

Abstract

Application of Digital Solutions in the Oil Industry for the Agricultural User Segment [†]

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1. Objectives

The aim of this paper is to show that traditionally considered conservative and not progressive customer segment and industry are open to innovations and new and up-to-date solutions. Digitalization in agriculture is occurring, and farmers are becoming very sophisticated users of digital solutions [1]. In order to keep and protect market positions, modernize the brand, improve performance, and become and stay relevant to new, digital generations, appropriate solutions are needed [2,3].

2. Methodology

The applied research method is a mix of online and face-to-face surveys. An online survey was conducted with agriculturists who shared their contact details previously, while the face-to-face survey was conducted at the Agricultural fair, with visitors who are at the same time agriculturists.

The applied research methodology employed a combination of online surveys and face-to-face interviews. The online survey targeted agriculturists who had previously provided their contact information, while the face-to-face interviews were conducted with agriculturist visitors at the Agricultural fair. The instrument used is a structured questionnaire, the same for both methods, with one part about the usage of solutions already implemented only applied in the online survey. The aim of the research was to understand farmers and their needs, their motivations to use new solutions, the level of satisfaction with the current solutions, and their suggestions for the future [4]. There were 25 questions, mostly multiple-choice [1,5–9]. Users from the database were chosen randomly, and 2234 farmers completed it, while at the fair, 567 farmers participated in the survey.

3. Results

The results of the research showed that there is a need for digital solutions in this target group [5]. Not all farmers, but many, implemented digital solutions in their daily work, which led to an acceptance of these kind of solutions in other fields. However, there are differences in motivations and specific needs, by region, mostly due to the nature of farming. As expected, there are some that are not prone to change and digital solutions themselves, but, surprisingly, they are not against digitalization in general.

4. Implications

Both agriculturists and companies in conventional industries, such as the oil industry and the retail sale of fuel and motor oils, stepped into direct communication [5,6]. The survey showed the opportunity for companies to advance by knowing and responding to



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agriculturists' changing and evolving needs [3,10,11]. Also, new fields for research and better understanding are opened. What should be offered and how those who are residing the change should be approached is yet to be investigated.

5. Originality Value

In order to improve business results, there is a need to offer the right solution in order to optimize communication and be effective in processes, while insights into the needs are starting point. Given the importance of digital solutions, there is a good reason to focus scientific research on this type of communication. A significant focus of the work was directed towards the research model and method, which serves as support for increasing the market position of the company and increasing profitability.

6. Contributions

Better and modernized services can be established through the implementation of new, digital solutions, and new experiences. Established dialogue with specific segments influences their attitudes about the company, and their willingness to increase the number of visits, spendings and recommendations. Solutions enabled by information technology are not only for very advanced and sophisticated users, but for many. On this positive example, all market players can benefit by following already made pioneer steps.

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