers* (17 %). Respondents are the least interested in *Information about employees* of the shop.

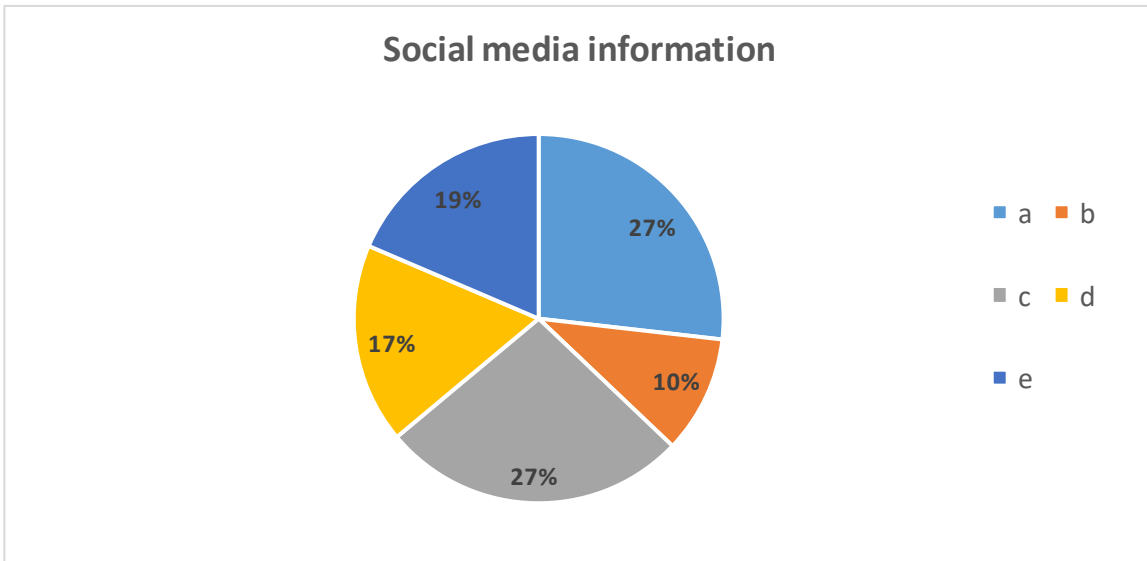


Figure 16. Popular social media information

Question #11. Would you purchase gift certificates if they would be available in the Zero waste shop?

Respondents were asked, if they would like to purchase gift certificates in Zero Waste shop. At the moment, there is no such possibility. By looking at the results, 57 % of the respondents would definitely go for it. The difference between *Yes* and *No* is not very high, but this tool still can be implemented in marketing communication of company.



Figure 17. Willingness of respondents to buy gift certificates

Question #12. Would you like to participate in online competitions organized by Zero waste shop (primarily on Instagram)?

This question had the same simple options as the previous one. Respondents just had to choose either they would like to participate in online competitions or not. The result show that the respondents are equally splitted, one-half voted “Yes” and the other half voted “No”.

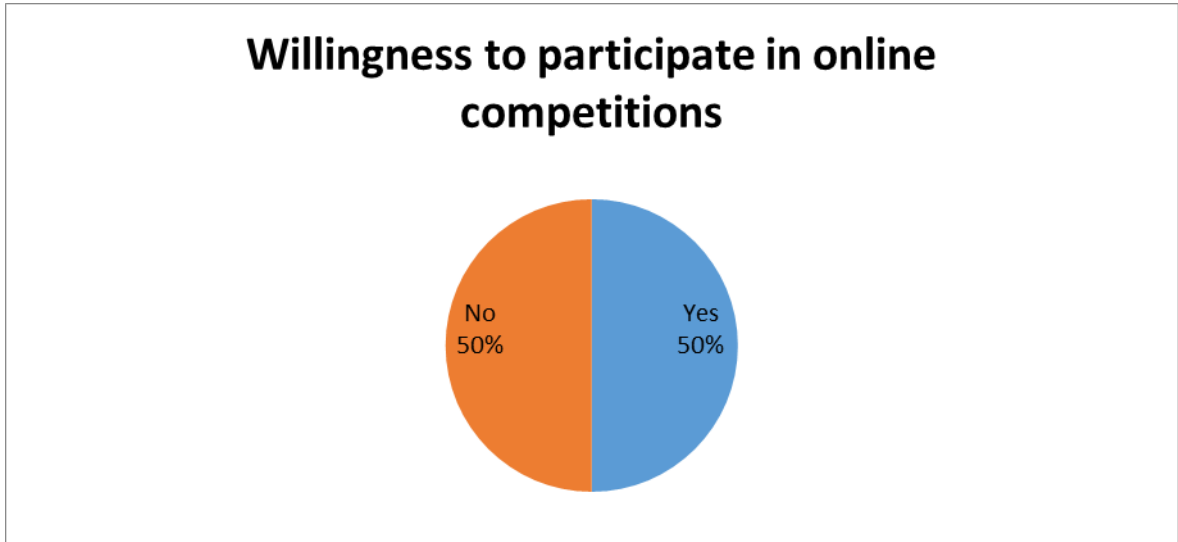


Figure 18. Willingness of respondents to participate in online competitions

Question #13. Are you a member of any loyalty program in other organizations (e.g. collecting points for the future discount or cashback)?

This question concerns loyalty programs and how active the respondents are with using them. The results show that 32 % of responding customers use it less often than once a month, and 28% use it more often than once a month. Percentage of respondents who are not a member of any loyalty program is 23 %, and a bit less number of respondents are members of a loyalty program, but don't use it (17 %).

Summarizing the results, 60 % of respondents use their loyalty programs, which is more than a half of the given sample.

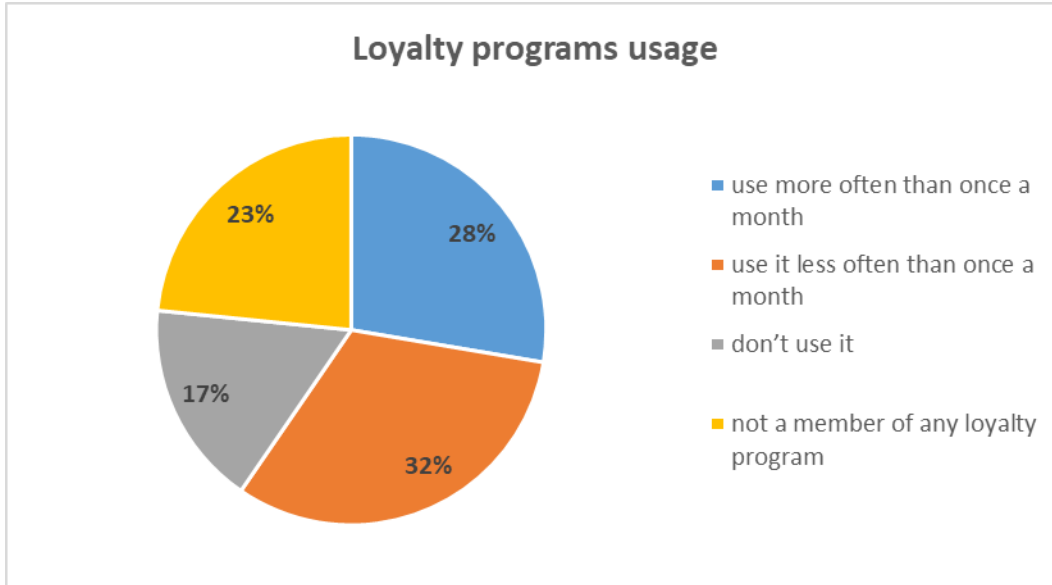


Figure 19. Usage of loyalty programs by respondents

Question #14. Please match the social media with the frequency of its usage by you.

From the results of the last question, it is visible that Instagram occurs to be the most popular platform right now among customers of Zero Waste shop in Moscow. 64 % of respondents use it daily. After Instagram, Telegram is used by 51 % of respondents on a daily basis, and VK is preferred by 40,6 % for the everyday usage. On the other side, 18,7 % of respondents never use Facebook, 11,1 % are not interested in Telegram and 9,8 % never log into VK. YouTube is also quite popular, as it is used daily by 36,2 of respondents, and few times a week by 31,8 %.

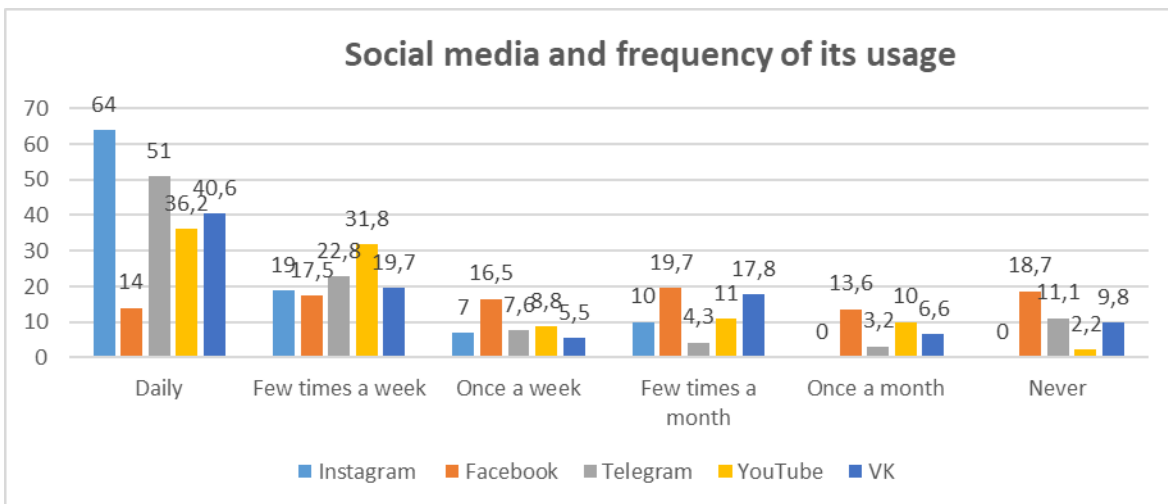


Figure 20. Social media usage by respondents

5.3 Evaluation of the results

To evaluate the results and make the received data more transparent for understanding, contingency tables were applied into analysis.

From the results of the questionnaire, the biggest group of customers is women between 18 and 25 years old, with income lower than 50.000 rubles per month and without children.

Gender and willingness to purchase gift certificates: taking into consideration those variables, women seem more likely to buy the gift vouchers, as 43 out of 72 answered positively, while male answers are looking more neutral: 8 of them have chosen “yes” option, and 10 have chosen “no”.

Table 2

	Yes	No
Female	43	29
Male	8	10
Total	51	39

Gender, age and willingness to participate in online competitions: out of 91 respondents, 39 women and 6 men confirmed that they would like to participate in competitions on social media. The majority of women, who answered “yes”, are from 18-25 age group. The highest number of “yes” answers were received from 26-35 age male group.

Table 3

Female	Yes	No
18-25	26	12
26-35	12	17
35+	1	4
Total	39	33
Male	Yes	No
18-25	2	1
26-35	4	7
35+	0	3
Total	6	11

This table shows, that almost 46 % of female respondents don't want to take part in competitions online. In addition, most of those women belong to the age group of 26-35

years old. Moreover, 65 % of males don't want to participate in online competitions as well. Since these numbers are significant, the preferences of those groups were analyzed. The customers' opinion about prices was taken into consideration. In the survey, respondents rated each product group price from 1 (the most affordable) to 5 (the least affordable). For the future recommendations, the least affordable products were considered, i.e. those, which got the rating 4 or 5.

Among group of women between 26 and 35 years old, 38 % marked cosmetics as 4 and 21 % rated household products as 4, too.

Among all male respondents the least affordable products turn to be household staff, 2 % rated it as 4. Unlike women, 11 % of males rated food products as 5, which the most unaffordable rate. It is important to note then, that among male respondents, there are 35 % of vegans, while among women this number is much lower – 17 %.

Gender, income and loyalty programs usage: most women who are not the members of any loyalty program have the lowest income; vice versa, most men who don't participate in those programs have with the highest income. In addition, I can conclude that women with the medium income are the most active users of loyalty programs, and among male respondents, the most active are those who have the highest income.

The meaning of columns are following: a) Yes and I trust them; b) No, I don't trust them; c) I am neutral to eco-labels, d) I don't know what is eco-label.

Table 4

Female	a	b	c	d
50k-80k	8	12	3	3
>80k	5	3	0	1
<50k	6	11	7	14
Total	19	26	10	18
Male	a	b	c	d
50k-80k	1	1	3	0
>80k	3	2	2	3
<50k	1	1	1	1
Total	4	4	6	4

Age and knowledge of eco-labels: contingency table overview shows, that group of respondents aged between 26 and 35 years old are the most aware of eco-labels and they

trust them the most as well. Respondents, who belong to age group 18-26, are the biggest group who doesn't know what eco-label is, but, at the same time, the number of them who know, is high enough as well. Moreover, the group, which gave the biggest number of neutral answers, is 25-36 years old.

The meaning of columns are following: a) Yes, and I trust them; b) No, I don't trust them; c) I am neutral to eco-labels, d) I don't know what is eco-label.

Table 5

	a	b	c	d
18-25	11	5	11	14
26-35	13	4	13	10
35+	2	0	3	4
Total	26	9	27	28

Summarizing results of the survey, the current customers of Zero Waste shop are primarily women between 18 and 25 years old without kids, whose income is lower than 50.000 rubles. The major part of customers don't follow any specific diet, but still there are a lot of vegans and vegetarians among them.

6 Recommendations for the marketing communication plan

Zero Waste shop implies online marketing, primarily communication via social media, the most actively among other tools of marketing communication. But, there are still ways to develop in that field. The recommendations are based on the findings from the research, questionnaire and literature review.

The following recommended communication campaign is designed for one-year period.

- **Winter**

Developing of Instagram profile.

Social media serves as a main communication channel for Zero Waste shop, therefore the biggest part of the campaign is dedicated to it.

Instagram of Zero Waste shop is rapidly developing. As of results from the research, it is used by 64 % of respondents daily, so it should remain as the main social media platform for the company.

The biggest popularity among participants of the research gained *special offers or discounts* and *information about new products*. Those types of publications can't happen very often, because the shop cannot have discounts and new products every week.

Therefore, the next most popular type was *environmental news*. It proves that customers of Zero Waste shop care about environment and they want to keep updated about the ecological situation. The news can be not only about Moscow and Russia, but also about the world in general. Respondents gave almost the same number of votes for *information about suppliers*. This material will prove to customers that all the products are environmentally friendly and safe for their health as well. Positive features of suppliers will raise the customers' trust towards products and the shop.

In the survey, there was a question regarding eco-labels. According to results, the big number of respondents don't know, what is eco-label or eco-certificate, particularly people in the age of 18-25, who make the biggest group of customers of Zero Waste shop. As Zero Waste shop sells the majority of products (especially food) with those certificates, it is essential to educate customers on that topic. One publication should be about one particular certificate, including the image of it, for which purposes it serves and why it is important. One certificate should be represented once in a month, so the followers can learn about them gradually, not all at the same time.

From the observation of the Instagram profile during one-year period, the photos and pictures should be mostly of green, yellow and pastel colours, as they appear the most popular. They represent sustainability and eco-friendliness. It is better to avoid red colour, as the research shows, that it was not successful among followers.

The photos of the products must represent it in the best way. From the first sight, a person should understand what the product is; the picture should be bright and the size of the product on picture should be big, so it is visible in the profile overview.

If the picture contain text, it should be in Russian language. English language turned to be less attractive to the followers, so it is better not to risk and make posts readable for everyone.

As the statistics and observation shows, setting of location to the picture like Moscow or the name of a district is a good way to increase the amount of likes and attract new followers, therefore potential customers. People can unintentionally find Zero Waste shop and get interested in it. This is the advantage of Instagram, because it allows to attract new customers just with one simple action.

For the better understanding of customers, Zero Waste shop should apply publications, which include questions towards followers. Observation of the profile shows, that the highest popularity gained interactive publications. It can contain a question regarding customers' preferences or any marketing elements, such as price or place. For example, the publication on Instagram will include the question: "What do you buy in our shop most frequently?" or "What is missing for you in our product range?" The user can answer the question in the comment section. Then the answers should be analysed and applied into campaigns or marketing strategy.

Intensity of publications: Now, the publications on Instagram take place once in three days, rarer once in two days or every day. It can stay on the same level, but it cannot be less often, as it was in autumn 2018.

Zero Waste shop has two more profile, one on Facebook and one on VK. Looking at the results from the survey, Facebook turns to be the least popular social media among the respondents, while VK is the third most popular after Instagram and Telegram. However, looking at the number of followers on these profiles, it does not seem very promising. Facebook page has 1.392 followers, while VK has almost the same number, which is 1.410 people. These numbers show, that respondents use VK for other purposes than keeping up

on Zero Waste shop updates. As a conclusion, recommendations for these social media will not be included into campaign.

- **Spring**

Gift certificates or vouchers. Based on the customers' answers for the 11th question, **57,1%** of respondents would like to purchase gift vouchers. As positive answers make more than a half of received answers, gift vouchers can be definitely implemented into marketing communication of the firm. As certificates or vouchers usually serve as a gift, they can work as a word-of-mouth because customers can spread the awareness about Zero Waste shop among their friends, relatives and so on.

In many organizations, gift cards are made of plastic. In Zero Waste shop, they should be made from more sustainable material, so it matches the concept of the company. I would suggest cards made from recycled material (e.g. plastic), which will be returned to the shop after usage and then sold again to other customers. It can also save costs for the company, as there is no need to produce new voucher over and over.

Information about availability of gift vouchers should be added onto website. There also can be an informative post on social media about this new option.

- **Spring-Summer**

Loyalty program and its promotion

The majority of clients, participated in research, use loyalty programs in other firms and organizations. 26,1 % uses it more often than once a month and 32,6 % uses it less often. Together it gives us that 58,7 % of respondents use loyalty programs. Only 23,9 % of respondents don't have such kind of membership. Therefore, the majority of customers have potential to use loyalty program in Zero Waste shop as well.

Loyalty programs have different types. For the selected company, I would suggest loyalty card with the *cash back option*. Customers will get certain percentage of their purchased amount back on this card, and will be able to use it for the future purchases. The minimum amount of purchase in order to get a cashback may be determined by the owner. This option motivates customers to come back again to the shop and repeat their purchases. Customers must be informed about new program. The most effective and easiest way to do it is social media. Beside an announcement publication, this information can be saved in InstaStories on Instagram profile so everybody can find this information easier and quicker. Customers should be also informed, that this program will save their money, as they will get the discounts for the purchases in the future, because based on results of

research, women with the lowest income are the biggest group which doesn't use loyalty programs in any organization. In addition, high percentage of people suggests that many products have too high price for them.

The launch of a loyalty program can be also promoted on a special event. As Zero Waste shop once organized a festival, it can be done again during the summer. On this event, the owner can present the loyalty program, talk about its benefits, and offer the registration to the guests. If they register for the program on this event, they will get bonus points on their cards straight away without purchasing anything. This will motivate them to come back to the shop, as they can already use the discount.

Type and design.

For implementing loyalty program with a cashback option, a firm needs a special type of card. After reviewing the offers from different agencies, I could see that there are two possible types: physical and digital.

Taking into consideration Zero waste concept, it is obvious that digital type of a card would be more suitable, as it does not create any additional waste. Customers, who follow this philosophy and care about environment, will be more satisfied with this option too. In order to implement this program, customers must download a special application on their phones, which will allow adding a loyalty card of Zero Waste shop to their phones. A firm itself must buy special license for this program, which costs \$900, after what it should make monthly payments in amount of \$30. Application for clients does not include any fees.

Table 6. Budget for the first year (digital card)

Digital loyalty card	
License price	\$900 (=55.800 rubles)
12 monthly payments	30*12=\$360 (=22.320 rubles)
Total:	\$1.260 (=78.120 rubles)

Physical card requires some services such as design and production. To make it more sustainable, the card can be made from recycled plastic. It cannot be made of paper because it will not serve long in this case. Loyalty card should be used during many years. Card from recycled plastic is more expensive than a new one, and it also requires some design.

Table 7. Budget for the first year (physical card)

Physical card	
Loyalty program implementation	25.000 rubles
Design of a card	50.000 rubles
Production of 1000 cards	200*1000=200.000 rubles
Monthly fee	1.500*12=18.000 rubles
Total:	293.000 rubles

Comparing these two options, I would recommend digital card, as it requires less costs and it goes along with the philosophy of the company.

Loyal customers are those who will buy the products even if there are cheaper substitutes on the market, they will recommend Zero Waste shop to their friends and therefore, increase the audience of the shop.

- **November-December**

Competitions on Instagram

New Year is Russian biggest holiday. On 31st of December, people are giving gifts to each other and celebrate the beginning of the New Year. Then, the whole country is having vacation until Christmas, which is on 7 of January. That is the best time for special offer or some surprises for the customers.

As half of the respondents voted positively for the online competition, therefore my suggestion is to use this tool around New Year.

Last year Zero Waste shop was sharing publications about new habits every day after New Year, those publications gained high number of likes. The competition can be connected with it. There will be seven prizes and seven winners, each will be announced every day from 1st of January till 7th. The prizes will be dedicated to the habits, described last year, which will help customers in their zero waste lifestyle.

Organization of online competition is the simple process. It only requires making a publication, setting the rules for the participants and deciding what will be the award or gift. The competition should be announced in the beginning of December. In order to participate, follower must give a “like” and share the publication on its profile.

In addition, Instagram competition can be also held during International Women’s Days in March, as the biggest part of female respondents voted for the participation in such competitions.

This is another way of communication with customers, it persuades them to visit Zero Waste shop again, try products and share this with friends. This option contributes to retaining old customers and gaining new ones, because participants will share information about the company in their profiles.

Price incentive

Online competitions are attractive for the 50 % of customers, based on the survey's results. Hence, the rest of the customers should be treated as well. The remaining 50 % of customers were analysed more deeply, their opinions about prices were taken into consideration. High percentage of both males and females consider cosmetics and household products less affordable than other products.

Based on the results, I would suggest implementing particular price incentives.

In Russia, men and women get presents on two public holidays separately. For women it is International Women's day, which is 8 of March; for men it is on 23 of February, which is Defender of the Fatherland Day. It is an important cultural tradition to give presents to relatives and close friends on those days. Hence, shortly before those days, the price for certain products, which are suitable to serve as presents, might be reduced. For women it can be cosmetics, and for men there are many reusable products, such as razer or toothbrushes.

7 Conclusion

Green marketing exists mostly due to environmental issues and problems. Those issues and the solutions for them are getting popularity among consumers and entrepreneurs in Russia. Hence, number of companies oriented on green marketing and eco-friendly products is growing.

The topic of this thesis was the proposal of recommendations for marketing communication for a young company, called Zero Waste shop, settled in Moscow. It has a big advantage on the market, as it has only few competitors in terms of Moscow market. However, while establishing this company, the owner didn't focus on profit, but on the benefits for society and environment.

The research fulfilled its purpose and answered all the research questions.

Firstly, the question about usage of customer loyalty was answered. The company should definitely focus on customer loyalty and invest into loyalty programs. It is important to retain clients because new competitors can always appear on the market.

The second question was about social media. Instagram turned out to be the most popular among respondents. Therefore, the recommendations for its development were proposed.

Third question was concerning the type of information on social media which is interesting for customers. Based on the outcome of the survey, customers are truly interested in the environmental problems and they are eager to learn more about them. Also, they want to learn more about suppliers and new products. That gives many opportunities for the social media utilization. As more they know about green products, their impact on environment and benefits, the more effective green marketing will be.

8 Limitations

The methodological limitations are included into this study.

A targeted sample size was 100 and eventually, number of returned answers was 91, which does not represent all customers of Zero Waste shop. During the process of gathering data, many received answers were saying: "I don't know what is Zero Waste shop" or "I only follow this page, but don't actually go there." As well as not every follower turned out to be actual customer of the shop, in the same way not all the customers may use social media. There was not any possibility to contact this group of customers, but it can be used in the future researches.

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10 Appendix

Questionnaire

Dear participant,

I am a student of University of Life Sciences in Prague and I would like to ask you to fill this questionnaire, which will be a part of my Bachelor Thesis. It will take max. 10 minutes of your time and it is completely anonymous.

Thank you for your help.

Alla Petrosyan

1. Please choose your gender:
 - Male;
 - Female
2. What is your age?
 - 18-25;
 - 26-35;
 - 35+
3. What is your monthly income?
 - Less than 50.000 rubles;
 - 50.000-80.000 rubles;
 - More than 80.000 rubles.
4. Do you have kids?
 - Yes
 - No
5. Please choose your diet/meal preference (max. 3)?
 - Vegan
 - Raw vegan
 - Lacto-vegetarian
 - Ovo-vegetarian
 - Lacto-ovo vegetarian
 - Pescatarian
 - Gluten-free

- No sugar
 - No specific diet
6. Please choose the reasons of buying products in Zero Waste shop (choose max. 3)?
- Care for the environment and nature;
 - High quality of the products;
 - Friendly staff and atmosphere;
 - Close/comfortable location of the shop;
 - Curiosity for something new;
 - Friend's recommendations.
7. Please rate the affordability of the prices for each product type (1 - most affordable, 5 – less affordable)?

Product type	Price affordability				
Food	1	2	3	4	5
Hygienic products	1	2	3	4	5
Cosmetics	1	2	3	4	5
Reusable household products	1	2	3	4	5

8. Please mark the eco-labels you know from the below?



a)



b)



COSMOS
ORGANIC

- c)
- d) none

9. If you know any of eco-labels from the previous question, do you pay attention to them while choosing products to buy?

- a) Yes, and I trust them
- b) No, I don't trust them
- c) I am neutral to eco-labels
- d) I don't know what is eco-label

10. Which information would you like to see on the social media of Zero waste shop (choose max. 2)?

- a) Special offers and discounts
- b) Information about employees
- c) Information about new products
- d) Information about producers and suppliers working with Zero waste shop
- e) Environmental news

11. Would you purchase gift certificates if they would be available in the Zero waste shop?

12. Would you like to participate in online competitions organised by Zero waste shop (primarily on Instagram)?

13. Are you a member of any loyalty program in other organizations (e.g. collecting points for the future discount or cashback)?

- Yes, and I use it more often than once a month
- Yes, but I use it less often than once a month
- Yes, but I don't use it
- No, I'm not a member of any loyalty program

14. Please match the social media with the frequency of its usage by you.

Instagram	Daily	Few times a	Once a	Few times a	Once a	Never
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		week	week	month	month	
Facebook	Daily	Few times a week	Once a week	Few times a month	Once a month	Never
Telegram	Daily	Few times a week	Once a week	Few times a month	Once a month	Never
YouTube	Daily	Few times a week	Once a week	Few times a month	Once a month	Never
VK	Daily	Few times a week	Once a week	Few times a month	Once a month	Never

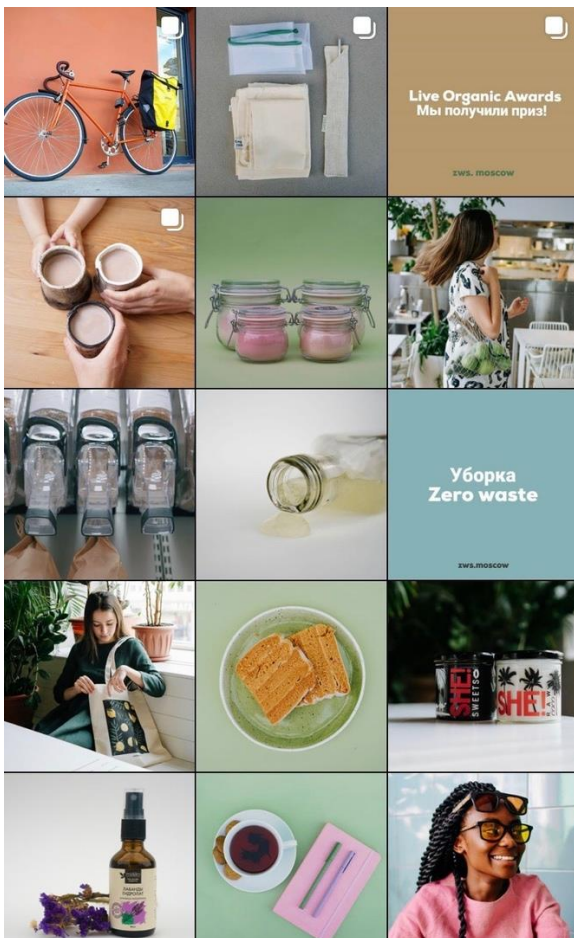


Figure 1. Overview of Instagram profile during spring



Figure 2. The most popular publication

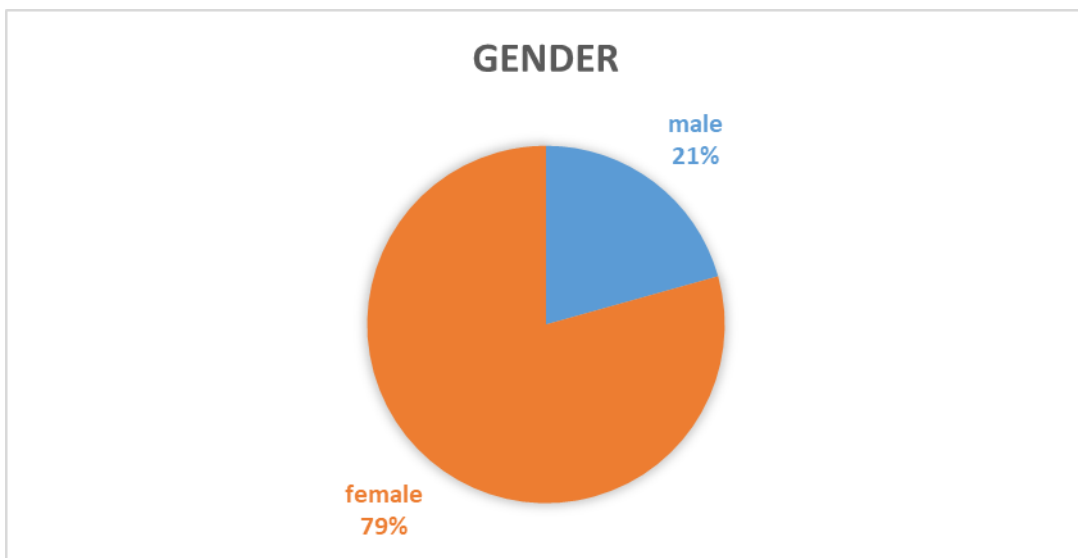


Figure 3. Gender of respondents

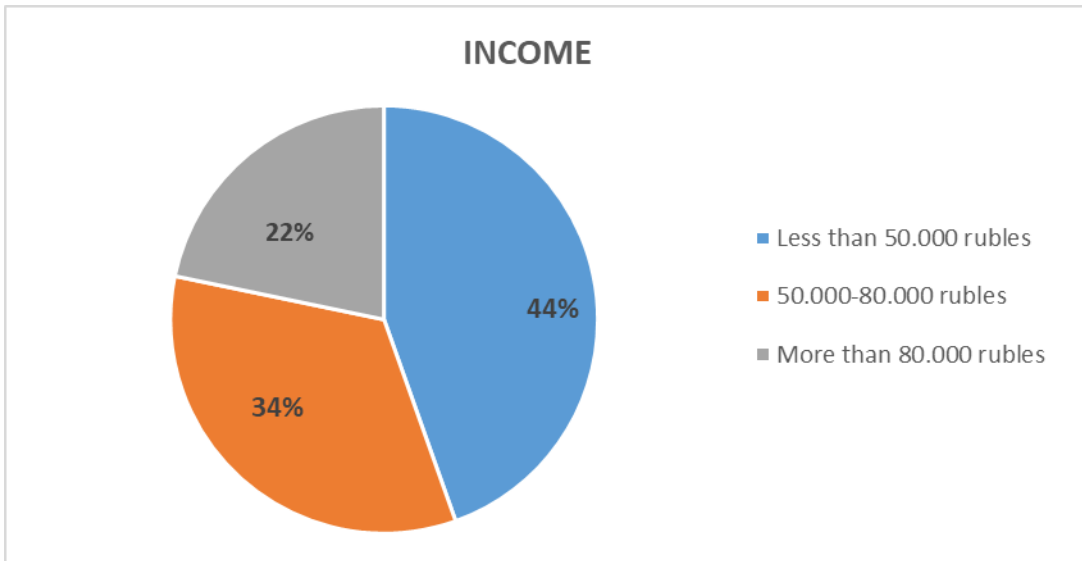


Figure 4. Income of respondents

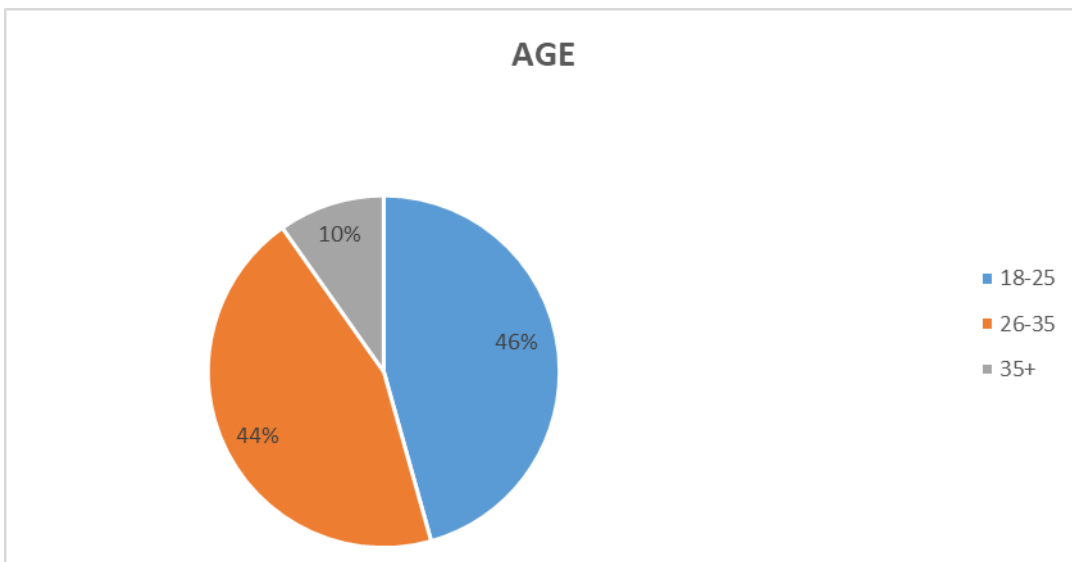


Figure 5. Age of respondents

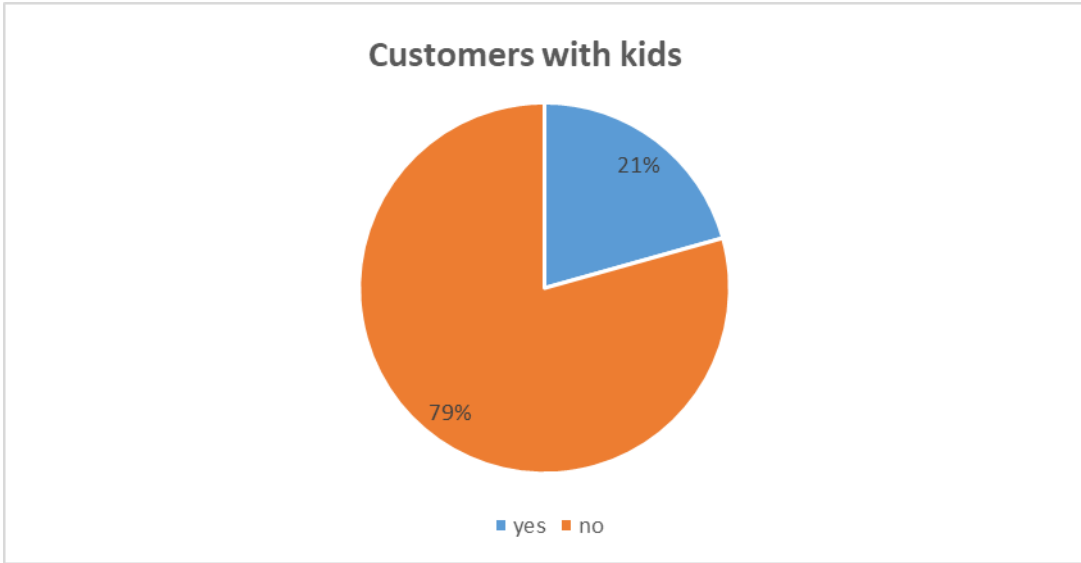


Figure 6. Customer with and without kids.