

E-MARKETING IN THE ROMANIAN AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Electronic marketing could bring great advantages, not only in terms of effectiveness and communication improvement, to the Romanian agricultural companies and has to raise a greater interest of the authorities.

Key words: electronic marketing, rural development

INTRODUCTION

The electronic marketing has a medium level of development in the Romanian economy in general, and a weak one in agriculture and rural development. It's potential should raise the interest of companies and authorities, if they really want that the Romanian agriculture could face the European agricultural environment, specially today when the economic crisis makes companies from all over the world and from all sectors, to be very careful to any costs.

The agricultural domains where the communication technologies and electronic marketing is already working are primary those of government information and non-economic organizations.

Most of the Romanian companies working in the rural areas are too far of using these technologies which could bring them high economic advantages in terms of effectiveness, both because the lack of infrastructure and of some degree of business blindness.

In a report made by Forrest Research Inc. is brought out that the on-line selling will become the battlefield of agricultural products. The level of e-commerce with agricultural products had reached in Europe in 2005 5,4% of the total amount of the commerce with agricultural products.

In the Central and Eastern Europe the development of agricultural e-business is detained by cultural factors but first of all by weak development of new communication technologies.

In Romania the development rate of agricultural e-commerce is below 0.1% but with an enormous potential once the authorities will start to develop new communication infrastructure in the rural areas.

The domains where electronic marketing could supply a great assistance in the development of agriculture are:

- agricultural services;
- zootechnie;
- raw material supply;
- transactions with agricultural products;
- banking;

- marketing.

Agricultural services are one of those domains where electronic marketing is already working. These services have a great influence on the farm production either direct or indirect.

The farmers could go on-line and find out all the informations they need at any time regarding the services they want without going themselves at the companies who supply these services.

By simply accessing the web sites of the service-supplying companies or of the Territorial Agricultural Consultant Offices, farmers could resolve problems regarding their production; could chat with the specialists of the offices or could change informations with other farmers.

The Zootechnie is one of the agriculture branches where electronic marketing could ease and make more effective the entire economic process in a farm especially in supplying with raw materials but in selling too.

The farmers by accessing the internet could ease the selling process, by simply, for example, accessing the web site of Stock Exchange (www.bursademarfuri.ro) where they can find information regarding the quotation of any agricultural products.

We have to appreciate also the existence of The Romanian agricultural Stock Exchange web site - www.bursaagricola.ro-, whose main purpose is to create a clean market by bringing together the offer and demand.

The web sites are a very good information channel, bringing to farmers statistics, tendencies and forecast, which are very useful in their business.

Therewith farmers could participate on on-line public auctions using a special design web site www.e-licitatii.ro.

Having a good web site farmers could be easily find on the internet by all the companies interested in buying products.

Electronic marketing and the communication technologies could lead, directly or not, to the economic development of the rural areas.

The support of electronic marketing to rural development depends on the level in which the new communication technologies are spread out among those fields who could help the development of rural area. Those fields are:

- agriculture;
- country-side tourism;
- agricultural companies;
- agricultural and rural development research institute.

Agriculture

In 2001 those 1.400 official agricultural web sites reflected the enormous potential of the internet in agriculture.

Even if in other domains (banking; trade; shipping; etc) the applications of electronic commerce were successfully resolved, regarding agriculture the problems are far from being resolved.

Also with the help of the internet farmers could be more informed and could market easier their products.

Country-side tourism

Altogether with classical ways of promoting tourism in one zone or another, tourism operators could use – to improve their activities- new marketing ways offered by the internet.

In Romania there are many web sites dedicated to country-side tourism but with a weak impact on the abroad potential tourists, because of the lack of english version of the web site.

Web sites offers some advantages comparing with classical marketing promotion: relatively low cost of promotion; highly communicative; 24 hours availability; etc.

Even though are many sites dedicated to country-side tourism, they don't are not fully profiting of potential of electronic marketing. Many of them are not offering english version of the web site and others are not registered in searching engines, not using advertising banners, mailing, chat and forum applications, etc.

Agricultural companies

The electronic marketing has made it's greatest entrance in business because the changes that took place in this environment. Those changes led also to the change of marketing strategies in agriculture business, especially regarding promotion, publicity, clients relations, price and product strategies.

The new electronic marketing strategies could support companies to plan and create a better on-line presence on the internet.

A inovative web site altogether with other online instruments can improve the company image, which is so necessary if the company wants to large profits and improve business relations.

The multitude of selling ways and the possibilities of promotions available today make possible many marketing strategies. By forecasting the final integrated and comprehensive strategy, it could be design a unique marketing strategy capable to point exactly the market segment.

The most effective electronic marketing strategies which can be used by the agricultural companies are:

- on-line branding;
- registering the site in searching engines;
- e-mail advertising;
- etc

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