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The View of Customers Towards the Usage of Cause-Related Marketing to Build Good Corporate Reputation

This paper analyses the usage of cause-related marketing to build good corporate reputation by empirically evaluating and comparing it from the view of customers. After conceptualization of theoretical insights on the use of cause-related marketing, while building good corporate reputation, there are presented research results from the point of view of customers on cause-related marketing to build good corporate reputation.

Keywords: cause-related marketing, corporate reputation, corporate reputation building, customers, corporate social responsibility, COVID-19.

Šiame straipsnyje analizuojamas priežastinio marketingo panaudojimas siekiant sukurti gerą korporatyvinę reputaciją, empiriškai vertinant ir lyginant vartotojų požiūriu. Konceptualizavus teorines įžvalgas apie priežastinį marketingą kuriant gerą įmonės reputaciją, pateikiami tyrimo rezultatai apie šio marketingo panaudojimą siekiant pagerinti korporatyvinę reputaciją.

Raktiniai žodžiai: priežastinis marketingas, korporatyvinė reputacija, korporatyvinės reputacijos kūrimas, vartotojai, socialinė atsakomybė, COVID-19.

Introduction

Building and managing a positive corporate reputation is becoming an integral part of every successful and fully representative company. Even though corporate reputation is an intangible concept, researchers identify that a good corporate reputation positively increases corporate and stakeholders' values, contributes to competitive advantage and improves customer loyalty. These undeniable benefits are leaded by a few crucial steps' combinations – risk management, business strategy alignment, stakeholder groups' attraction, and efficient communication.

Good corporate reputation can be built through corporate social responsibility initiatives too. One of the most used ways to contribute to corporate social responsibility is cause-related marketing. Usually, organizations use it not only to reflect their responsibility but also to attract customers to contribute to social and

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environmental issues through their purchases. Even though every company aims to contribute positively to external issues, inappropriate communication and activities of cause-related marketing can turn stakeholders sceptical and drive ethical conflicts too if marketing campaigns are understood only as the company's aim to benefit financially.

Despite a large amount of literature about cause-related marketing and corporate reputation, the topic still lacks a united approach and empirical examination of stakeholders' attitudes and behaviour towards cause-related marketing and its ability to improve corporate reputation. Thus, **the problem of the research is formulated as** – how cause-related marketing should be used in order to build good corporate reputation.

The object of the research is the usage of cause-related marketing for building good corporate reputation.

The aim of the research is to analyse the usage of cause-related marketing for building good corporate reputation.

The objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To define theoretically the concept of cause-related marketing.
2. To conceptualize theoretically customer behaviour towards cause-related marketing.
3. To analyse theoretically the use of cause-related marketing for building good corporate reputation.
4. To prepare and substantiate research methodology.
5. To carry out empirical research on "Jurgis & Drakonas" cause-related marketing activities and their effect on corporate reputation improvement from the point of view of customers.

Research methods. Analysis and synthesis of scientific literature was applied to solve the problem of the research at the theoretical level. The empirical research was based on the customer survey. After conducting the survey, the questionnaire data were summed up, and a descriptive and interpretation method of the data was used. Analysis and processing of structured and systematized data were performed using MS Excel.

Definition of cause-related marketing

Scientific literature analysis proves that the definition of cause-related marketing usually highlights it as a formulation and implementation of marketing activities that include company's offer to contribute in a particular amount to a designated cause when customers participate in revenue providing exchanges that satisfy organizational and individual needs (Varadarajan and Menon, 1988). P. Kotler and N. Lee (2004) note that cause-related marketing campaigns can be distinguished from other social initiatives by directly linked contributions to a customer's purchase of a specified product and depends on a rather formal agreement, tracking and measurement system with non-profit organizations. A more interpretative term was provided by M. Demetriou, I. Papasolomou and I. Vrontis (2009) who describe it as a firm's tool to solve social issues by providing financial resources while achieving marketing goals.

However, S. Adkins (2007) presents a slightly different approach of cause-related marketing definition and its activities. The author argues that sales promotion

techniques, which usually are product or service purchases that lead to a contribution to a cause, where a percentage of the product price is donated, are just one of many types of cause-related marketing. Cause-related marketing should be interpreted in situations where the link with the cause has been implemented to support the marketing of the business and at the same time benefiting the charity or cause. So, it can be maintained that charity, cause advertising, sponsorship, public relations and direct marketing can all contribute to cause-related marketing. Other authors add that such marketing implementation is usually led by such factors as a contribution to philanthropy units, social responsibilities, raising of funds for non-profit organizations in order to increase customers engagement and purchase (Mullen, 1997; Wu and Hung, 2007) possibly by using particular products for a restricted period of time (Kotler and Lee, 2004). Further, P. Brønn and A. Vrioni (2001) add that such marketing is fulfilled by particular packaging, special promotions and other aspects as well to highlight their affiliation and partnership supporting particular issues. It can be stated that the selected technique of cause-related marketing depends on a company's creativity, as various forms and implementations are possible.

Even though it is complicated to classify cause-related marketing techniques as the variations differ, authors tend to separate particular cause-related marketing implementation approaches. For example, J. Lee and K. Johnson (2019) identified four different types of cause-related marketing strategies:

1. Sponsorship-linked marketing, which delegates and implements marketing activities to build and communicate an association with a sponsorship. In this type of strategy, the company expects to increase positive customer attitude towards the business unit by donation provided to a cause.
2. Transaction-based cause-related marketing that provides a conditional monetary donation to a charity after the customer makes a purchase. This strategy is the most associated with cause-related marketing.
3. Cause-related "event" marketing, which promotes the interests of a company and its brands by associating it with a specific activity by several actions, contributed towards the cause. It enables customers to engage in the campaign actively and share their viewpoints.
4. Cause-related "experiential" marketing that focuses on creating strong experiential value. Experiential marketing implements its activities by creating diverse types of experience: sensory, affective, cognitive, action, and relationships.

Further, some of these strategies can be fulfilled by G. Liu and W. Ko (2010) insights as authors provided similar cause-related marketing implementation approaches: sponsorship, transaction-based, joint-promotion, and donation in-kind units. Even though almost every unit correlates with J. Lee and K. Johnson (2019) provided strategies, it is essential to highlight that G. Liu and W. Ko (2010) suggest two different delivery patterns that define another two different implementations of each unit. At first, the conventional delivery pattern reflects organizations' direct appeal to the social issue through planning and applying a cause-related

marketing campaign exclusively. Second, at the social alliance delivery pattern partnership between the company and non-profit unit plays a crucial role as partners work jointly towards the development and implementation of a campaign.

Comparing different authors' classification of cause-related marketing, sponsorship defines the sponsorship of a restricted event that leads to a company's direct attaching to a specific non-profit charitable event, scheme, or challenge. Similarly, J. Lee and K. Johnson (2019) defined sponsorship-linked marketing as providing publicity for an organization through the use of selected symbols and activities by an additional focus on efficient product exposure. Talking about the transaction-based implementation approach, even though J. Lee and K. Johnson (2019) and G. Liu and W. Ko (2010) explain it very similarly, the latter authors add a more detailed explanation as they divide this approach into conventional and social alliance delivery. Likewise, cause-related "event" marketing (Lee and Johnson, 2019), a joint promotion approach mirrors partnership engagement between non-profit (or cause) and for-profit and focuses on the content of the message that the company aims to deliver to stakeholders. However, it adds additional weight to the public's emotions about corporate ethical behaviour. The donation in-kind implementation focuses on non-financially contribution towards the improvement of a social cause. Such type of cause-related marketing may include donating products or services, providing corporate volunteers, or contributing to improvements to facilities (Liu and Ko, 2010). Finally, it is essential to mention that J. Lee and K. Johnson (2019) suggested cause-related "experiential" marketing has similarities to both joint-promotion and donation in kind (Liu and Ko, 2010) approaches as it can raise awareness and it focuses on non-financial contributions respectively.

Further, analysed J. Lee and K. Johnson (2019) and G. Liu and W. Ko (2010) ideas were illustrated by the table below (Table 1) in order to specify the main cause-related marketing implementation approaches and their possible techniques separated into both conventional and social alliance delivery patterns. As G. Liu and W. Ko (2010) provided classification has broader explanations of each approach, the author has chosen to base the table on their provided information, even though it includes information carried by other discussed authors.

Although the provided table reflects some possible techniques of each cause-related marketing implementation approach, it is important to repeat that there are many more marketing methods as the implementation belongs to the company's creativity. To add, provided examples of both conventional and social alliance delivery pattern techniques illustrate the difference between the non-profit unit role as it usually works as an intermediary. It can be stated that a non-profit unit is not mandatory to contribute to the selected cause. Also, it is relevant to mention that the initial positions of each approach can move after the start of the cause-related marketing project (Liu and Ko, 2010), or that campaign may include more than one approach (Liston-Heyes and Liu, 2010). Besides, additional tools to cause advertising, sponsorship, public relations, and direct marketing can be added to cause-related marketing approaches (Adkins, 2007).

Table 1. **Cause-related marketing implementation approaches**

	Sponsorship-based	Transaction-based	Joint-promotion	Donation in-kind
Conventional delivery pattern possible techniques	Company's sponsorship to series of programs towards a particular cause	Company's contribution to a particular cause by issuing independent vouchers system that helps to solve an issue	Company's issue of products and educational programs that helps to solve a particular cause	Company's encouragement for their employees to volunteer to a particular cause
Social alliance delivery pattern possible techniques	Company's sponsorship through non-profit unit to series of programs	Company's monetary donation to non-profit unit generated through customer purchases	Company's and non-profit unit's partnership to raise awareness towards a particular cause	Company's encouragement for their employees to volunteer in a particular non-profit unit to contribute to a selected cause

Note: the table is based on J. Lee and K. Johnson (2019); G. Liu and W. Ko (2010).

Customer behaviour towards cause-related marketing

In order to properly analyse cause-related marketing it is crucial to identify how it needs to be executed in terms of customers' as specific mistakes can result in their scepticism and ethical conflicts. For instance, some customers believe that most of the cause-related marketing campaigns are causing exploitation or are used as "greenwashing" (Walker and Wan, 2012). It might be illustrated by one proposition that states that it is impossible to consider Philip Morris as a responsible company even though it stocks water to flood victims and helps to provide food for the poor (Alsop, 2002). Also, this thought highlights that such marketing activity might be used by companies to hide or excuse practices that cause harmful effects (Andreasen and Drumwright, 2001). Philip Morris's case refers to M. Gurin (1987) and A. Andreasen and M. Drumwright (2001) statements that companies prefer to act on trending, low-risk, and high exposure social issues neglecting less pleasant ones. F. Farache et al. (2007) give breast cancer as another example since this cause is frequent for middle-aged females, and a big part of society can be affected by loss, illnesses, prevention, or idea towards it. However, such issues as violence, rapes, AIDS are supported by businesses more rarely because it is way harder to communicate it properly, and basically, the topic is less attractive.

Customers react negatively to cause-related marketing campaigns if these activities conflict with the corporation's image (Silva et al., 2007). Such incompatibility might result in damage because of low campaign publicity or inefficient engagement with the non-profit. In addition, P. Varadarajan and A. Menon (1988) presented the idea that there is a possibility that the amount contributed to issues by companies might be much smaller

than cause-related marketing implementation expenses, so it may result in "greenwashing" and customer scepticism too. In this case, disclosed expenses and returns of cause-related marketing campaigns could encourage customers' trust, but companies need to be careful not to spend more money on marketing instead of philanthropy. A combination of cultural values, affected topics, and objectives for both profit and non-profit organizations to create logical and synergic cooperation could help avoid scepticism. Moreover, since this cause-related marketing does not have legislation, including marketing rules in the company's code of conduct might be an option to avoid ethical conflicts (Silva et al., 2007).

According to L. Witek (2016), the customer attitude of cause-related marketing varies on socio-cultural and demographic factors like gender, age, place of living, education, income, values, and culture. The author presented that even though people with higher education tend to accept cause-related marketing programs more, they are not willing to pay higher prices for products since they are more acknowledged about reasons related to this activity by arguing that it is a business duty to cover expenses donated to the philanthropic unit. On the other hand, customers with a lower level of education are acting opposite – they are not that aware of organizations' motives behind case-related marketing but still are willing to pay a higher amount of money for promoted products or services. Moreover, people with the highest incomes tend to buy such products or services more impulsively even with the higher price.

Further discussing customer attitude differences, it is relevant to highlight the distinction between men's and women's perceptions of purchasing commodities connected to a social or environmental issue (Lerro et al., 2019). For example, studies reflect that there is a tendency that females interact more positively with cause-related marketing activities because their empathic sensations are way stronger compared to males (Eagly and Crowley, 1986; Witek, 2016). Young women based in bigger cities with higher education have the most positive attitudes toward cause-related marketing (Witek, 2016).

Furthermore, Generation Y, also known as millennials, i.e., the segment of the population born between 1978 and 1994 (Sheahan, 2005), is considered to be the most responsive to cause-related marketing activities because of their purchasing habits, higher responsibility towards social and environmental issues and tend to choose those brands that are solving causes (Cui, Trent, Sullivan and Matiru, 2003). For example, 91% of Generation Y would purchase brands that are associated with a cause (vs. 85% U.S. average) (Cone Communication, 2015) and 33% of global customers prefer to buy from trustful brands that have a positive impact on social or environmental areas (Unilever, 2017). Such results prove that cause-related marketing might positively impact brand affinity, too, since individuals prefer to buy products with a good cause. Also, millennials do not have a strong brand preference comparing to Baby Boomers (Kassaye and Hutto, 2016), i.e., people that are born between 1945 and 1964 (Acosta, Gagnon, Ouellette and Bourbeau, 2017), who are the most attached to companies (Phillips, 2007). Additionally, there is research that implies a possible generational cohort effect (a research outcome that

is caused by characteristics of the group studied that shares everyday historical or social experiences (Vinney, 2019)) on the impact of social media on cause-related marketing awareness. It shows that millennials are most influenced by such marketing techniques based on social media (Parment, 2013). It means that social media sources are supposed to be used for advertising marketing activities to engage Generation Y efficiently and to avoid promotional clutter (Melanthiou, 2016). So, it is vital to identify the organization's target customers and their characteristics since particular marketing sources might be ignored by possible customers.

Finally, I. Baghi (2010) research outcome reflects the preference of customers to buy products that engages emotionally and communicates the reason for the donation since these aspects are closely related to companies' reliability (Lerro et al., 2019). J. Eastman, K. Smalley and J. Warren (2019) add that cause-related marketing activity may not be efficient for such products as laptops because Generation Y customers are willing to contribute to one-for-one cause-related marketing for fundamental needed products as food or water.

Theoretical insights on the use of cause-related marketing for building good corporate reputation

Corporate reputation can be defined as a collective respective stakeholder groups' evaluation of the company's ability to create value based on its characteristics, qualities (Mishina, Block, Mannor, 2012), past behaviour, outcomes (Fombrun, Gardberg, Sever, 2000) and the company activities, workplace and future prospects (Fombrun, 2000). For this reason, corporate reputation can be maintained as a core variable in improving the company's attractiveness and its capacity for retention of both clients and investors (Feldman, Bohamonde, Velasquez Bellido, 2014). Besides, corporate reputation can be characterized as a quantity of attributes that shape customers' perceptions (Levitt, 1965).

There are various ways to maintain or improve corporate reputation. Corporate social responsibility also can take its role in the reputation building process. Since stakeholders are an inseparable part of corporate reputation, companies engage in corporate social responsibility activities in order to align stakeholders' interests, enhance organization and product images, and disclose social and environmental issues (Carroll, Shabana, 2010). As cause-related marketing is a part of corporate social responsibility (Sheikh and Beise-Zee, 2011; Aggarwal and Singh, 2019; Demetriou, Papasolomou and Vrontis, 2009; Papasolomou and Kitchen, 2011), it is important to identify how it should be applied to improve corporate reputation.

For example, B. Till and L. Nowak (2000) analysed the effective usage of cause-related marketing which would lead to corporate reputation enhancing and authors highlighted that specific managerial implication can be used for more sufficient cause-related marketing:

1. The use of cause-related marketing alliances (two stimuli that consist of the brand and the cause) will be more sufficient when applied consistently.

2. Effective cause-related marketing communication needs to focus on the brand and the related cause at first.
3. The selection of a cause-related partner should be determined by a cause that is not already associated with other brands.
4. The perceived fit, similarity and belongingness should be considered when selecting a cause partner.
5. Potential cause partners should be tested among the target audience.
6. Alliance with a positive cause tends to benefit more to fewer known brands.
7. Cause that can be considered as "surprising" or "novel" by main customers can benefit a brand more.
8. Cause-related marketing alliances will benefit more to brands that have weaker association sets.
9. Brands will benefit more from an alliance with a cause that has a weaker association set respectively.

Such statements can be complemented by S. Sheikh and R. Beise-Zee (2011) insights about cause-related marketing implementation. Besides the proper fit between the cause and the organization, it is also relevant to look for the prevalence of cause affinity in the market. For example, as cause-related marketing appeals only to people that find the cause relevant or are sympathetic with the cause, it can reach selected segments only for those reasons. To add, cause-related marketing can be seen as part of an organization's strategy to adapt to the characteristics of the customers. It can be explained by identity theory which proposes that organizations are perceived more favourably if they are alike to their customers. In this way, corporate social responsibility and cause-related marketing particularly can help to achieve mentioned similarity. Although there exist non-interested or neutral customers towards a particular cause, negative cause affinity might reduce co-congruence – the perception by a customer that the organization or brand embodies a similar personality. So, it can be stated that if companies want to reach a high level of support, they should select such cause so the majority of people are sympathetic with companies and should avoid negative or controversial causes. However, cause-related marketing campaigns that support causes that are of high affinity may impact customers' scepticism, so it would be recommended to follow the balance.

M. Demetriou et al. (2009) add that expected partnership results should be long-term oriented instead of short-term. S. Adkins (2007) supplements the previous statement by saying that these days companies seek to create long-term partnerships with non-profit organizations instead of temporary donations issues to reach maximum value possible. However, Y. Cui et al. (2003) point out that cause-related marketing can mature from a short-term promotional campaign into a long-term marketing strategy or be implemented only for a short period of time (Kotler and Lee, 2004; Vanhamme et al., 2012). Such diversity towards the time perspective allows to do an assumption that time is not the core weight that defines the efficiency of cause-related marketing. As corporate reputation is a long-time matured construct, it can be assumed that cause-related marketing campaign that is long-term oriented can help to achieve not only instant improvement but the lasting one.

In addition, both partners need to clarify their expectations of a partnership in order to avoid conflict, stress and dissatisfaction which may damage corporate reputation. Moreover, integration of cause-related marketing in the long-term corporation strategy as well as in the marketing mix used together with more traditional communication tools as public relations may contribute to expected benefits and corporate reputation (Papasolomou and Kitchen, 2011).

Since a positive corporate reputation can be built by corporate social responsibility activities as well, it is important to focus on stakeholders' environment because it is an inseparable part of corporate reputation (Carroll and Shabana, 2010). Organizational stakeholders mapping is one of the steps in corporate reputation building (Firestein, 2006). For this reason, it is important to identify the main stakeholders that the company want to reach by cause-related marketing activities and to align campaigns based on their characteristics. Talking about marketing communication, J. Webb and L. Mohr (1998) argue that organizations need to clearly communicate both the conditions of the offer and the results of cause-related marketing campaigns. In order to effectively manage stakeholder relationships and corporate reputation, the organization not only needs to use cause-related marketing as an integral part of a company's mission but also must communicate it to the stakeholders (Brønn and Vrioni, 2001). Moreover, using a third-party organization as a means of bringing together messages concerning the cause and the product on offer to the attention of the desired audience can also be beneficial (Papasolomou and Kitchen, 2011).

To add, P. Kotler and N. Lee (2004) highlight that cause-related marketing is often practiced via the support of causes that corporate social responsibility focus on. Also, it was highlighted that companies use corporate social responsibility strategically by selecting areas of focus that fit with corporate values (Papasolomou and Kitchen, 2011). According to P. Kotler and N. Lee (2004), it is important to choose initiatives that support particular business goals, select issues related to core products and core markets, and supporting issues that provide chances to meet their own marketing objectives. So, it can be assumed that properly selected corporate social responsibility activities can benefit to corporate reputation positive shift highly as it will be aligned to company's strategical aims and will help to keep more consistent activities.

Research methodology

Seeking to analyse how cause-related marketing can help to improve corporate reputation, the case of "Jurgis & Drakonas" was selected. "Jurgis & Drakonas" is a restaurant chain based in Lithuania that belongs to a limited liability company "Burokėlis ir krapas". The company has been implementing its activities since 2014, it is a family-type restaurant chain suitable for families that have all ages of children (Jurgis & Drakonas, 2014). Before quarantine, caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, there were four "Jurgis & Drakonas" restaurants in Vilnius and one in Kaunas.

In order to evaluate "Jurgis & Drakonas" application of cause-related

marketing and its effect on good corporate reputation building, the method of quantitative customer survey was used as it is one of the most convenient, fastest and easiest ways to reach and survey customers. The survey was conducted in the Lithuanian language and then translated into English. The survey questions were formulated to identify customers' behaviour and attitudes towards cause-related marketing, its effect on corporate reputation, and their opinion about "Jurgis & Drakonas" applied cause-related marketing campaign. It was estimated that the sample required for the survey is 196 respondents by choosing 7% allowed error obtained with 95% probability and specifying the size of the survey population, which is 2,295,171, i.e., the number of adults in Lithuania, according to the data of the Lithuanian official statistics portal Department of Statistic in April 2020 (Oficialios statistikos portalas, 2020).

Research results

After the survey was placed on the internet (Facebook) and its links were sent to the possible customers of "Jurgis & Drakonas", 429 filled-in questionnaires were received. All respondents answered general questions and 214 answered the whole questionnaire as it was selected those only respondents that know "Jurgis & Drakonas" company, and its applied cause-related marketing campaign can answer questions related to it.

First of all, respondents were asked demographic questions about their age, gender, place of residence, the highest completed level of education, and monthly incomes. Based on the primary data obtained by the customer survey, the profile of people that know "Jurgis & Drakonas" and its cause-related marketing was clarified.

It can be stated that "Jurgis & Drakonas" and its campaign attract respondents belonging to the 18–25 and 26–34 age groups, which accounted for 42.5% and 30.8% of all respondents, respectively. The rest of the respondents were 35–44 years old (8.9%), 45–54 years old (11.2%), 55–66 years old (6.1%), and only 0.5% – 1 respondent is over 67 years old. The majority, 90.2% of respondents were women, 9.8% – men. Such disbalance between respondents' gender correlates with the theoretical analysis information that there is a tendency for women to interact more positively with cause-related marketing activities because their empathic sensations are way stronger as the survey was distributed in Facebook channels and the possibility to reach both genders was equal. Talking about respondents' place of residence, it became clear that people living in cities and towns tend to be more aware of "Jurgis & Drakonas" and its marketing campaign compared to the province residents as 47.3% of respondents declared living in towns, 41.1% – in cities and the rest of them live in provinces. Even 36.9% of respondents have a bachelor's degree, 29.9% have a master's degree, and 11.2% are currently studying, and the remaining respondents fell into other categories: unfinished high school, high school, professional qualification, college – no degree and higher than master's degree. So, it is conceivable that people that have higher education tend to know "Jurgis & Drakonas" and its cause-related marketing campaign and the opposite.

Assessing the monthly incomes of respondents, 34.1% of respondents receive 431–835 euros NETO, 29% – 836–1100 euros NETO, 13.6% receive 100–430 euros, and 13.6% receive 1101–1400 euros NETO, and the rest receive more than 1401 euros NETO.

The opening section of the questionnaire aimed to find respondents' behaviour towards cause-related marketing in general, so questions that could reflect such information were selected. The first question of the questionnaire aimed to evaluate respondents' tendency to purchase products or services associated with a cause. Even 59.9% of the respondents answered that they had purchased such products or services, 15.9% have not purchased, and the rest of the respondents answered that they are not sure, so it shows that most respondents tend to contribute to causes by their purchases.

The second question asked respondents how often they give time to help causes. Besides, the example was given to respondents to illustrate possible causes as donations to charity or animal shelter in order to ensure a better understanding of this term. It can be stated that respondents have split into two groups: even 49% of respondents marked that they help causes sometimes and 10.7% and 1.9% – often and very often, respectively, while 34.5% contributes rarely and 4% – never. However, it might be maintained that a more significant part of the respondents tends to contribute to social or environmental problems. The third question was appointed only to those respondents that answered 'never' to the previous question to find out the reason why those respondents do not will to contribute their time to causes.

It was noticed that 25% of the respondents respectively do not help causes because they prioritize family or do not have a particular reason. 20% of the respondents stated that they do not trust causes, 15% answered that they do not have enough time, and 5% do enough in other ways. Finally, 10% of the respondents defined other reasons, which are lack of courage and scarcity. Such results partly correlate with theoretical analysis, which presented possible customer scepticism towards cause-related marketing because of a lack of trust. However, as only 4% of the respondents never contribute to causes due to the reasons presented above, it is conceivable that most of the respondent is willing to spend their time for causes.

After clarifying why some respondents never contribute to causes, the following question was presented to evaluate cause-related marketing from the customers' point of view. Respondents were asked to assess whether they agree to the statements provided by choosing from the following options: strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree. After analysing the obtained results, it was noticed that the respondents strongly agree and agree that corporates will have a more positive reputation if it supports a cause (40.6% and 49.9%, respectively). Such an answer correlates with the theoretical analysis that presented cause-related marketing ability to positively impact corporate reputation. To add, results reflected possible respondents' behaviour towards causes. For example, respondents agreed that they tend to support brands if they support causes that they care about (47.3%), people are willing to engage in a cause-related campaign to aid only for those in need (46.6%),

respondents will support such companies, because they feel satisfaction when helping others (40.3%) and generally that it is crucial for companies to contribute on responsible activities (42.9%). These answers reflected the information presented in theoretical analysis that these days customers and stakeholders expect companies to contribute to social or environmental issues. However, the distribution of the values needs to be adequate in order to be accepted positively. Also, the cause's affinity and sympathy towards a cause need to be high enough to reach positive customer support.

However, it can be seen that respondents state that they neither agree nor disagree and disagree (42.7% and 29.8% respectively) with a statement that their belief is based on the opinion that companies are being socially responsible in order to get more customers. It shows that people are not sure about companies' intentions, or their attitude is more or less favourable. Furthermore, it can be said that respondents have a more neutral opinion that such marketing campaigns provide an opportunity for respondents to participate in causes support (36.8%), or such support provides satisfaction (28.7%). Finally, respondents do not agree that they engage in a cause-related campaign to get recognition by others or to feel needed (41.3% and 28.4% respectively).

Further, the fifth question aimed to find out whether respondents prefer to buy brands that support a cause that still have the same price and quality comparing to other brands that do not support any cause. The majority of the respondents (80.7%) answered that they would only buy a brand that supports a cause, while the rest of the respondents stated that they do not care which brand to choose as the cause would not influence them. Since the leading part of the respondents can be assigned to Generation Y (people that are 24–42 years old), such a result correlates with the information analysed in the theoretical part that 91% of Millennials and 33% of global customers prefer to purchase brands that are associated with a cause.

The following question aimed to determine which causes customers to tend to support the most. It was asked them to assess whether they agree to contribute to the causes provided by choosing from the following options: strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree. It can be noted that respondents agree (and strongly agree) to support such causes as care of the aged (41.3% and 49% respectively), disabled causes (39.4% and 50.1% respectively), and health issues as cancer (42.4% and 47.8% respectively). Also, education and training (37.3% and 46.2 % respectively), children from social risk and causes connected with babies (38.7% and 45.5% respectively) and pandemic related causes (39.9% and 43.4% respectively) were supported by the respondents too. It proves that high exposure and affinity causes are being supported more. It can be stated that a significant part of the respondents does not have a clear opinion about their support towards the LGBT community (39.4%), land degradation (32.6%), hospices (32.2%), crimes and personal safety (31.2%) arts and culture and racism (31% respectively). Even though there is no cause that the majority of the respondents would disagree (and strongly disagree) to sustain, however, the least supported causes were still noticed: unemployment

(13.3% and 2.8% respectively), gender inequalities (12.4% and 5.8% respectively), the LGBT community (13.3% and 9.6% respectively), racism (10.3% and 5.1% respectively) and drug or alcohol abuse (18.2% and 5.6% respectively). Such selected causes fulfil the information provided in the theoretical analysis that companies prefer to act on trending, low-risk, and high exposure social issues like breast cancer while neglecting less acceptable issues can be caused by such customers' perception.

The results of the seventh question showed that majority of the respondents – 62.2% cares that company's selected cause would be aligned with the company's products or services, while 21% stated that such types do not need to be aligned and 16.8% stated that they are not sure about it. However, it is significant to stress that the given example could impact these answers – for a matching example, it was described as a computer technology company that runs free computer literacy courses for school children. For a non-matching example, it illustrated a tobacco company that donates food to the hungry. The author assumes that a non-matching example could distort the answers as tobacco companies receive negative attitudes in general. However, this result correlates with the theoretical analysis information that the fit, similarity, and belongingness between a cause and a company are relevant. On the other hand, the question's outcome does still deny the statement provided in the theoretical part – it can be said that the obtained results showed that cause-related marketing activities might be efficient for other products besides everyday customer goods.

Moreover, the eighth question was pointed out to evaluate customers' attitude towards possible companies' contributions used in cause-related marketing. As previously, respondents were asked to assess whether they agree to the business unit's possible contribution to the causes by choosing from the following options: strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree. Data is presented using the percentage of respondents' responses. Outcomes showed that approximately all possible contributions are evaluated very similarly – the majority of the respondents tend to agree (and strongly agree) that all provided actions are essential in cause-related marketing. Such answers suggest that cause-related marketing is not only sales promotion techniques that contribute to a cause of product or money donation as some of the authors state in the theoretical analysis, but also other possible methods as services, raising society's concern towards the cause and educated stakeholders.

The ninth question of the questionnaire was aimed to assess "Jurgis & Drakonas" awareness and the effectiveness of the communication channels used, asking to indicate for what reasons respondents know "Jurgis & Drakonas" restaurants. Since the quantitative research aimed to evaluate "Jurgis & Drakonas" cause-related marketing campaign, the questionnaire was further conducted based only on the respondents who knew "Jurgis & Drakonas". This means that respondents who did not know the restaurant were asked to finish the questionnaire. To add, people were able to select multiple questions as sources from where they know the company could be multiple.

It was noticed that as many as 97.8% of all respondents know "Jurgis & Drakonas" restaurants. The biggest group of respondents (18.60%) know "Jurgis & Drakonas" restaurant either because they notice T. Nicholson, B. Nicholson or O. Bložienė personal accounts on social media while other – 18.10 % are or were restaurant's customers. As other significant groups of respondents (14%) stated that they know the company because of its account or people's reshared posts on social media, it can be stated that the majority of respondents are aware of the company based on information in social media. However, it seems that the applied cause-related marketing campaign did not contribute much to make "Jurgis & Drakonas" more known. Finally, 10.90 % of respondents defined that they know restaurant for other reasons as advertising in social media and the marketplace, they are someone's competitors, they know people working there, they have visited or have seen "Jurgis & Drakonas" restaurants or are not sure about it.

Further, the tenth question aimed to show "Jurgis & Drakonas" restaurant's corporate reputation shift after applied cause-related marketing. For this reason, the tenth question asked respondents' opinions about "Jurgis & Drakonas" corporate reputation before they launched the cause-related marketing campaign. It was noticed that the results of the tenth question showed that the majority of the respondents – 48.60% had neutral opinion towards "Jurgis & Drakonas"corporate reputation before its launched cause-related marketing campaign, while another significant group of respondents had either very positive or positive attitude (16.5% and 33.2%, respectively). For this reason, the eleventh question aimed to clarify if the restaurant's corporate reputation shifts after the launch of the campaign.

However, the eleventh question's results revealed that most respondents (38.2%) did not know about its cause-related campaign, so it was asked for them to finish the survey as only information from people aware of the campaign was needed. Other groups of the respondents (34.45%) marked that in their opinion corporate reputation did increase or left the same (29.6%).

The twelfth question was dedicated only to respondents that marked corporate reputation decrease (0.6%) in the previous answer to find out the motive behind it. It was identified that they are not even sure about it.

The thirteenth question asked the opinion about "Jurgis & Drakonas" corporate reputation after they launched cause-related marketing. It can be said that "Jurgis & Drakonas" corporate reputation was improved after their applied cause-related marketing as respondents' opinion was either very positive or positive (34.1% and 47.2%) afterward while neutral position kept only 17.3% of the respondents.

Furthermore, as respondents' attitude shift towards cause-related marketing was identified, it was relevant to find out if "Jurgis & Drakonas" needs to apply more campaigns after the present one to keep their corporate reputation. The results have shown that most respondents (50.7%) stated that they need to apply more cause-related marketing campaigns to reach such aim, while the rest of the respondents neither thought nor knew it. Such an answer can support some of the authors' positions presented in the theoretical analysis that in order to impact corporate reputation positively, cause-related

marketing needs to focus rather on long-term campaigns instead of short-term.

Finally, the last question aimed to determine if the cause-related marketing campaign impacted customers' preference to buy from "Jurgis & Drakonas" restaurants in order to determine if corporate reputation improvement goes altogether with buying preference. Discussing the provided diagram shows that most respondents (32.7%) would prefer to buy food from "Jurgis & Drakonas" restaurants if it is convenient for them to reach it. It can be stated that other significant groups of respondents would prefer to buy from "Jurgis & Drakonas (22.9%), or they would not prefer to purchase from the restaurant as they do not care much about the exact place where to eat. However, they still support the initiative (20%). To add, part of the respondents (13.6%) stated that they would visit the restaurant after COVID-19 caused economic challenges. Such results prompt that more than half of the respondents would prefer to visit "Jurgis & Drakonas" restaurants in particular circumstances, while other respondents only supported the initiative. Besides, less than 4% defined that they neither like the restaurant nor care about the ordered food place. Finally, 1.9% of the respondents defined other reasons as they do not see the relation to cause-related marketing impact and visits, never eat in the catering facilities, or it is not their favourite place to eat.

Results and discussion

"Jurgis & Drakonas" empirical evaluation on its cause-related marketing campaign and customers and other stakeholders' behavior and opinion towards identified that women that live in either cities or towns and have university degree tend to interact more to cause-related marketing activities. Also, people reflected agreement that corporates will have a more positive corporate reputation if they support a cause; they support brands that focus on causes that they care about; engage in a cause-related campaign to aid only for those in need; support such companies because they feel satisfaction when helping and generally that companies need to be responsible. Even 80.7 % of the respondents will only buy a brand that supports a cause if it has the same price and quality comparing to other brands. Also, it can be noted that that high exposure and affinity causes are being supported more. The majority of the respondents care that the company's selected cause would be aligned with the company's products or services, too; however, not only daily consumed goods can be donated.

People that receive the highest incomes tend to buy products or services connected to causes more. It was determined that they would prefer to buy from "Jurgis ir Drakonas" after cause-related marketing campaigns, buy only if it is convenient, or visit the restaurants after the COVID-19 pandemic. Even though there are customers that do not care where from to order food, they still support the initiative. In general, Generation Y prefers to purchase brands that are associated with a cause more.

Customer survey allowed to determine that applied cause-related marketing campaign was implemented in a way that it improved corporate reputation, however, the result will be likely to be temporary as both customer survey and literature analysis show the need for

campaign's continuity. Also, it is essential to highlight that as many as 97.8% of all respondents know the restaurants but the applied cause-related marketing campaign did not contribute much to making the restaurant more known.

In conclusion, it can be stated that "Jurgis & Drakonas" corporate reputation was improved after the application of cause-related marketing from the view of current and possible customers and other stakeholders. Even though this campaign positively impacted stakeholders' reactions and corporate reputation, it can be assumed that results will be temporary, but such outcomes will be visible only in the future. In order to keep a positive corporate reputation in the long term, it requires complex actions and continuation over time.

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PRIEŽASTINIO MARKETINGO NAUDOJIMAS KURIANT GERĄ ĮMONĖS REPUTACIJĄ: VARTOTOJŲ POŽIŪRIS

Santrauka

Geros įmonės reputacijos kūrimas ir jos valdymas yra neatsiejama kiekvienos sėkmingos įmonės dalis, – tai teigiamai veikia įmonių ir suinteresuotųjų šalių vertes, prisideda prie konkurencinio pranašumo ir gerina klientų lojalumą. Gerą įmonės reputaciją gali užtikrinti ne tik rizikos valdymas, verslo strategijos suderinimas, suinteresuotųjų grupių pritraukimas ir efektyvus bendravimas, bet ir įmonių socialinės atsakomybės iniciatyvos. Viena iš dažniausiai naudojamų įmonių socialinės atsakomybės veiklų yra priežastinis marketingas, jį panaudojant siekiama ne tik atspindėti savo atsakomybę, bet ir pritraukti vartotojus prisidėti prie socialinių ir aplinkosaugos problemų per pirkimus. Neapgalvotos priežastinio marketingo veiklos ir neskaidri komunikacija gali daryti neigiamą įtaką suinteresuotosioms šalims, jei marketingo kampanijos suprantamos tik kaip įmonės įrankis gauti finansinę naudą. Priešingai, tinkamai vykdomas priežastinis marketingas ir jo veiklos ne tik padeda palaikyti teigiamus ryšius su suinteresuotosiomis šalimis, bet ir prisidėti prie korporatyvinės reputacijos gerinimo.

Straipsnyje analizuojamas galimas restorano „Jurgio ir drakono" reputacijos pokytis, kurį lemia taikyta priežastinio marketingo kampanija ir suinteresuotųjų šalių reakcijos. Atlikus priežastinio marketingo sampratos, klientų elgsenos esant priežastiniam marketingui, priežastinio marketingo naudojimo kuriant gerą įmonės reputaciją teorinę analizę, parengiama ir pagrindžiama empirinio tyrimo metodologija bei atliekama kiekybinė klientų

apklausa siekiant įvertinti „Jurgio ir Drakono“ taikytą priežastinį marketingą. Apklausa buvo atlikta lietuvių kalba, vėliau tekstas išverstas į anglų kalbą. Apklausos klausimai buvo suformuluoti siekiant nustatyti klientų elgesį ir požiūrį į priežastinį marketingą, jų nuomonę apie „Jurgio ir Drakono“ taikomą priežastinio marketingo kampaniją bei kampanijos poveikį įmonės reputacijai. Apklausą paskelbus internete ir išsiuntus jos nuorodas galimiems „Jurgio ir Drakono“ klientams, buvo surinktos 429 užpildytos anketos, tačiau 214 atsakė į visą klausimyną. Taigi tyrimui buvo pasirinkta, kad į klausimus, susijusius su priežastiniu marketingu, gali atsakyti tik tie respondentai, kurie žino apie „Jurgio ir Drakono“ įmonės taikytą su priežastimi susijusią rinkodaros kampaniją. Nustatyta, kad taikyta priežastinio marketingo kampanija ir jos įgyvendinimo procesai buvo tinkami, ir didžioji dalis vartotojų, gydytojų, visuomenės, žiniasklaidos ir net konkurentų reakcijos į kampaniją buvo teigiamos.

Šio straipsnio tikslas – išanalizuoti, kaip priežastinis marketingas turi būti naudojamas kuriant gerą įmonės reputaciją. Siekiant pasiekti tikslą, suformuluoti tyrimo uždaviniai: 1) teoriškai apibrėžti priežastinio marketingo sąvoką; 2) teoriškai konceptualizuoti klientų elgseną panaudojant priežastinį marketingą; 3) teoriškai išanalizuoti priežastinį marketingą kuriant gerą įmonės reputaciją; 4) parengti ir pagrįsti tyrimo metodiką; 5) atlikti empirinį tyrimą išanalizuoti „Jurgio ir Drakono“ priežastinio marketingo veiklas ir jų poveikį įmonės reputacijai klientų atžvilgiu.

Tyrimo rezultatai parodė, kad dabartinių ir potencialių klientų bei kitų suinteresuotųjų šalių požiūriu „Jurgio ir Drakono“ įmonės reputacija pagerėjo tikslingai vykdžius priežastinį marketingą. Nors kampanija teigiamai paveikė suinteresuotųjų šalių reakcijas ir įmonės reputaciją, galima manyti, kad rezultatai bus laikini, ir tai bus matyti tik ateityje. Norint išlaikyti ilgalaikę teigiamą įmonės reputaciją, reikalingi kompleksiniai veiksmai ir tęstinumas.