программа ЕС – «Восточное партнерство». Эта программа предусматривает развитие двусторонних и многосторонних отношений Европейского Союза с такими странами, как Армения, Азербайджан, Беларусь, Грузия, Молдова и Украина. Эта инициатива не определяет членство в ЕС как окончательную цель партнерства, а призвана обеспечить активное сотрудничество в дву- и многостороннем формате как с Европейским Союзом, так и между странами-партнерами, с целью приведения их законодательства, экономики и других сфер к европейским стандартам.

ЕС уделяет внимание и своему арабскому окружению. В 1995 г. в Барселоне было официально положено начало «Европейско-Средиземноморскому партнерству». В 2007 г. Президент Франции М. Саркози озвучил проект создания Средиземноморского союза, который после ряда переговоров в 2008 г. был анонсирован как продолжение Барселонского процесса «Барселонский процесс: Союз для Средиземноморья», ставящий своей целью формирование Европейско-Средиземноморской зоны свободной торговли.

Однако в последнее время отмечается тенденция переноса переговорного процесса с регионального на трансконтинентальный уровень. Активность ЕС в глобальном масштабе также отражают ДССТ с Мексикой, Чили, Южной Африкой, Южной Кореей. Ведутся переговоры с США, Канадой, Индией и Японией. По мнению специалистов, либерализация трансатлантической торговли может послужить импульсом либерализации торговли в глобальном масштабе и стимулом для усиления многосторонней торговой системы в рамках ВТО.

Выводы. Формирование преференциальных режимов, ставших современной мировой тенденцией, несомненно, усложняет функционирование мирохозяйственной системы, поскольку происходит своеобразное наложение ДСТТ на многосторонний переговорный процесс в рамках ВТО.

Практически все члены ВТО – участники одного или более соглашений, что свидетельствует о том, что в международной торговле принцип страны наибольшего благоприятствования становится уже исключением, а не правилом.

Быстрому росту соглашений о свободной торговле способствовали два определяющих обстоятельства. Во-первых, с практической точки зрения соглашения о свободной торговле являются более предпочтительными, чем многосторонние, ввиду их селективного подхода к отраслям, секторам экономики и партнерам. Во-вторых, для большинства стран соглашение о свободной торговле выступает инструментом привлечения прямых иностранных инвестиций.

Билатеральные соглашения предоставляют странам новые возможности по поиску стимулов экономического развития – это, прежде всего, касается преодоления нетарифных ограничений доступа на рынок; кроме того существуют сферы, которые не урегулированы многосторонними нормами (режим инвестиций, торговля продукцией двойного назначения и т.д.).

Заключение ДССТ не подменяет собой экономическую региональную интеграцию, а создает особую систему взаимодействия национальных экономик с учетом экономических и политических факторов. Евросоюз рассматривает процесс последовательного подписания соглашений о свободной торговле с другими партнерами как элемент европейской стратегии экономического роста, включая в сферу регулирования ДССТ вопросы сертификации продукции, защиты интеллектуальной собственности и доступа к государственным заказам.

Практика заключения ДССТ ЕС свидетельствует о расширении сферы его интересов и активном использовании билатеральных соглашений в качестве инструмента либерализации внешнеэкономической политики государства.

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ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF THE COMPANY IMAGE IN THE B2B MARKET

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Nowak D. Analysis and evaluation of the company image in the b2b market
Creating a positive image is a specific advantage of the company that could become a key competence used in the fight for a suitable position in the competitive market. It is created in the representation of direct and indirect stakeholders who according to their own interests take into account various aspects of activities of the rated entity. The company's goal is therefore appropriate balance of activities, which will result in a coherent, harmonious and properly perceived image of the company. Given the diversity of the determinants of corporate image-building objective of developing adopted the identification and assessment of the main elements used by stakeholders in the assessment of the image of a counterparty.
Keywords: image, competition, key competence, company strategy, b2b market.

INTRODUCTION

A complex economic reality, increasing competition, and in particular the density of products and services on the market are forcing the companies to undertake a series of actions that will enhance their competitive advantage. These actions may rely on a more effective coordination of procedures for the value chain so as to reduce costs of production and optimize it, adjust the structure of terms of range - quantitative market needs or through proper motivation of employees and increase in productivity. Companies may also seek to positively distinguish themselves in the market through application of unique technology, brand, adequate communication with the environment, care of the environment and also the construction of appropriate relationships with suppliers and customers. The measures taken must have a harmonious and coherent interdependence, the effect of which is to create the image positively and well perceived by all stakeholders. It is emphasized that, acceptable, positive image enhances the stability of institution facilitates its operation, reduce business risk contributes to the reduction of costs and facilitates the attainment of resources or entry into new markets. In addition, positive, properly created image helps to establish relations of cooperation, both domestically and internationally.

Creating a positive image is not a feature of the long-term, it should therefore be managed, invested and above all developed covering trends and market development. To be properly and positively perceived there's a need to work actively using the whole set of instruments, such as public relations, brand management, sponsorship, procedures of suppliers and buyers management and shaping the quality of the company by entering into higher levels of functioning confirmed by appropriate distinctions, awards and certificates. Such actions contribute to the growth of the company, facilitate the functioning, networking, and development of products and services. This allows to build equity of clients and suppliers, which is defined as receipts, profitability and the information that they generate for the companies affecting its market value[1]. The higher the scope of these relationships is and more stable and loyal each group is, the higher the value of the company and clearer and more transparent the growth prospects are. It should be noted, however, that the perception of the image is variable in time. Improper behavior, unexpected transaction, failure to adopt procedures may contribute to changes in picture of company from positive to neutral or negative. Additionally, the image can be perceived differently by different groups of stakeholders. Other expectations are posed by the shareholders or the shareholders of the company, other ones come from the

[1] B. Dobiegała-Korona, T. Doligalski, Wartość klientów jako przesłanka alokacji kapitału [w] praca zbiorowa pod redakcją J. Bielińskiego, Zarządzanie wartością przedsiębiorstwa a alokacja kapitału, Wydawca: CeDeWu, Warszawa 2004, s. 89.

recipients and suppliers and yet other expectations are announced by local government authorities and the local community. Given the diversity of quantitative and qualitative factors affecting the image the objective of the paper is to identify and evaluate the determinants that affect the perception of the companies in the group of its direct customers.

IMAGE AND THE COMPANY IMAGE

The concept of image is derived from the Latin word "*imagio*" or "*imaginatio*". The first of them is identified with the image, symbol, portrait, the second with the idea, delusion, opinion or a dream[1]. Commonly understood as created by people such as artists, athletes, politicians, personality or self-image as a developed public face of the organization, presenting it in a positive light and for gaining social acceptance for the activities of this institution or enterprise. The literature emphasizes that the image is the sum of subjective perceptions and beliefs about a particular subject[2]. In the common sense the term image is identified with the overall picture and feelings of which a person is associated with a specific object[3].

The wide and comprehensive understanding of image is presented by Arpan, Raney and Zivnuska who point to his four connotations[4]:

• the first apply to associations connected with the name of the organization,
• the second emphasizes the psychological profile created for the organization by the unit,
• the third is associated with idiosyncratic representation concerning the corporate
• the fourth is the sum of attitudes towards the organization.

Four presented perspectives emphasize different elements of the image, however, together constituting a coherent and logical structure.

In relation to the company the image can be defined as idea, image, impression or assembly of business associations existing in its immediate external environment and internal, among its stakeholders such as suppliers, customers, employees, local community, local authorities, competitors, collaborators, including a set of positive and negative associations evoked by verbal or visual expression of the company. It can therefore be emphasized that the company image is formed in the vicinity of the subject, which is variable in time and space. It is, in addition to tangible assets, an important element of company with a high growth potential. Its value is created both by the present and future clients, as well as other groups of market actors operating in the same environment[5].

Riordan at al. characterize image as an individual's perceptions about the actions, activities and accomplishments of an organization[6]. Kennedy[7] and Dowling[8] argue that a company does not have one image but multiple images. Each of them has a different set of interaction with the company and therefore is likely to have different images. Riel at al. summarizes that concept of corporate image as a set of meanings abort the company in the minds of the stakeholders. They say that image is a "(…) sum of the different perceived features of the company (…) and a holistic impression of the position of the object in relation to its competitors"[9].

Kunkel and Berry define the image of the company as "an important factor which affects the purchasing power of the consumer tendency" and the consumer "general images of the corporate." Bernstein emphasizes, however, that the image of the company "(...) is the net result of the interaction of all the experiences, beliefs, feelings, knowledge and experience that people have regarding the subject"[10]. It presents the sum of the visual characters through which individual and collective actors can recognize a company and distinguish it from other entities operating in the same environment[11].

It is indicated that the image of the company is its profile, or otherwise speaking, the sum of impressions, feelings and sensations and expectations about what the organization develops and creates in the minds of individuals who operate in the area[12]. It consists of "(...) all scheduled and unscheduled, verbal and visual elements that are derived from the essence of the company and have an impression on the observers"[13].

It should be emphasized that the concept of the image is non-static, due to the impact of a number of media organizations and environments subject to constant evolution, constant change, taking into account the latest developments. It may be pointed that the dynamic process is influenced by number of factors. LeBlanc and Nguyen suggest that it is under the influence of identity, reputation, environment, services, and direct service[14]. In contrast, according to A. Wilczak these factors are divided into factors under the control of the organization and independent factors over which the organization has no or little impact[15].

The primary purpose of creating a positive image is acquiring a growing number of buyers who affect the value of the entity. This indicates that the process of shaping the image is linked with the desire of the economic operators to produce an emotional connection with the company and stimulate positive attitudes towards it. These attitudes are formed as a result of contact between the market participants with the features of the company. The result is every kind of experience, expectations, feelings, knowledge and experience that are to be reflected in the given entity. Most often company puts in front of the image the certain tasks, which include:

• building confidence in the company,
• building confidence in its products,
• risk reduction activities,
• reduction of costs,
• development of appropriate relationships between the company and its stakeholders.

In order to fulfill these functions, the company might use a set of actions, which could include:

• improving the quality of services through better, more competent and professional service,
• a flexible approach to the customer by understanding their situation, their needs and the specific nature of activity,
• flexible working hours, corresponding to the requirements and demands of customers,

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[15] A. Wilczak, Budowanie wizerunku przez organizację – prawda czy mit? http://www.wz.uw.edu.pl/panel/serwisy_wydzialowe/6c70bbed128b884316fae5606c1bd17a.pdf z dnia 30.06.2013.

• the provision of comprehensive services that can be achieved through diversification of products and production, as well as entering new market segments.

The image of the company can be defined as a subjective feeling, idea or belief of people of a given entity or otherwise speaking what the entity, or group thinks about it[1]. From the perspective of the company therefore the way it presents in the environment and how it is perceived by other. It can therefore be emphasized that the image is: "(...) idea that one or more of the audience have about a person, company or institution, it is not a real image, accurately and specifically outlined, but rather a mosaic of many details, noticed accidentally fragmentary, with blurred differences"[2].

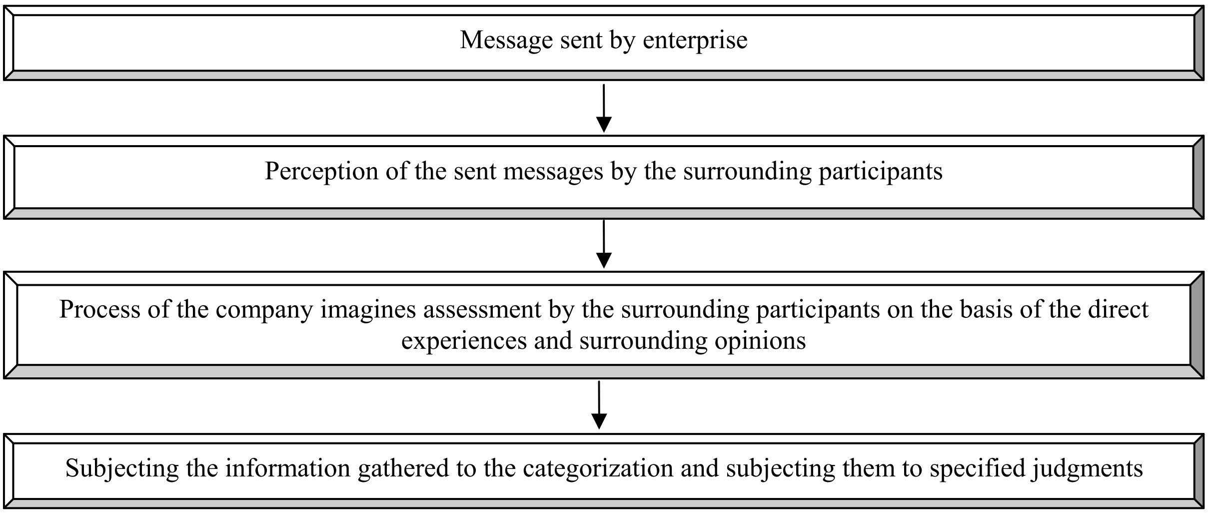
Table 1. Factors contributing to shaping the image of the organization

FACTORS UNDER THE CONTROL OF ORGANIZATION	INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL FACTORS (OR DEPENDENT IN MINOR SCOPE)
Objective factors: • history of the organization, • resources of the organization. Factors related to the functioning of the organization: • financial situation (potential) • the management of the organization, organizational structure, • human resource management. Marketing factors (related to the identity of the organization): • mission • goals • adopted strategies • positioning, • instruments of marketing mix, • corporate social responsibility (CSR).	• factors related to the personality of the recipient • actions of competitors • changes in the macro-environment • co-operation and co-operators • image of the country of origin and industry • interpersonal communication (between entities external to the organization).

Source: A. Wilczak, Budowanie wizerunku przez organizację – prawda czy mit? http://www.wz.uw.edu.pl/panel/serwisy_wydzialowe/6c70bbed128b884316fae5606c1bd17a.pdf dated 30.06.2013

Likewise P. Koltler argues and emphasizes that the image is not a real image, only a notion, opinion or view. He points out that it is: "(...) a set of convictions thoughts and impressions of the person or group of any object: a company, product, brand, place or person”[3]. These definitions suggest one very important aspect of this idea image is not a realistic reflection of reality, it is only an idea, an opinion or a judgment, which can be affected by incidental, one-off events. They can have an impact both positive and negative, they can also be perceived in different ways by different actors. The measures taken may in fact meet with the approval and acceptance from one hand, from the other hand actions will be perceived as hostile, negative, antagonistic.

Considering above mentioned approaches, concepts and definitions it should be noted that for the company the image will always have a strategic importance. It is therefore necessary to take a number of actions aimed at proper selection of tools and instruments that will create the most correct picture of the company that will have a real and not illusory effect on its value.



Picture 1. Process of the company image developing
Source: M. Urbaniak, Wizerunek dostawcy na rynku dóbr produkcyjnych, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, Lodź 2003, p. 30.

To sum up, it should be noted that the image can not be considered as a homogeneous instrument or tool which can manage the company. The literature identifies seven types of image that may appear in the company, they are: the image of the company *(the corporate image*) the image of the institutional (*the institutional image*) the image of the product (*the product image*) the image of the brand (*the brand image*) the disseminated image (*diffused image*) and the image desired by the purchasers (*the consumer demand image*) [4].

SELECTION AND NATURE OF THE SAMPLE

Research on the assessment and classification of the factors affecting the image of the company, is based on the method of deliberate non-random selection of typical units. The basic eligibility criterion is the type of activities associated with the production or providing the production services and services associated with production on the Polish market of industrial goods and belonging to one group of industrial processing section

[1] E.M. Cenker, Public relations, Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Bankowej, Poznań 2000, s. 40;61.
[2] K. Wojcik, Public relations od A do Z, Tom I, Agencja Wydawnicza Placet, Warszawa 1997, s. 44.
[3] P. Kotler, Marketing. Analiza, planowanie, wdrażanie i kontrola, Felberg 1999, s. 549.
[4] R.A. Harris, How creativity in marketing can develop the image that counts: The consumer demand image, Advertising Age, 29, July. s. 61-66.

in accordance with the European Classification of Economic Activities (EKD) based on NACE[1]. The source of the selection of the studies there were the diversified databases, including database primarily one of the leading enterprise engaged in material and technical supply. Empirical research took the form of in-depth survey of the work of a qualitative - quantitative type with a dominant share of qualitative research. It was conducted in 2008-2012 among 270 companies located in Poland, mainly in the Wielkopolska Region. Group of analyzed entities was not a unified domain in terms of both activity and size of the structure making it impossible to create a common and uniform portrait. Therefore the results can not be generalized to all companies in Poland but probably they give a picture of reality and allow a broad interpretation and evaluation of the issues examined, and define future directions of research.

The dominant domain of business was the manufacture of basic metals, fabricated metal products, machinery and equipment, medical, precision and optical instruments, and production of food products, beverages and tobacco. Quite large numbers were also represented by companies engaged in the production of wood and furniture and the production of chemical products, rubber and plastics.

In the studied sample 65.9% (178 entities) were manufacturing companies, the remaining 34.1% were engaged in providing of production services and services associated with production. The production was represented by sectors such as agri-food, machine, textile, clothing, acquisition and processing of wood and furniture production. In the second area, the major domain was indicated the production services such as the production of parts and components on behalf of a co-operator according to his specifications and requirements, and a number of other type of design, installation, assembling, painting, varnishing, demolition, cutting, machining, turning, milling, etc. For services associated with the production there were included transportation services, warehousing and storage and maintenance, service and repair.

Characterizing the examined trial there was also made its classification on the basis of number of employees. Given the size criterion there were identified 44 micro entities employing up to 9 workers, representing 16.3% of the sample, 94 small entities of employment in the range 10-49, which represent 34.8% of the sample, 96 medium-sized entities with employment between 50 -249 persons, constituting 35.5% of the sample and 36 large entities hiring more than 250 people, representing 13.3% of the sample.

Table 2. Structure of the examined enterprises according to EKD

Industrial processing (15-37)	No. of indications (N = 270)	Share %	EKD group
Production of food products, beverages and tobacco	56	20,74	15,16
Textile, garment manufacturing, fur, leather, leather products	20	7,41	17,18,19
Manufacture of wood, wood products, furniture	51	18,92	20,36
Manufacture of pulp, paper and paper products	8	2,96	21
Manufacture of chemicals, rubber and plastics and other non-metallic products	45	16,67	24,25,26
Manufacture of basic metals, fabricated metal products, machinery and equipment, electrical machinery and apparatus, medical, precision and optical instruments	71	26,36	27,28,29, 31,33
Manufacture of motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers and other equipment car	19	7,04	34,35

The study indicated a dominant area of operation
Source: own study based on the results of empirical research.

Taking into account the importance of the regions in which the analyzed businesses operate should be stressed that at the time of market research, for the entire sample, the domestic market was the market that generates the most revenue, represented by 43.1% of the survey sample, followed by regional market, on which activity is conducted by 40.5 % of the sample. Least, because only 16.4% of companies operates in local markets.

Table 3. Enterprises by the number of employees

No. of employees	Examined sample N=270	
	No. of indications	Share in %
Micro-enterprises (1-9 employees)	44	16,3%
Small enterprises (10-49 employees)	94	34,8%
Medium enterprises(50-249 employees)	96	35,5%
Big enterprises (over 250 employees)	36	13,3%

Source: own study based on the results of empirical research.

Characterizing the examined group of companies the attention was also paid to the type of applied base strategy. It turned out to be two dominant strategies in the sample: a qualitative strategy, which is effectively implemented by 177 entities representing 65.55% and the cost leadership strategy implemented by 92 entities representing 34.07% of the sample. With other types of strategies the attention should be paid to the niche strategy, understood as a specific service for selected and precisely regulated segment of the market. Service of such market, especially the market of industrial goods, is associated with close, permanent and based on mutual trust relationship. This kind of strategy is developed by 37 cases, which constitute 13.7% of indications.

Table 4. Kind of applied base strategy and the directions of its development

Kind of the applied base strategy[1]	Research sample N=270	
	No. of indications	Share in %
Price strategy (the cost leadership)	92	34,07
Quality strategy	177	65,55
Nish strategy	37	13,7
Mix strategy (medium quality for medium price)	18	6,67
Follower strategy	6	2,22
No clear strategy	9	3,33
The strategy varies - depending on the supported regions, enterprises	39	14,44

[1] enterprises could indicate more than one strategy
Source: own study based on the results of empirical research.

EVALUATION OF ENTERPRISE IMAGE BASED ON THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

In the process of survey research concerning the evaluation and classification of the factors determining the market image of the company, respondents were asked to give, according to their own opinion and their own judgment, the appropriate rank of the selected factors characterizing the image. These factors were identified on the basis of literature research observations and comments of entrepreneurs and their critical reflection. The evaluation was performed in a 5 point Likert scale where 1 means no impact of a given factor on the image of the company 2 low impact 3 medium

[1] Group from 15 to 37 according to European Classification of Activity

impact, 4 high impact and 5 a very big impact. Analyzing the results of the research it is worth to underline the high percentage of indications which ranges from the level of 99.25% for the level of prices of products offered to 87.03% in case of social responsibility. A high percentage of indications reflects the growing awareness of Polish entrepreneurs, the importance of each factor and the increasing role of image in the process of building a cooperative relationship.

Collection and verification of questionnaires included in the research sample, allowed to encode the answers given by respondents using Microsoft Excel. This was followed by detailed calculations of the percentage of individual indication of respondents and the average rank for the specified variable was calculated. The adopted scale allowed to determine the strength and direction of the impact of each variable by calculating the arithmetic mean and appointment of the so-called significance factor N. It is considered that the factors which factor of significance is in the range 4.0 to 5.0 have a decisive influence in the evaluation process of corporate image, the factors within the range of 2.51 to 3.99 have a medium impact, while factors with a value of less than 2.5 play a minor role in the process of building cooperative relationships.

Analysis of the data has shown that in the first group there are 10 factors, while the most important is the level of the prices (relative to the competition), which has the significance N equal 4.78 and the value for money, the value of N was estimated on the level of 4. 74. The high value was obtained also for the factor on quality of our products and services which obtained the value 4.54 in the 5-point Likert scale. It should be emphasized that the high importance of these factors is related to the type of base strategy implemented by the surveyed entities. Enterprises indicated that in their business are dominated by two priorities, i.e. quality and production costs. Strictly defined preferences indicate that the market, in which the entities operate, is immature, placed in the phases of development and growth. In stable, mature markets usually other determinants of the image dominate such as the level and scope of the relationship with the contractor, conducted development research as well as environmental activities and for the local community.

In addition to the above-mentioned factors on the image (to a high degree), according to respondents, is also influenced by factors associated with broadly understood aspects of quality, including quality management systems, customer service, and having different types of certificates, awards and recommendations that support the prestige and reputation of the company. Among the important factors that affect the company's image, particular attention should also be paid to offer convenient payment terms and discounts and other benefits offered to the buyer The first is related to financial liquidity, in particular the payment backlogs In economic practice, in fact it is assumed that the accumulation of debts is one of the most significant barriers and threats to the development of enterprises in Poland. Assessing contractors the entrepreneur shall take into account the length of "the trade credit", which is willing to give the supplier. The longer the payment period, the higher the rating, the better the enterprise is perceived. Long term payments offered by the supplier allows to use the idea of "credit provider", and thus weaken the threat posed by the possibility of losing financial liquidity.

Another factor, enhancing corporate image, is associated with its policy on discounts and other benefits that are offered to contractors. Discount policy is a very important factor, which allows to build a base of loyal and faithful customers who will both repeat purchases and recommend your company in their environment. It should be noted, however, that this factor often takes the form of "commissions on transactions" and is not subject to records and documentation in the enterprise, and thus contributes to the development of the so called shadow economy. Lack of legal and ethical norms in this area contribute to its high appreciation by the companies operating in the informal economy.

From other interesting factors influencing the assessment of the company image, it is worth to point out the technical and technological level of production potential, which is characterized by two variables, i.e. modern technology (N - 3.63) and the level of production capacities and capabilities of their development (N - 3. 57). According to the respondents only high technical level of suppliers equipment and, above all, its compatibility (understood as the compliance of production potentials, organizational potentials, management systems, etc.), allow for the realization of common goals and achieve superior results. Looking for new partners they are tested in terms of their owned generation resources, quality, modernity and synchronization capabilities with its own production resources. In this context, the companies that have outdated, obsolete or incompatible potential, encounter significant difficulties in establishing the cooperative relationships. This problem affects both producers with obsolete production equipment (or from the time of the centralized economy), as well as from companies with modern and modernist solutions that are not commonly used by most entrepreneurs. With this factor there is bound the flexibility in adjusting to the needs and requirements of the customers (N = 3.97). This flexibility is determined by oscillating and variable demand, both in time and in space on which a number of goods. Thus, highly assessed are those who may periodically increase or decrease its production capacity.

Table 5. Ranking of factors influencing the of corporate image in the B2B market

Factors influencing the company image on the industrial market	Percentage share	Index "N"	Standard deviation
Price of products	99,25	**4,78**	1,09
Value for money	97,41	**4,74**	1,10
The quality of offered products and services	98,15	**4,52**	1,02
The level of competitiveness of the company	97,03	**4,43**	1,14
Possession of the quality management systems	99,25	**4,35**	1,10
Availability of products offered	97,41	**4,28**	1,17
Offering a convenient payment terms	97,03	**4,22**	1,09
Discounts and other benefits for the buyer	97,41	**4,18**	1,00
Approach to service the buyer	97,78	**4,15**	1,19
Certificates, awards and other recommendations	97,03	**4,01**	1,21
Flexibility to adapt to the needs of the recipient	98,15	3,97	1,23
Partner relationships with contractors	97,03	3,94	1,26
Previous experiences in cooperation	97,41	3,92	1,21
The width and depth of assortment (the complexity of supply)	97,03	3,81	1,20
The speed and professionalism to resolve conflicts and misunderstandings	97,78	3,75	1,17
Professionalism of activity	95,92	3,75	1,18
Modernity technology	88,89	3,63	1,08
The level of production capacities and capabilities of their development	94,07	3,57	1,11
The level and quality of communication	92,22	3,52	1,12
The ability to certify produced (supplied) products	97,03	3,52	1,09
Knowledge of the brand on the market	95,92	3,48	1,16
Experience and skills of employees	91,85	3,46	1,12
Fulfillment of the commitments made	94,07	3,38	1,27
Trustworthiness of a brand	95,92	3,34	1,28
Location (easy reach of)	92,22	3,28	1,28
The financial situation	94,07	3,24	1,19
Offered trainings	91,85	3,20	1,28
The organization of work (speed of contact)	92,22	3,15	1,21
After-sales service (guarantees)	95,62	3,07	1,32

System of communication with internal and external environment - an electronic communication system	94,07	2,96	1,33
Customer service procedures and programs	92,96	2,90	1,13
The experience and skills of managers	95,92	2,82	1,41
Participation in trade fairs and exhibitions	92,22	2,76	1,28
Management transparency	92,22	2,76	1,18
The means and methods of transport	94,07	2,74	1,03
Used means and tools of communication (advertising, promotion)	94,07	2,67	1,05
Organizational culture	92,22	2,63	1,03
The level and scope of the research and development	94,07	2,59	1,26
Participation in local projects	88,89	2,51	1,36
Visual evaluation of the company (visual appeal)	91,85	2,38	1,26
Ecological involvement	95,92	2,20	1,44
Company's reputation in the region in which it operates	92,22	2,12	1,24
Sponsoring and mentoring	88,89	2,08	1,36
Corporate social responsibility	87,03	2,08	1,35
Attractiveness of the business environment	92,22	2,06	1,32

Source: own study based on the results of empirical research.

Concluding considerations on assessing the factors shaping the image of the company it is worth mentioning the ones that, according to the respondents of the study group, are secondary in nature and generally did not play a major role. In the article it is assumed that they are the factors which influence factor is less than 2.5 and include the following:

• visual assessment of the company,
• ecological engagement (action to protect the environment),
• regional reputation of the company in the region,
• sponsoring and mentoring,
• social responsibility
• attractiveness of the business environment.

According to the respondents, less important in the evaluation of the image there are both visual assessment of the company and attractiveness of the surroundings. Above all the professionalism and expertise of actions, and not the external conditions, are taken into account which improvement may require substantial monetary outlay. The sponsorship activities also has little importance, as well as the reputation of the company in the region. These factors may have a bearing on consumer markets. It should be noted, however, that the market for industrial goods ruled by other laws, and there are taken into account quite different determinants.

Astonishing, however, is the lack of a high assessment of such factors as efforts to protect the environment, and business social responsibility. In the present ranking of these factors, according to the respondents, have minimal impact on the image of the company. The rationale for low score may be the high cost of environmental activity and its direct impact on the level of product prices and services offered by the company.

CONCLUSION

Analyzing the results presented in the table there can be drawn a number of interesting conclusions regarding the assessment process of the image of companies operating in the markets for industrial goods, done by the customers. Most customers assessing the image of the supplier uses traditional criteria, such as quality, price, terms of the agreement or the proper execution of the contract, etc. However, they give them a different meaning, a different rank and a different interpretation. There is also noted a trend associated with including by the buyers the increasingly higher requirements and new yet applicable criteria, which are not always directly related to the provision, manufacture, quality or price. Among these variables the worth to be noted are past experience, professionalism in resolving conflicts and misunderstandings or experience and skills.

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