USING IT-MARKETING PRODUCTS
IN COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE PROJECTS

Korkhina I., Petrenko V.

The commercial real estate market in Ukraine has changed significantly over the past few years. This article focuses on commercial real estate, in particular, shopping and entertainment centers (SECs).. Ukrainian SECs have suffered significant losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and then some more suffered serious damage during the full-scale war. However, most of the SECs have resumed or are resuming their operations, and new SECs are being unfrozen. The unstable situation in the country, massive population movements within the country and the departure of many Ukrainians abroad make the management of SECs to revise their development plans and marketing strategies. Modern marketing strategies for promoting SECs require the use of innovative tools. This paper considers the problem of using special software for marketing automation. The authors have selected the most well-known marketing automation platforms for any project and conducted a comparative analysis of them.

Introduction

Now, when our country is facing a more terrible disaster – the war – after a long quarantine caused by the COVID-19 epidemic, Ukrainians need any positive emotions, rest and entertainment more than ever. Despite the fact that these are not essential services, the demand for entertainment has not disappeared, and after our victory it should grow significantly. One of the places that Ukrainians prefer to relax or buy necessary things is the SEC. Shopping and entertainment centers are quite profitable commercial real estate projects from an economic point of view.

The commercial real estate market has frozen in most Ukrainian cities due to the aggressor's invasion. Many commercial real estate objects were destroyed, and those that were not damaged still felt the negative impact of the war. Therefore, the commercial real estate market will not be the same after the war.

According to the Ukrainian Council of Shopping Centers (UCSC), SEC's direct losses, calculated as the cost of repairing the damage, amount to $350 million. As of the beginning of June, 23 SECs in Ukraine suffered significant damage [3].

The largest share of destroyed SECs falls on the East – 12 buildings were damaged to the tune of $250 million. In Kyiv and the region, 6 SECs were damaged to the tune of $68 million. In the South, 5 SECs were destroyed to the tune of $29 million. A diagram of damaged SECs by region is shown in Fig. 1.

The most affected SECs are Port City (Mariupol), Nikolsky and Karavan (Kharkiv), Retroville (Kyiv), and Fabrika (Kherson).
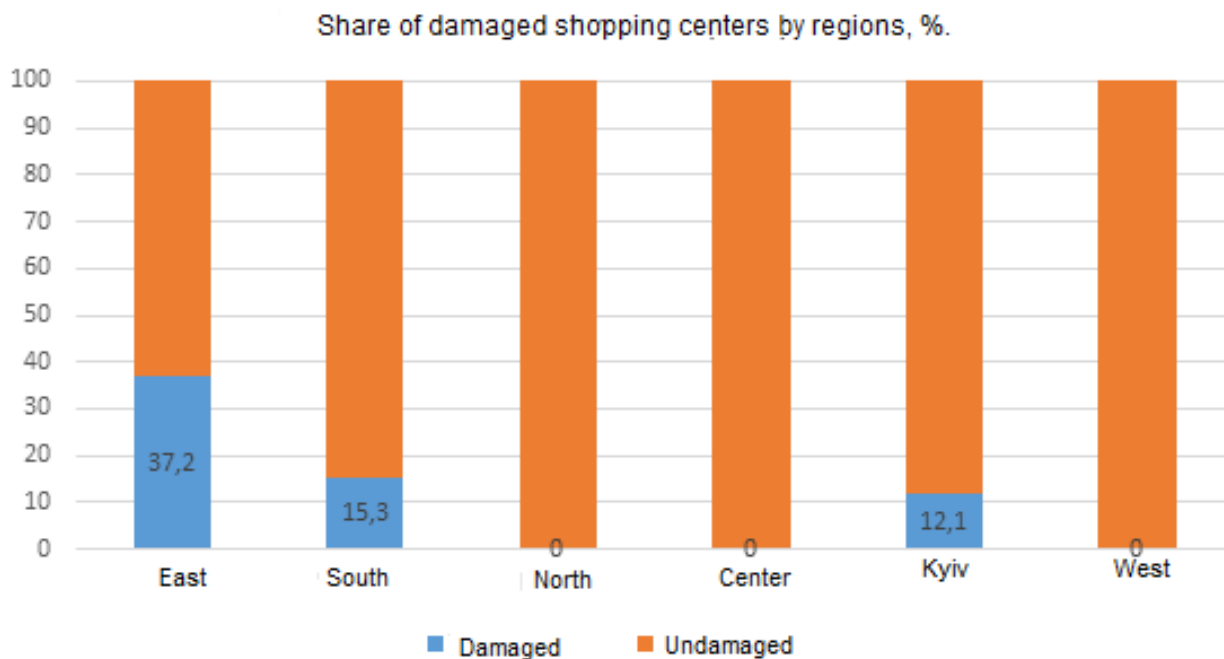
Fig. 1. Share of damaged SECs by region

Almost immediately after the full-scale invasion of the Ukrainian SEC market, all Russian-linked chains began to withdraw, which led to the release of a significant amount of space and a rapid increase in the average market vacancy rate.

The limited range of goods and lack of development reserves caused almost all SEC management companies to have difficulty finding alternative operators of a comparable scale.

In addition, the war has also changed the consumer profile in many regions of Ukraine: local residents have left and been replaced by IDPs, most of whom are in difficult financial situations. This has led to a mismatch between the structure of the brands offered and the incomes of the population.

However, despite the martial law and risks, most foreign chains have not only not left Ukraine, but continue to operate actively: McDonald's, LPP group (Cropp, House, Reserved, Mohito), LC Waikiki, DeFacto, Decathlon, New Yorker, Adidas, Reebok, JYSK, Leroy Merlin, Auchan.

Global solidarity and loyalty to our country give us hope that many popular brands that had previously ignored our market may enter Ukraine immediately after the war is over: Uniqlo, Starbucks, Peek & Cloppenburg, Abercrombie & Fitch, C&A.

Features of marketing automation in retail projects

Today, the owners of shopping centers, regardless of whether they have been damaged or not, are faced with the task of revising their business to meet new

consumer needs and market conditions. In addition, even before the war ends, some developers plan to start building new shopping centers that will immediately be oriented towards the new face of the Ukrainian consumer.

Competent decisions and the ability to follow current trends are becoming a key factor in the organization of retail operations and the success of the company.

Consumers are changing, and in the face of a long-term crisis, a big name and attractive advertising are no longer enough. When costs are rationalized and "emotional" expenses are reduced, people need to be offered something more than "a place to buy food, clothes and a new smartphone."

The consumer should be interested in coming and staying for a long time, and then returning and bringing new customers with them.

Promotion of a shopping center is among the most important activities required by any SEC regardless of its size, launch date, concept or anything else. As you know, one of the key indicators of the success of a shopping center is its attendance. It is high attendance rates that allow tenants to earn money, and the owner to earn money as well.

The problem of promoting and developing retail projects is solved by modern marketing tools. In general, there are three ways in which SECs can be promoted: improving operational efficiency; creating new formats such as online-offline hybrids; and personalization - managing the customer journey.

Recently, the process of marketing digitalization has been observed in all areas of business. This problem was first raised by Western scholars in their works: Cham, Dara, Grewal, Hulland, Herhausen, Järvinen, Nguyen Ngoc Hien, Pascucci, Royle, Silva [1, 2, 4–9, 11, 12, 14]. Ukrainian researchers have also paid attention to the digitalization of business, including marketing [10, 13].

According to the author of [7], marketing automation as an ideology is increasingly being used by marketers to automate traditionally manual tasks, including managing and delivering content and personalized marketing communications, as well as to increase conversion rates (the ratio of the number of visitors to a company's website who perform certain actions to the total number of visitors).

Marketing automation software enables marketers to customize content, align messages, and optimize their workflows. It also helps to speed up and improve the quality of reports, coordinate the work of marketers with sales managers, which will help to achieve higher performance and business growth in general.

The main goal of marketing automation is to deliver the right content to the right person at the right time so that they perform the action required by the company. Thanks to the rapid development of this technology, it has become available not only to large but also to small and medium-sized businesses. Today, the average

cost of using such technologies per month is $9–15, and the number of companies that automate marketing reaches 140 thousand worldwide.

Marketing automation is data-driven, so any marketing automation system needs effective data management tools. The most important data that such a system needs is the data that fully reflects consumer behavior, tastes, and needs. Only if you have accurate information about potential and existing customers can the system promptly provide the necessary information.

But collecting data alone is not enough, as it can quickly become outdated. Companies close down, change their place of registration, are merged with other companies, and individuals change their phone numbers, email addresses, jobs, and statuses. Changes also occur at the state level: mergers of departments or, conversely, the emergence of new government agencies, changes in the names of cities and streets, etc. Every day there are some changes that must be reflected in the system, and only then can it be called effective.

Analysis of modern marketing automation programs

Automated marketing has already proved its superiority over manual marketing. Table 1 shows its main advantages for promoting retail projects, including SEC.

Table 1

The main advantages of using marketing automation (MA) tools in SEC promotion

№	Name of the advantage	What is the benefit?
1.	High conversion rate	The clear and truthful data obtained through MA allows you to send targeted messages to the right people who are more likely to be interested in what the SEC has to offer.
2.	High quality control over business performance	MA is a good way to demonstrate which marketing activities are effective and which are not. This makes it possible to reallocate the budget in such a way as to increase the scale of effective marketing tools and abandon ineffective ones.
3.	Marketing work becomes more streamlined	MA helps to coordinate all marketing activities and keep everyone involved working towards common goals.
4.	Motivation and productivity of the marketing department	Automation of some processes significantly saves the team's time on labor-intensive monotonous tasks. This frees up time that can be used for some creative work. It also prevents employee fatigue and human error.
5.	Increased customer retention rate	The task of marketing is to ensure that after the first purchase from SEC, the customer returns there again. MA helps maintain customer relationships through various loyalty and reward programs. For example, the program will send personalized messages, individual offers, and various surveys to the customer, thereby encouraging a person to engage in a dialogue and gaining their trust.

There are a lot of different marketing automation software available today. The most popular ones are HubSpot, SalesForce, Microsoft Dynamics 365, and many others.

Let's take a look at the features of each of the most used software and find out which ones are more suitable for retail real estate projects (Table 2).

Table 2

Comparison of various well-known marketing automation software

№	Software name	Software description	Features	Price
1.	Salesforce	Universal cloud-based CRM system designed for large multitasking projects.	Sales forecasting; workflow automation; powerful analytics; collaboration and project management tools.	Minimum $25 for up to 10 users per month.
2.	HubSpot	The system has a lot of free features, including an online library, training resources, and various free courses.	Contact and opportunity management; sales forecasting; workflow automation; analytics; collaboration and project management tools.	Paid plans start at $50 per month per user.
3.	Microsoft Dynamics CRM	Helps organize sales, services, and marketing. Easily integrates with other Microsoft products.	Manage contacts, support, sales, marketing, and other data in one system; automate data processing processes with scripts; create Word and Excel file templates for quick reports; iOS, Android, Windows, and web apps available.	From $65 per month per user.
4.	Apptivo	A simple online CRM system for sending reminders, storing contacts, files, and message history. You can add more complex features as needed.	Storing contacts and related communication history; employee management; monitoring the development of business processes; time tracking.	The minimum paid tariff for 1 user per month is $8.
5.	Worksection	CRM service for organizing project data: tasks, performers, deadlines, documentation, etc.	Data warehouse; systematization of work processes; deadline control; communication; time tracking; Gantt chart; report generation.	The minimum paid tariff is $29 for 10 users and projects per month.
6.	TerraSoft Sales Creatio	Cloud-based CRM system for professional sales management and related business processes.	Order and invoice management; corporate social network; internal telephony; document management; contact database segmentation; search for a contact's profile in social networks; business process automation; product cataloging.	From $22 per user per month.

As you can see from the table, most of the well-known marketing automation software is universal and meets the requirements of projects in any field. However, in our opinion, the following platforms are more effective for projects in the field of retail real estate, in particular for the promotion of SEC: Salesforce, Apptivo, and TerraSoft Sales Creatio. All of them allow the marketing department to better communicate with customers, manage business processes, and control a huge document flow.

Conclusions

Despite the fact that the retail real estate market, like all other markets in Ukraine, first faced restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and then the losses and risks associated with the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia, it continues to develop actively and sets new goals. The concept of SEC's development is changing somewhat, reorienting it towards a "new" consumer. This requires changes in marketing strategies. Today, more and more projects use automated tools that greatly facilitate marketing work. A comparative analysis of popular marketing automation platforms has shown that the following types of software are more effective for commercial real estate projects: Salesforce, Apptivo, and TerraSoft Sales Creatio.

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