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INTERNAL MARKETING AS A STRATEGIC TOOL FOR DEVELOPING INNOVATIVE AND MANAGERIAL POTENTIAL AND ENHANCING THE COMPETITIVENESS OF BUSINESS ENTITIES

Background. Internal marketing is now viewed as a comprehensive system of partnership-based relations that fosters the development of corporate culture, employee loyalty, and customer orientation. This approach increases employee satisfaction, reduces resistance to organizational change, promotes interdepartmental synergy, and contributes to the achievement of the strategic objectives of the economic entity. The relevance of this topic stems from the ongoing transformation of economic conditions, the growing significance of human capital, and the increasing necessity for strengthening internal organizational interactions.

Methods. To generalize the stages of internal marketing evolution and to formulate the authors' approach to defining it, the methods of induction and deduction, along with a comprehensive approach, were employed. To examine scientific approaches to the interpretation of internal marketing and to identify interconnections among elements of the personnel management system, methods of analysis and synthesis were used. Additionally, to construct a conceptual model of internal marketing as an integrated system of interaction, methods of abstraction, logical generalization, and a systemic approach were applied. The study's information base comprised scientific works by foreign and domestic scholars on service marketing, personnel management, organizational behaviour, and internal communications. It also included analytical materials and methodological sources reflecting contemporary approaches to implementing internal marketing in economic entities.

Results. The article substantiates the evolution of approaches to defining the essence of internal marketing within economic entities, as well as its role in shaping an effective personnel management system and influencing organizational behavior. It establishes that modern interpretations of internal marketing encompass not only activities related to attracting, training, and motivating personnel but also the development of communication systems, the formation of a value set-up, corporate philosophy, and culture. The authors propose a definition of internal marketing based on the identified key principles, factors, and functions, and present a model of internal marketing for an economic entity. This model is based on elements of the classical marketing "4P" framework and encompasses components such as planning, communications, control, and reputation management, among others.

Conclusions. The conducted research enabled the authors to define internal marketing as an integrated system of partnership relations in human resource management. This system focuses on creating and maintaining a motivational climate and organizational working conditions within the economic entity to ensure customer orientation and employee loyalty. In this framework, employees not only perform functions aimed at improving service quality and meeting the needs and demands of the customers but also actively participate in implementing corporate philosophy, values, and strategies to achieve objectives and maintain a positive company image. A conceptual model of internal marketing is proposed as a human resource management mechanism that integrates motivational, communicative, organizational, and cultural components within the economic entity.

Keywords: HR-marketing, human resource management, organizational culture, personnel engagement, consumer, stakeholder, service quality, partnership relations.

Background

Relevance of the study. In the current environment of rapid economic transformations, labour market instability, digitalization of business processes, and increasing competition, the issue of effective human resource management has become particularly pertinent. An increasing number of companies recognize personnel not merely as a resource, but as a key strategic asset, upon whose satisfaction, motivation, and engagement the competitiveness and sustainability of the organization largely depend. Against this backdrop, interest in internal marketing as a tool to harmonize intra-organizational relations, foster a favourable microclimate, ensure internal loyalty, realize innovative and managerial potentials, and enhance the quality of external service is growing.

The concept of internal marketing originated in the 1970s within the service sector; however, over time, it has evolved

into a universal paradigm applicable across various industries. Its core principle lies in treating employees as internal customers and work as an internal product that must be attractive, valuable, and aligned with employee expectations. Concurrently, traditional marketing principles – value, communication, service, and motivation – are applied within the internal environment of the organization.

Despite the widespread adoption of internal marketing practices among leading companies, there remains no universally accepted definition of the concept within domestic scholarly literature, and approaches to its structural framework are fragmented. This lack of consensus complicates both its effective implementation and the assessment of its impact within personnel management systems. Therefore, there is a pressing need to revisit the evolution of the internal marketing concept, to systematize its approaches and functions, and to define its

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role within the management model of economic entities. It is crucial to substantiate internal marketing as a system of partnership relations encompassing not only personnel but also all key internal stakeholders of the organization. The adaptation of the classical "4P" marketing model to the internal environment of enterprises is also relevant, as it enables the customization of external marketing tools to meet organizational management needs.

The purpose of this article is to clarify the essence and conceptual model of internal marketing by examining its evolution as a scientific concept, identifying its key principles, factors, and functions, and thereby forming a comprehensive understanding of internal marketing as an integrated human resource management system that fosters enhanced motivation, employee engagement, and customer-oriented organizational behaviour within economic entities. **The object of this study** is the personnel management processes within economic entities that implement marketing approaches in their interactions with internal stakeholders. **The subject of the study** encompasses the conceptual foundations, principles, and functions of internal marketing as a tool for shaping effective organizational behaviour and fostering internal customer orientation within economic entities.

Literature review. Numerous foreign and domestic scientists have made significant contributions to the development of the internal marketing concept, developing it from initial ideas to a multifaceted philosophy and management toolkit. For example, Berry L. defined internal marketing as motivating employees through marketing activities, later expanding this definition to view internal marketing as a philosophy of treating employees as internal customers and as a strategy for creating a "work product" tailored to the needs of the employee-customer (Berry, 1981).

Gummesson E. emphasized the importance of relationships in the internal marketing system, identifying seven levels of "nano-relationships" that can be perceived as aspects of internal marketing (Gummesson, 1991).

Grönroos C. proposed considering internal marketing through the prism of total quality management of customer service, first introducing the terms "internal product" and "internal consumer", and presenting internal marketing as a management philosophy that continuously encourages and reinforces the understanding and appreciation of personnel roles within the organization. Its goal is to attract and retain customer-oriented employees, as well as to develop and maintain a service culture (Grönroos, 1985). As Sahaidak M. notes, the scientist, together with P. Voima, interpreted internal marketing as a cumulative concept encompassing many internal activities at various levels, defining it as the process of establishing and maintaining relationships with employees and other internal consumers to satisfy the needs of all parties involved (Sahaidak, 2016).

Rafiq M. defined internal marketing as an activity aimed at implementing a change management strategy and developed an internal marketing model comprising five factors: personnel motivation and satisfaction, customer orientation, cross-functional coordination and integration, application of traditional marketing, and implementation of corporate strategies. They argued that internal marketing contributes to the effective execution of corporate strategies. Additionally, they structured the elements of the traditional marketing toolkit "4P" in relation to internal markets, forming an "internal marketing mix", and proposed expanding it to "7P". Furthermore, they conducted a critical analysis of the internal marketing concept and developed criteria for

evaluating the effectiveness of internal marketing programs (Rafiq, 1993).

Lings I. proposed a philosophy of internal marketing in which personnel are simultaneously regarded as a vital resource for achieving company goals and as the most important group of internal clients whose needs must be satisfied. His perspective contributed to understanding internal marketing not merely as a functional activity but as a business approach grounded in internal marketing research, communication, and responsiveness (Lings, 1999).

Kotler P. included internal marketing as one of the components of the holistic marketing concept; he characterized it as a two-level system: the first level implements various marketing functions, and the second – integrated marketing, where other departments "think from the buyer's perspective"; he identified three interconnected units in the activities of service enterprises (enterprise, contact personnel and consumer), which form three links of relationships, where the internal marketing strategy is aimed at the "enterprise-personnel" link, related to personnel motivation (Kotler, 1999; Kotler, & Keller, 2012).

Drucker P. believed that internal marketing should be aimed at the company's reputation to attract employees, as well as at the position of marketing in the company, and noted that "managing people is 'marketing work'", suggesting to consider employees as "volunteers" due to the limited financial motivational tools (Drucker, 2012).

Kapferer J.-N. introduced branding into the scope of internal marketing, emphasizing that branding experience in the service sector is closely linked to the points of contact between customers and personnel. He noted that internal marketing is essential for managing brand contact, which requires consistency in functional responsibilities as well as shared accountability of management and personnel for the promises and unity embodied by the brand (Kapferer, 2008).

Ballantyne D. identified the main principles of internal marketing: orientation to satisfying personnel needs, motivating all personnel to consciously satisfy the needs of external consumers, using traditional marketing methods within the organization, cross-functional cooperation, active interaction, and readiness for change. In addition, he noted that this approach allows reducing the gap between theoretical justification and practical implementation (Ballantyne, 2000).

Voichak A. used the term "internal marketing management" and proposed an author's classification of the internal marketing concept depending on the internal market, paying significant attention to research on the structure and role of internal communications. He believed that internal marketing is aimed at ensuring full perception of marketing principles by all enterprise personnel, especially its management (Voichak, 2009).

Kudenko N. characterized internal marketing from the perspective of its strategic value for the enterprise, where the object of research is personnel in the process of implementing a marketing strategy as "the enterprise's internal market" and substantiated the similarity of internal marketing with the postulates of personnel management theory in terms of strategic business partnership (Kudenko, 2012).

Reshetnikova I. defined internal marketing as activity within the enterprise aimed at creating a favourable internal environment, conveying enterprise values and its marketing goals to management and personnel, training contact personnel for the best satisfaction of consumer needs and increasing the customer base, and emphasized that internal marketing should cover the integration of efforts, setting up

the service process, creating material conditions, and training personnel (Reshetnikova, 2015).

Okuneva O. noted that internal marketing should be considered from the perspective of service quality, internal communications, innovation implementation, the organization's internal market, and the implementation of marketing plans; she defined the internal marketing system as a set of interconnected and interdependent elements of the internal marketing complex and targeted management actions for the development and retention of customer-oriented contact personnel for the best satisfaction of the end consumer's needs; she developed an internal marketing complex "8P", which, unlike the classical "7P", is supplemented with the element "prolonged service productivity" to account for the differences in providing and consuming services (Okuneva, 2014).

Kosar N., Sarapin T., Kuzio N. emphasized that internal marketing, as a component of holistic marketing, ensures the acceptance of marketing principles by all employees and regulates relations at the "company – personnel" level (Kosar, Sarapin, & Kuzio, 2013).

Mishustina T. called internal marketing a new direction of marketing activity, whose task is to create a customer-oriented environment within the organization (Mishustina, 2014).

Sahaidak M. proposed an author's definition of internal marketing as "activity aimed at building mutually beneficial partnership relations in the value creation chain owner – top manager – personnel – client with the aim of best satisfying the needs of internal and external consumers and achieving the market and social goals of the enterprise" (Sahaidak, 2016).

Vengerova O. substantiated a five-stage approach to implementing internal marketing at the enterprise, aimed at increasing personnel productivity and overall enterprise efficiency, emphasizing the importance of internal communication and knowledge management (through the SECI model and "knowledge spiral") for achieving market goals and increasing management efficiency (Vengerova, 2018).

Krasovska O. emphasized that corporate culture is an integral part of internal marketing, which directly affects the efficiency of employees, creating a favourable internal climate and providing the company with competitive advantages in the market, emphasizing that balanced internal marketing criteria can optimize the working environment and improve the quality of customer service (Krasovska, 2021).

Thus, the authors' contribution to the development of the internal marketing concept lies in the consistent expansion of its interpretation, from basic personnel motivation to a comprehensive management system that integrates HR functions, corporate culture, change management, branding, and a focus on the internal customer as a key success factor in the external market. However, despite significant progress in the scientific literature, there is still a lack of generalized approaches and models of internal marketing that take into account contemporary challenges and the dynamic changes in the internal environment of economic entities. Comprehensive research into the principles, factors, and functions of internal marketing, as well as their systematization within a unified conceptual framework, requires further development.

Methods

The study employed a range of general scientific and specific research methods. To generalize the stages in the evolution of internal marketing and to formulate the author's definition, the methods of induction, deduction, and a comprehensive approach were applied. These enabled the identification of five key phases in the development of the

internal marketing concept: from a focus on personnel motivation to the understanding of internal marketing as an integrated component of the economic entity's management system, ensuring the interconnection between human resource management, corporate culture, and overall marketing strategy. To examine scientific approaches to interpreting internal marketing and to reveal interconnections between elements of the human resource management system, the methods of analysis and synthesis were used. This facilitated the structuring of existing concepts and provided a rationale for considering internal marketing as an integrated human resource management system that enhances motivation, promotes employee engagement, and ensures customer-oriented organizational behaviour in economic entities. To construct a conceptual model of internal marketing, the methods of abstraction, logical generalization, and a systems approach were applied. These made it possible to form a comprehensive view of internal marketing as a human resource management mechanism that integrates motivational, communicative, organizational, and cultural components within the economic entity. The informational foundation of the research was formed by the scientific works of both foreign and domestic scholars in the fields of services marketing, human resource management, organizational behaviour, and internal communications, as well as by analytical materials and methodological sources reflecting modern approaches to the implementation of internal marketing in economic entities.

Results

In the context of modern economic transformations, innovative approaches to managing economic entities and their market activities are receiving growing attention. Since the late twentieth century, internal marketing has emerged as a topic of particular interest, increasingly generating debate and contradictions among marketing theorists and practitioners. At the same time, the concept of internal marketing has undergone several distinct phases of development (Lytvynenko, 2019; Sahaidak, 2016):

1. In the first phase, in 1970–1980 (focus on service marketing), researchers concentrated primarily on employee job satisfaction and workplace comfort. Internal marketing was understood as the process of attracting, training, motivating, and retaining qualified personnel by creating working conditions that met their needs. In this context, employees were regarded as consumers of the services and benefits offered by the organization's human resource management system. A strong focus was placed on material incentives and rewards as key tools for encouraging effective performance. Thus, the term "internal marketing" first appears from the representative of the American School of Services Marketing Berry L. and is defined as "applying the philosophy and practice of marketing to people (specialists) who serve external customers for the purpose of hiring and retaining the best personnel and ensuring they perform the highest quality work" (Berry, 1981). The key thesis in this approach is: "to satisfy the consumer, the economic entity must first satisfy the employee" (George, 1977; Sasser & Arbeit, 1976). Thus, according to L. Berry, "internal marketing is attracting, developing, motivating and retaining qualified personnel through work that is offered and satisfies the needs of the worker". Therefore, on the one hand, "internal marketing" is viewed as a philosophy of the employer's attitude towards personnel as an internal client, and on the other hand, as a strategy for creating a work-product in accordance with the needs of the employee-client (Sahaidak, 2016). And all actions primarily concern contact personnel.

2. In the second phase (1980–1990), Grönroos C., a leading figure of the Scandinavian school of services marketing, exerted a decisive influence on the development of internal marketing. He argued that, in delivering quality services, both frontline personnel and support staff (those who do not directly interact with clients) play a crucial role. Grönroos C. emphasized that consumer orientation among employees is best achieved through targeted marketing influence—applying a client-influence model—rather than merely by satisfying and stimulating staff. Consequently, he expanded the definition of internal marketing from a mere personnel-motivation technique to a strategy for fostering customer and sales orientation. As he put it: "The internal market of employees of an economic entity can be influenced more effectively and, therefore, stimulate customer-orientation, market orientation, and sales through the implementation of marketing activities directed inside the economic entity" (Grönroos, 1985). However, like L. Berry's concept, Grönroos's approach focuses on shaping employee customer orientation via influence processes, rather than on enhancing their satisfaction and motivation.

3. The beginning of the third phase (1990–2000) was marked by many authors' understandings of internal marketing as a means of implementing the economic entity's strategy. Winter J. argues that the role of internal marketing is to target, train, and motivate personnel to fulfil the institutional objectives of the economic entity. In his view, internal marketing is a process through which employees come to understand and acknowledge not only the value of the program but also their role within it (Winter, 1985). In this phase, the role of internal marketing as a tool or methodology for implementing the economic entity's strategy becomes clearer. Initially, this viewpoint appeared in the context of service provision. Later, it was generalized to any type of marketing strategy. Thus, both researchers and practitioners have recognized the significant role of internal marketing as a technology for human resource management aimed at achieving the strategic objectives of an economic entity. Internal marketing functions as an interfunctional unifying mechanism within the organization, playing a crucial role in integrating marketing and HR functions. Consequently, personnel are transformed into a strategic resource that actively contributes to the implementation of marketing processes.

4. In the fourth phase (2000–2010), internal marketing began to be viewed as a mechanism for reducing departmentalization, interfunctional resistance, and overcoming resistance to change. This phase of development leads to the conclusion that the scope of internal marketing is much broader than just employee motivation and customer orientation. Internal marketing researchers Ahmed K. P. and Rafiq M. considered the latest transformations in the understanding of internal marketing and gave it the following definition: "It is planned efforts to overcome organizational resistance to change and to direct, motivate, and integrate employees for effective implementation of corporate and functional strategies" (Rafiq & Ahmed, 1993). This definition implies that any strategic change is likely to necessitate internal marketing efforts aimed at overcoming organizational inertia and motivating employees to adopt the desired behaviours. In addition, since some (including marketing) strategies are likely to encompass several functional areas, this process will likely require cross-functional integration. The above definition of internal marketing takes this aspect into account and shifts the focus from viewing the employee as a

customer to emphasizing the tasks and measures necessary for the effective implementation of marketing and other organizational programs aimed at achieving customer satisfaction, while recognizing the central role of employees.

5. In the fifth phase (2010 – present), internal marketing is considered as a system of partnership relations and an integrated management function in the chain of participants: "owner – top manager – manager – personnel – contact personnel – consumer".

Therefore, it should be emphasized that internal marketing is important not only for the service sector. It is also relevant for economic entities in various industries (e.g., information technology), where the final product largely depends on the potential of personnel and their motivation in the production process. Thus, the emphasis on the philosophy of building relationships with personnel, particularly frontline or contact employees, as partners forms the foundation of the modern concept of internal marketing, which identifies three categories of consumers:

- internal consumers (personnel);

- stakeholders (interested groups or individuals who can influence the company's achievement of its goals or are themselves influenced by this process, i.e., business owners, top managers, partners);

- external consumers (end-users). It should be noted that internal marketing is sometimes equated in literary sources with such concepts as intra-firm, intra-corporate, or intra-market marketing. Such a vision of the essence of internal marketing by various scholars is associated with:

- 1) the extension of marketing principles and methods to all levels of management of the economic entity and the improvement of internal organizational processes;

- 2) the strengthening of the interaction of intra-corporate marketing with the HR department in terms of such activities as recruitment, selection, certification, and professional development of personnel, and the strengthening of the role of intra-corporate communications and PR events;

- 3) the consideration of personnel and structural subdivisions of the economic entity as an internal market, where there is an exchange of work-product (provision of a workplace and satisfaction of personnel needs) and the results of personnel work (standards of quality service for external target consumers).

At the current stage of development, the concept of "internal marketing" can be considered from the following perspectives:

1. Internal marketing as a system of relationships with contact personnel refers to the activity of an economic entity directed at various target groups of current employees. Its purpose is to identify their needs, expectations, and level of satisfaction with working conditions, as well as prospects for professional and career development. In this context, internal marketing primarily functions as a relationship system focused on contact personnel, aiming to enhance service quality by creating motivational and organizational working conditions. These outcomes are achieved through the formulation and implementation of strategic goals and tasks, utilizing selected elements of the internal marketing system (Kudenko, 2012; Mazur, & Bratko, 2016). That is, before a high-quality service can be delivered to an external customer, it must first be "sold" to the internal customer – the personnel. In other words, employees must be consciously motivated to uphold quality standards in external customer service. In this interpretation, internal marketing is viewed primarily as a set of efforts directed at contact personnel, and its scope significantly overlaps with

that of human resource (HR) management. At the same time, the main focus of internal marketing within the economic entity remains the "contact" personnel. It is important to emphasize that HR specialists should be responsible for the selection and overall qualification development of personnel, whereas marketing management should focus on training employees in marketing techniques, communicating the organization's values and objectives, familiarizing them with product and service characteristics, and applying sales promotion tools – similar to those used when working with external intermediaries (Reshetnikova, 2015). Contact personnel can include individual employees, their groups, or all personnel directly or indirectly involved in change processes and/or the implementation of marketing strategies and programs, i.e., all those who make contact with the target and contact audiences of the economic entity:

- 1) top managers who hold meetings and establish contacts with interested audiences;
- 2) employees of the marketing and sales department who communicate with intermediaries and suppliers;
- 3) specialists of the advertising department who contact representatives of television and radio companies, advertising and information, and PR agencies;
- 4) IT department specialists who maintain communication with existing and potential clients using the economic entity's website electronic resources;
- 5) accountants who report on the economic entity's activities to the tax inspectorate and control and audit bodies, as well as those who interact with representatives of banking institutions, also belong to the category of contact personnel. In the service sector, this category typically includes staff or specialists who directly deliver services to consumers. These professionals act as intermediaries in the process of transferring services to end users. Such intermediation involves balancing the interests of business owners, external customers, and other stakeholders, along with their professional interests. Importantly, contact personnel cannot fully realize their interests, whether commercial or non-commercial, without first satisfying the interests of the consumer or other counterparties. These individuals must understand the value and characteristics of the goods or services offered and be properly motivated to deliver high-quality service. Therefore, top management should view and treat contact personnel as strategic partners. In this context, contact personnel can be understood as customer-oriented managers and specialists of the economic entity who establish and maintain long-term, mutually beneficial relationships with both internal and external contact audiences in order to achieve the marketing goals of the organization (Sahaidak, 2016).

2. Internal marketing as a process of forming customer-oriented personnel is a process that takes place within the economic entity at all functional levels, motivates and inspires personnel at all management levels, to improve the quality of customer service (Organ, Podsakoff & Mac Kenzie, 2006). That is, it is an attitude towards one's employee as an internal client, and its goal is to ensure working conditions that meet the needs of the personnel. By creating proper working conditions, imposing the values and beliefs of the economic entity on the personnel, and using marketing tools, the result is achieved in the form of a customer-oriented employee.

3. Internal marketing as a philosophy of human resource management of an economic entity is considered the creation of such favourable conditions and relationships within the economic entity that would ensure effective work

and interaction of all personnel, and high satisfaction of employees as internal clients. The result of internal marketing is a level of personnel loyalty that ensures a dedicated and sincere attitude towards employees, management, other persons, their actions, and the economic entity as a whole; it encourages employees to consciously perform professional tasks and duties at a high level in accordance with the goals and interests of the economic entity, and evokes the desire of each employee for initiative, active activity to improve its results.

4. Internal marketing as a system of internal company communications is a form of marketing within an economic entity that focuses personnel's attention on internal actions that must be changed to improve the economic entity's market position (Yeriomina, 2020).

5. Internal marketing as a tool for implementing corporate and functional strategies is understood as the application of a marketing approach to employees. It involves building, stimulating, coordinating, and integrating personnel to ensure the effective implementation of strategic objectives. This process aims to satisfy the end consumer through interaction with motivated and customer-oriented staff.

It should be noted that economic entities with many professional employees, as well as with an extensive network of branches and departments, have the greatest need for internal marketing. This is since professional employees are usually not inclined to consider themselves as subordinates (they cannot simply be given orders), they are significantly less dependent on economic entities, and more committed to their field of knowledge than to the economic entity itself.

Thus, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. All listed approaches focus on the internal client – the employees of the economic entity.
2. The main goal of internal marketing is to create favourable working conditions that ensure high motivation, satisfaction, and loyalty of personnel. This is achieved through creating a favourable working environment, supporting professional growth, and integrating corporate values.
3. An important element is the integration of the efforts of various departments of the economic entity (HR, marketing, management) to ensure coordinated actions aimed at maintaining corporate culture and implementing strategies.
4. Despite the primary focus on the internal client, the goal of all approaches is to improve the quality of external customer service through personnel training and motivation.
5. First and foremost, it is essential to create working conditions that meet the needs and expectations of employees, as this directly influences their productivity and loyalty to the economic entity. The link between the quality of services provided and external customer satisfaction on the one hand, and the satisfaction of internal customers (i.e., personnel) on the other, is both evident and well-established (Fig. 1).

Thus, internal marketing serves as a key instrument in establishing an effective human resource management system and shaping organizational behaviour. It facilitates the creation of conditions in which employees not only comprehend the goals and values of the economic entity but also actively contribute to their achievement, thereby enhancing the overall efficiency of the entity and increasing the satisfaction of external clients. Considering various approaches and views, internal marketing is proposed to be understood as an integrated system of partnership relations for human resource management, which is focused on creating and maintaining a motivational climate and organizational working conditions within the economic entity to ensure customer orientation and personnel loyalty, where

employees act not only as performers of functions to improve the quality of service for external clients and satisfy their needs and requests, but also as active participants in

the implementation of corporate philosophy, values and strategies to achieve goals and form and maintain a positive image of the economic entity.

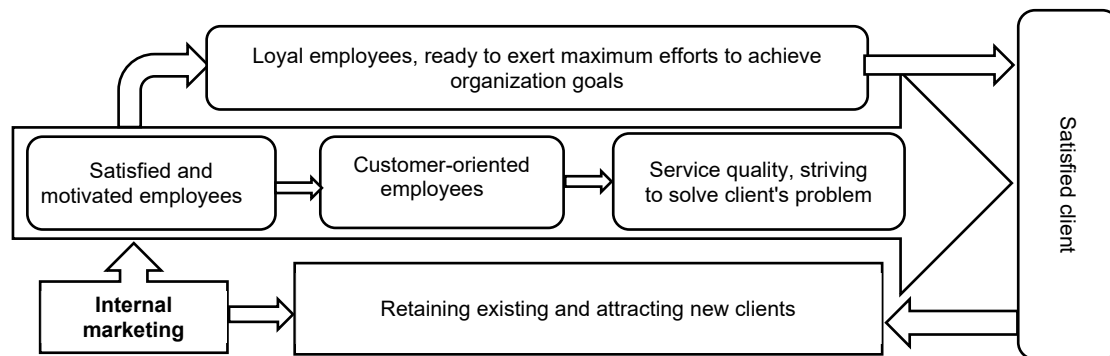


Fig. 1. The chain of service quality assurance in internal marketing

Source: formed on (Lings, 1999; Sahaidak, 2016).

Therefore, internal marketing should be considered as:

- 1) a system of relationships between the economic entity and its personnel, which cannot exist separately from each other;
- 2) an internal philosophy of market orientation;
- 3) a component of corporate philosophy and culture implementation, and the formation of the economic entity's strategy;
- 4) a tool for improving product (service) quality and the economic entity's image. In addition, it should be noted that the concept of internal marketing is based on elements of the traditional complex by analogy with traditional marketing and McCartney's marketing concept model "4P" (Kudenko, 2012), from which internal marketing programs are formed at both the top management level and in departmental management or personnel promotion (Mazur, & Bratko, 2016).

The first and fundamental element of any marketing mix is the product. In the context of internal marketing, the job offered by the economic entity to the employee represents the internal product. The development of this internal product (the job) encompasses the following elements (Flipo, 1986):

- selection of appropriate personnel;
- effective internal training;
- proper distribution of powers and responsibilities;
- creation of conditions for teamwork.

The second element of the internal marketing mix is price. Payment is the price of the internal product. It should be noted that the internal marketing "price" is not equivalent to the salary paid by the economic entity to its employees as compensation for their labour, but rather "what we demand from our internal clients as 'payment' when they 'buy' the product and participate in the marketing plan". The determination of the price of the internal product is based on the premise that the benefits employees derive from the job must exceed their opportunity cost. In other words, employees should perceive that the material, social, and other benefits they receive in their current position surpass those available in alternative employment. Only under such conditions can the economic entity expect to retain satisfied personnel who perform quality work.

The third element of the internal marketing complex is place or so-called "distribution". Place (distribution) is the way of delivering the internal product to its consumer (employee). The term "internal marketing place" can be understood as a set of spaces, processes, people, and decisions (managerial, technological, etc.) within a specific

organizational structure and corporate culture that form a platform for "economic entity-employee" relationships in the process of achieving the economic entity's strategic goals and ensure the reliability, openness, and transparency of these mutual relationships.

The fourth element of the internal marketing complex is promotion, which is most visibly manifested in the form of internal communications and appeals. Promotion of the internal product is the formation of corporate culture, contributes to meeting the needs of internal clients, creating a system of effective relationships between internal clients and internal suppliers, between internal clients and external clients, developing internal communications, and other elements of internal PR. Internal marketing focuses on relationships and processes within the economic entity (Mazur, & Bratko, 2016).

The methodological basis of internal marketing as a science includes the following approaches:

- 1) systemic – viewing processes as systems, i.e., combining elements necessary for forming internal marketing and achieving a specific goal into a single whole;
- 2) complex – as a unity of organizational, economic, social, legal, psychological, and other aspects of management;
- 3) situational (applied) – the actions of the economic entity and its manager must depend on the current state of the internal and external environment (context) of the economic entity.

Based on the generalization of various scientific approaches (see above), the main principles of internal marketing of economic entities are (Sahaidak, 2016):

- 1) entering the market with an individual service offer and ensuring a high level of customer service and additional services;
- 2) establishing mutually beneficial cooperation with employees of the economic entity as business partners, by creating proper working conditions, motivating and satisfying needs in exchange for their professional qualities and intellectual abilities to achieve the corporate goals of the economic entity;
- 3) forming and implementing a change management strategy by developing marketing programs, defining the role and place of personnel in them, and implementing tactics of active service offering, taking into account the values of the internal and external market, and simultaneously influencing it;
- 4) ensuring compliance of the desired result from receiving and consuming the service by the client, forming

loyalty (of personnel and clients) to the economic entity and its brand, as well as a positive consumer experience.

Domestic and foreign researchers identify five main factors of internal marketing (Kosmyna, 2012):

- personnel motivation and satisfaction;
- customer orientation and their satisfaction level;
- organizational integration and coordination;
- marketing approach to organizational behaviour;
- implementation of corporate and functional strategies of the economic entity.

Regarding the main advantages of internal marketing's influence on organizational behaviour, the following can be highlighted (Ahmed, & Rafiq, 2002):

- 1) encouraging personnel to productive work;
- 2) empowering personnel with certain responsibilities;
- 3) encouraging personnel to provide quality customer service;
- 4) improving understanding of marketing principles by all employees;
- 5) improving customer satisfaction and loyalty;
- 6) integrating business culture, human resource management structure, vision, and strategy with professional and social needs of personnel;
- 7) creating effective coordination and communication between departments and subdivisions, ensuring proper information flow within the economic entity (Leskiv, & Bochko, 2014).

The formation of an effective internal marketing system can be conditionally divided into the following processes, which are not one-time:

- researching market requirements regarding personnel qualities;
- recruiting and training employees;
- researching employee needs and offering them an "internal product" (work) that would maximally satisfy their needs;
- conveying and explaining the values and tasks of the economic entity and its marketing goals;
- training the contact personnel of the economic entity on product properties and characteristics, sales methods and techniques to best satisfy consumer needs, and increase the economic entity's customer base, etc. In this context, regarding relations with the personnel of the economic entity, the following functions of internal marketing can be distinguished:

1. *Functions related to the formation and management of customer-oriented contact personnel* (Sahaidak, 2016):

- 1) selling the "internal product" to the economic entity's contact personnel, as an internal consumer;
- 2) comprehensive study of the internal consumer, their needs, requests, desires, and satisfaction with the performed work;
- 3) segmentation of the internal market where the work-product exchange takes place;
- 4) identifying the individual values of contact personnel and taking them into account in the mission and corporate culture of the economic entity;
- 5) establishing interaction and forming internal interpersonal relationships between the contact personnel of the top office, middle office, and front office;
- 6) internal communication and integration of personnel ("part-time marketers") to satisfy consumer needs and achieve the marketing goals of the economic entity;
- 7) creating conditions and an atmosphere of mutual understanding among employees regarding orientation towards the final result;

- 8) best customer satisfaction;
- 9) increasing customer orientation of contact personnel, etc.

2. *Functions related to the formation and management of customer-oriented personnel in general* (Sahaidak, 2016):

- 1) investigating employee satisfaction with the work performed;
- 2) developing internal corporate service standards and controlling service quality;
- 3) forming a marketing orientation of personnel during training and conducting corporate seminars and training;
- 4) popularizing the products manufactured and services provided by the economic entity by disseminating information about their advantages, production technologies, and other relevant aspects; attracting new customers while retaining and supporting existing ones through loyalty programs; and creating a highly attractive employer brand image. This approach enables employees not only to receive material benefits but also to fully realize their professional competencies and personal qualities.

In general, the functions of internal marketing can be combined into the following 5 groups (Sahaidak, 2016): analytical, integrating, information and communication, stimulating, and managerial.

The implementation of *the analytical function*, using various market analysis tools, ensures the development of well-founded marketing plans at the strategic, tactical, and operational levels. The components of this function are:

- study of the internal and external market;
- study of internal and external consumers;
- study of consumer demand for services;
- analysis of the internal environment of the economic entity.

The integrating function allows for effective, mutually beneficial cooperation between all departments of the economic entity, between personnel and consumers. The focus of this function is the unification of the economic entity's personnel and its preservation as such.

The components of this function are:

- uniting the personnel of the economic entity based on a common cause, a common way of thinking, moral and corporate values, and experience;
- development of a system of horizontal and vertical ties;
- joint participation in the preparation and conduct of corporate events and solving non-standard situations;
- involvement of personnel and service consumers in value creation;
- creating an atmosphere of safety and stability for employees.

The information and communication function in the internal marketing system provides reliable, timely and objective information to all participants in the consumer value chain about the mission, goals and values of the economic entity; about the socially necessary quantity, assortment and quality of goods (services); about the competitive positions of the economic entity in the market and its advantages; about the results of activities and success stories of employees, etc. The components of this function are:

- corporate media, as a public part of the internal communication system and as the most powerful channel of influence;
- direct communications at horizontal and vertical levels (meetings with management, open days, feedback letters);
- promotion and internal public relations;
- organization of advertising and stimulation of consumer preferences.

The *stimulating function* creates guidelines for the development or curtailment of production activities. The task of this function is to ensure the most complete activation of individual performers or labour collectives to achieve clearly formulated goals and set tasks. The stimulating function aims, first of all, to satisfy the economic, social, and moral-emotional interests of personnel in performing their functional duties.

The components of the stimulating function are:

- encouraging the economic entity to reduce costs;
- focusing on motivating personnel to take specific actions and find solutions in resolving non-standard situations;
- motivating personnel to maximize the satisfaction of their own and others' interests;
- improving the quality and consumer value of services;
- establishing new contacts, etc.

The *managerial function* traditionally involves systematic targeted influence on marketing activities through planning, organization, motivation, coordination, and control to achieve defined marketing goals of the economic entity.

Components of this function:

- organization, planning, and control of marketing activities in internal and external markets;

- coordination of actions and motivation of personnel.

When making management decisions, it is essential to ensure the presence and proper functioning of all the above-mentioned functions. Underestimating the importance of any one of these functions in practice can lead to misunderstandings regarding the goals and objectives assigned to individual employees or teams, inconsistencies in actions, a lack of initiative, and frequent violations of labour, executive, and organizational discipline.

The model of internal marketing of economic entities contains the following systematically and comprehensively interconnected elements (Fig. 2).

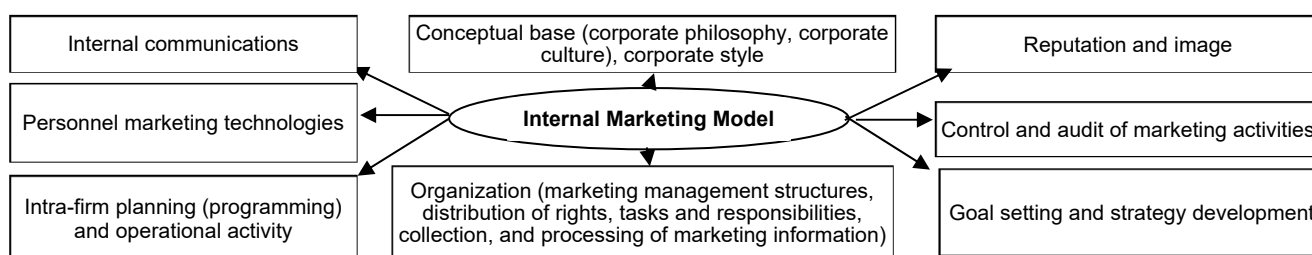


Fig. 2. Elements of the internal marketing model of an economic entity

Source: author's development.

To summarize, internal marketing must be integrated into the organizational behaviour of economic entities. To achieve this, managers need to employ all available methods to foster shared values and beliefs among personnel, ensuring that the concept of the "internal client" is recognized at all levels of the economic entity. Establishing a firm internal conviction that clients exist both inside and outside the organization should become a stable norm adhered to by all employees. As a result, personnel will align their behaviour with these organizational norms, driving positive changes both within the economic entity as a whole and in its organizational behaviour specifically (Kosmyna, 2012).

That is, internal marketing aims at systematic optimization of processes occurring within the economic entity, using methods of HR and marketing management. The object of internal marketing is the employees of the economic entity and the internal environment of the economic entity, viewed through the prism of the client (Leskiv, & Bochko, 2014; Sahaidak, 2016).

Among the main tasks of internal marketing, the following can be distinguished (Sahaidak, 2016):

- 1) simultaneous orientation towards both clients and personnel, studying their needs, taking into account individual values and interests (personnel satisfied with their work can more easily assimilate given service standards and provide higher quality service to external consumers);
- 2) reducing the isolation of the economic entity's subdivisions and interfunctional discrepancies;
- 3) development by the economic entity's management of a favourable microclimate for work, psychological support, assistance, friendly attitude towards personnel, mutual trust and respect;
- 4) overcoming resistance to innovation from personnel (when introducing any innovations, the management of the

economic entity, as a rule, may face difficulties related to personnel (misunderstanding, unwillingness, possibly fear, etc.).

Thus, the core idea of internal marketing is the application of external marketing concepts, ideas, and tools within the internal market of an economic entity, i.e., within its internal organizational environment, which significantly influences overall organizational behaviour. Internal marketing posits that the relationship between an economic entity and its employees mirrors the relationship between the entity and its external clients: the entity offers a "product" (a specific job position) which the employee "acquires" by investing their labour. The traditional marketing focus on customer needs is extended here to include the employee as an "internal" consumer. Internal marketing aims to ensure high product quality at every stage of production and delivery by enhancing employee motivation through satisfaction with working conditions, compensation, team atmosphere, and other factors.

Discussion and conclusions

Our study of the essence and phases of internal marketing development further clarified the results of the systematic review of the role of internal marketing in personnel development and organizational performance, and its role as a mediator between leadership style and market orientation (Hidayati, Suyanto & Istanto, 2023). It also emphasized the importance of involving personnel in developing and understanding organizational goals, which is the essence of internal marketing. Additionally, it highlighted the importance of ensuring that personnel meet qualification and motivational requirements, which include aspects of personnel marketing and enhancing the enterprise's attractiveness in the labour market (Dashko, Bekhter, & Mykhailichenko, 2023).

The model we developed complements the results obtained by scientists Li E. Y. and Ko S.-F., who substantiated the interaction with knowledge integration,

quality of internal communications, and other individual employee factors (Li, & Ko, 2021); Eltayib N. H. E. and Ali A. B. M., who studied the impact of personnel marketing technologies (internal training, motivation, reward), communications on employee satisfaction in the banking sector (Eltayib, & Ali, 2022); Yıldız S. M., who showed the links between internal marketing, engagement, performance, and turnover intention in Turkish sports organizations (Yıldız, 2024); Brahimi A. and Kadri D., who investigated the impact of internal marketing on service quality through the prism of internal communication processes (Brahimi & Kadri, 2024); Awwad M. S. and Lafi F. M., who clarified the role of internal marketing as a mediating variable in path-goal leadership styles and the market orientation (Awwad, & Lafi, 2023); Grishnova O., who presented a model of human capital management based on digital technologies, aimed at improving the internal experience of employees, their engagement, and loyalty through the integration of IT solutions into HR strategies, creating favourable conditions of work, developing digital competencies, and ensuring flexibility, which optimizes interaction between personnel and encourages innovation (Grishnova, 2025); Lisogor L. and Rudenko N. who examined the component structure of human resource potential which includes a motivational component and substantiated the directions for minimizing the risks of its quality deterioration. They emphasized encouraging employers to invest in employee upskilling and enhancing their motivation for self-education, which are key technologies of personnel marketing within the internal marketing model (Lisogor, & Rudenko, 2022).

Based on the above, it is evident that the concept of internal marketing has evolved through five distinct phases, beginning with an initial focus on personnel satisfaction with work in the 1970s–1980s and progressing to a systemic understanding of internal marketing as a system of partnership relations and an integrated management function within the network of organizational participants "owner – top manager – manager – personnel – contact personnel – consumer" in the modern fifth phase (since 2010). Currently, internal marketing serves as a key tool for establishing an efficient human resource management system and shaping organizational behaviour. The core idea is to apply marketing principles to the internal environment by treating employees as "internal clients", where the job is the "internal product" offered by the economic entity, and the employee "purchases" it through their labour. In addition, in the modern fifth phase of development, internal marketing also considers stakeholders (business owners, top managers, and partners) as a separate category of consumers alongside internal (personnel) and external (end) clients.

Considering the above, internal marketing can be understood as an integrated system of partnership relations in human resource management, aimed at creating and maintaining a motivational climate and organizational working conditions within the economic entity to ensure customer orientation and personnel loyalty. This approach enables employees to act not only as performers of tasks but also as active participants in implementing corporate philosophy, values, and strategies, thereby contributing to the achievement of organizational goals and the formation of a positive corporate image.

It is important to note that internal marketing is crucial not only for the service sector but also for economic entities in various industries (e.g., information technology), where the final product depends on the potential and motivation of personnel in the production process. At the same time, the quality of services and the satisfaction of external clients

directly depend on the satisfaction of internal consumers – the personnel. Therefore, it is pointless to promise an adequate level of service if the company's employees are not prepared to deliver it. Thus, internal marketing is based on elements of the traditional "4P" complex: 1) Product: The "work" offered to the employee includes the selection of appropriate personnel, effective internal training, proper distribution of powers and responsibilities, and the creation of conditions for teamwork. 2) Price: The benefits that employees receive from work (material and social) should exceed the alternative cost. 3) Place: The distribution is a set of spaces, processes, people, and decisions that form a platform for "economic entity-employee" relationships and ensure the reliability, openness, and transparency of these relationships. 4) Promotion: It manifests itself in the formation of corporate culture, the development of internal communications, PR activities, and the creation of a system of effective relationships between internal clients and suppliers, as well as external clients.

The main goal of internal marketing is to create favorable working conditions that ensure the high motivation, satisfaction, and loyalty of personnel. Its tasks include simultaneous orientation towards both clients and personnel, studying their needs, considering individual values and interests, reducing subdivisional isolation, developing a favorable microclimate, and overcoming personnel's resistance to innovation. Internal marketing is based on principles such as orientation to personnel needs satisfaction, motivation, cross-functional cooperation, readiness for change, and forming personnel and client loyalty. Its functions are grouped into five categories: 1) Analytical: Ensures the development of well-founded plans by studying the market and consumers. 2) Integrating: Unites personnel around common values and ensures mutually beneficial cooperation between subdivisions. 3) Information and Communication: Provides reliable and punctual information to all participants in the chain. 4) Stimulating: Activates personnel to achieve goals and satisfy their economic, social, and moral-emotional interests. 5) Managerial: Involves systematic influence on marketing activities through planning, organization, motivation, coordination, and control.

Further research should focus on evaluating the effectiveness of internal marketing in various economic sectors and developing performance indicators, considering adaptation to crisis conditions.

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ВНУТРІШНІЙ МАРКЕТИНГ ЯК ІНСТРУМЕНТ СТРАТЕГІЧНОГО РОЗВИТКУ ІННОВАЦІЙНОГО Й УПРАВЛІНСЬКОГО ПОТЕНЦІАЛУ І ЗМІЦНЕННЯ КОНКУРЕНТОСПРОМОЖНОСТІ СУБ'ЄКТІВ ГОСПОДАРЮВАННЯ

Вступ. Внутрішній маркетинг нині розглядають як комплексну систему партнерських відносин, що сприяє формуванню корпоративної культури, лояльності персоналу та клієнтоорієнтованості, що дає змогу підвищити задоволеність персоналу, зменшити опір змінам, забезпечити синергію між підрозділами та досягнення стратегічних цілей суб'єкта господарювання. Актуальність теми зумовлена трансформацією економічних умов, підвищенням значення людського капіталу, необхідністю посилення внутрішньої взаємодії в межах організації.

Методи. Для узагальнення етапів еволюції внутрішнього маркетингу та формулювання авторського підходу до його визначення використано методи індукції і дедукції, комплексний підхід; для вивчення наукових підходів до трактування внутрішнього маркетингу, виявлення взаємозв'язків між елементами системи управління персоналом – методи аналізу і синтезу; для побудови концептуальної моделі внутрішнього маркетингу як інтегрованої системи взаємодії – методи абстрагування, логічного узагальнення та системний підхід. Інформаційну базу дослідження становили наукові праці зарубіжних і вітчизняних учених із питань маркетингу послуг, управління персоналом, організаційної поведінки та внутрішніх комунікацій, а також аналітичні матеріали й методичні джерела, що відображають сучасні підходи до реалізації внутрішнього маркетингу суб'єктів господарювання.

Результати. Обґрунтовано еволюцію підходів до визначення сутності внутрішнього маркетингу суб'єктів господарювання, його роль у формуванні ефективної системи управління персоналом і вплив на організаційну поведінку. Визначено, що сучасні трактування внутрішнього маркетингу охоплюють не лише діяльність із залучення, навчання та мотивації персоналу, а й побудову системи комунікацій, формування ціннісного простору, корпоративної філософії та культури для ефективного розвитку кадрового, інноваційного та управлінського потенціалу суб'єктів господарювання. Запропоновано авторське визначення внутрішнього маркетингу і запропоновано модель внутрішнього маркетингу суб'єкта господарювання з урахуванням виявлених ключових принципів, чинників та функцій, що базується на елементах класичної маркетингової моделі "4P", і містить елементи планування, комунікацій, контролю, репутаційної складової тощо.

Висновки. Проведене дослідження дозволило сформулювати авторське визначення внутрішнього маркетингу як інтегрованої системи партнерських відносин щодо управління людськими ресурсами, яка орієнтована на створення і підтримку мотиваційного клімату й організаційних умов праці всередині суб'єкта господарювання для забезпечення клієнтоорієнтованості та лояльності персоналу, де співробітники виступають не лише виконавцями функцій для підвищення якості обслуговування зовнішніх клієнтів і задоволення їхніх потреб і запитів, але й активними учасниками в реалізації корпоративної філософії, цінностей і стратегій для досягнення поставлених цілей і формування й підтримки позитивного іміджу суб'єкта господарювання. Запропоновано концептуальну модель внутрішнього маркетингу як механізм управління людськими ресурсами, який поєднує мотиваційні, комунікаційні, організаційні та культурні компоненти в межах суб'єкта господарювання.

Ключові слова: HR-маркетинг, управління людськими ресурсами, організаційна культура, залучення персоналу, споживач, стейкхолдер, якість обслуговування, партнерські відносини.

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