



Naděžda Petrů, Peter Stuchlík, Oskar Crnadak

Theory, Practice and Future of Corporate Marketing Management Education as Part of Tertiary Education

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ABSTRACT

To update the research priorities, this study aims to define the main content elements of teaching business marketing management in tertiary education. Based on their identification, the aim was to evaluate and compare the overall rate of use of marketing tools in business practice over time. Subsequently, the study aims to measure the dependencies between the level of marketing vitality and the number of employees, the field of business and the year of the company's founding and to evaluate which online marketing tools companies know, use and plan to use in the future. We aim to evaluate whether real marketing practice corresponds to the topics taught in tertiary education in the Business Marketing Management program. To identify and understand teaching practice, the method of comparative research was used. To evaluate the feasibility of using marketing tools in real practice, multi-stage data collection using interviews and questionnaires was carried out in 2020-2023. The total number of respondents representing business entities in the Czech Republic was 411. Respondents were selected by random selection from the internal database of VŠFS, a.s., containing approximately 4,150 contacts to business entities. Statistical methods were used to evaluate the data and dependencies with verification of the received data using Pearson's coefficient, Student's distribution. Furthermore, descriptive exploratory analysis and the method of cluster analysis of the co-occurrence of words were used. The contribution of the study is the created list of topics used in teaching the subject Marketing Management of Enterprises in Tertiary Education. It can be stated that in real business practice, tools are used in accordance with the topics taught, tactical tools of the marketing mix are used as a priority. In the 2021-2023 timeline, the overall marketing vitality of companies is improving, especially in the area of external marketing communication. The findings highlight the importance of a balanced use of classic marketing tools in the offline environment with the incorporation of trendy online technologies into teaching and real business practice. Inevitably, the involvement of artificial intelligence (AI) in the marketing management of a business can be expected. The paper brings a new perspective on the connection between teaching theory and the practice of business entities. It appeals for cooperation between tertiary education and representatives of the business community and the practical application of theory, especially with the use of trendy tools of online marketing and artificial intelligence..

KEY WORDS

Communication. CRM. Marketing Management. Marketing Mix. Tertiary Education.

1 Introduction

Marketing theory and practice have utilized different marketing concepts in different time periods, depending on the economics (supply and demand), technology, cultural differences, customer needs, etc. of the time. It has influenced the specific approaches adopted by academics in teaching marketing and applied by managers in practice. The evolution of teaching marketing is a logical response to the evolution of the business environment (Hunt, 2010).

Mishra and Mishra (2023) show how the focal point of interests and topics is constantly changing across schools of marketing thought. They identified 12 schools. They also discuss the issue of closing the gap between academic and managerial perspectives on marketing theories. Heath et al. (2023) urge those teaching marketing management to get students excited about trend innovation and positive use of communication tools to address many of today's social and environmental challenges. Pitt et al. (2023) explore artificial intelligence (AI) specifically in relation to marketing and its potential applications in marketing.

Yet how will the knowledge gained through study ultimately be reflected in real-world business practices? The results of research have shown that companies with systematic, creatively managed marketing activities (i.e., the ones that apply knowledge from theory to practice) use trending technologies, optimize business management, and achieve business and marketing goals more effectively (Stuchlý et al., 2023). Applying knowledge of the use of digital technologies in marketing to practice is key to enabling companies to improve their competitive activities, increase their market coverage, and form a loyal customer base (Fayvishenko et al., 2023).

2 Literature Review

The literature on international perspectives regarding marketing education at the tertiary level reveals a multifaceted landscape shaped by various socio-economic, cultural, and institutional factors. This review synthesizes key findings from diverse studies, providing insights into the evolution, challenges, and strategies of marketing education across different countries. This paper addresses both the theory and practice of marketing management, and the literature review is therefore divided into two parts - one part on developing topics for teaching marketing management and one part on researching marketing management.

2.1 Developing Topics for Teaching Marketing Management

The role of socio-economic factors in shaping marketing education is evident in the work of Abedin et al., who argue that tertiary education significantly influences economic development, including stock market participation and foreign direct investment (Abedin et al., 2020). This connection underscores the importance of equipping students with marketing skills that are relevant not only to their immediate educational context, but also to broader economic frameworks. The findings suggest that marketing education should be designed to address the specific needs of local and global markets, thereby enhancing the employability of graduates.

In the context of integrated marketing communications (IMC), Dagumboy presents an IMC model tailored for Philippine higher education institutions, emphasizing the need for universities to adopt a cohesive marketing approach that resonates with the tech-savvy generation of students (Dagumboy, 2022). This model illustrates the importance of leveraging digital platforms and social media as effective marketing tools, a sentiment supported by Ghansah et al., who advocate for the use of social media to enhance visibility and engagement in tertiary institutions (Ghansah et al., 2015). The convergence of traditional and digital marketing strategies is essential for attracting a diverse student body and responding to the evolving preferences of prospective students.

The impact of educational quality on marketing education is another critical theme. Simangunsong discusses the necessity of quality management systems in higher education to ensure that institutions remain competitive and responsive to market demands (Simangunsong, 2019). This perspective aligns with the findings of Garcia-Alvarez et al., who emphasize the importance of transversal competencies – skills that transcend specific disciplines and are essential for employability – in the curriculum of marketing education (Garcia-Alvarez et al., 2022). By integrating these competencies into marketing programs, institutions can better prepare graduates for the complexities of the modern labor market.

Furthermore, the internationalization of marketing education is a significant trend that reflects the increasing mobility of students and the globalization of the workforce. Nascimento et al. explore the barriers and drivers of universal access to higher education, highlighting the need for policies that promote inclusivity and diversity in educational settings (Nascimento et al., 2022). This is particularly relevant in the context of marketing education, where understanding global markets and cultural nuances is paramount. The ability to navigate different cultural contexts and consumer behaviors is a critical skill for marketing professionals, necessitating a curriculum that is both locally relevant and globally informed.

The relationship between educational expansion and labor market outcomes is also noteworthy. Delaney et al. examine the phenomenon of overeducation among graduates, suggesting that while tertiary education has expanded, the alignment between educational qualifications and job requirements remains a challenge (Delaney et al., 2020). This misalignment can lead to underemployment and dissatisfaction among graduates, underscoring the need for marketing education programs to closely monitor labor market trends and adapt their curricula accordingly. By fostering partnerships with industry stakeholders, educational institutions can ensure that their programs remain relevant and that graduates possess the skills demanded by employers.

Marketing science has often claimed and continues to claim that marketing begins and ends with the **customer**. For this reason, academic research and, ultimately, academic instruction has tended to focus on customer behavior (Kotler & Levy, 1969) and customer segmentation, targeting, and positioning, as well as their importance in influencing customer purchasing decisions (Sukamdani et al., 2023). The subject of the general theory of teaching a marketing system has been describing, explaining, and predicting the market behaviors central to trading and marketing activities for groups of sellers and buyers (Shaw, 2020). Focus has gradually shifted to models of efficiency measurement in the context of customer relationship management (CRM). Methods have been sought, explored, and described that allow for the assessment of relationships between different CRM resources and company performance. An emphasis is placed on connecting people (customers, employees) with technology (CRM applications, AI) and the impact on performance (Wang, 2023).

The relatively new field of **marketing research** has been introduced and is being taught (Daymon & Holloway, 2011). In the history of marketing research, it was common for professors of marketing to carry out their activities in companies specializing in market research or in consulting firms, publish the results, and incorporate them into their teaching (Casotti, 2019). Researchers have debated the appropriateness of using qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods of research (Gummesson, 2002). And yet it is undeniable that the diversity of knowledge regarding marketing has been cultivated through research efforts conducted by universities with students for implementation into corporate practices (Farrell, 2001).

Other academic outputs and teaching have focused on **companies and corporate marketing strategies**, managerial activities such as planning, controlling, brand management, product design, logistics, and pricing, legal frameworks for marketing activities, etc. (Schwarzkopf, 2015). The first definition of the marketing mix was published by McCarthy in 1960. He presented it as a choice of tools that a company intends to combine in order to satisfy a (particular) target group. Since it was conceived in the 1970s, the marketing mix has been considered

a fundamental principle of commercial and social marketing (Lahtinen et al., 2020). Nonetheless, as marketing theory evolves, always one step behind practice, new types of marketing mixes have been developed and defined that might better capture a specific model, solution, or marketing strategy in relation to real-world factors influencing the market. In practice, many other tools and concepts have been utilized and presented to students - the 4C marketing mix (Nguyen-Tan & Kuo-Liang, 2022), the 4S (Gao & Zhao, 2022), the 4A (Duo et al., 2023), the 4E (VanDyke et al., 2023), and other important marketing concepts now focusing on corporate social responsibility, sustainability, and resilience (Abourokbah et al., 2023; Ostadi et al., 2023).

The growth of the media environment and communication tools has made it possible to expand teaching to cover **the impact of media tools (TV, radio, print, the linternet) and the communication mix (advertising, sales promotion, PR, DM, personal selling) in the offline and online space** on business competitiveness and customer buying behavior. Crescitelli and Figueiredo (2009) characterized the digital environment and its impact on the creation of brand loyalty. According to Pecot et al. (2018), the use of social media is becoming an important marketing communication tool in B2C and B2B markets in service marketing, tourism marketing, sports marketing, election marketing, educational marketing, and other industries (Fagundes et al., 2023).

One trending tool representing the future of the field is **artificial intelligence (AI)**, which has demonstrated the power and potential to literally shake up the status quo in various areas of theoretical and practical marketing and teaching (Davenport et al., 2020). While the human factors (experience, intuition) incorporated into purchasing decisions, branding, WoM, and other concepts continue to play a vital role (Chen et al., 2022), AI offers a new way to acquire, process, and analyze data, as well as to generate insights and deliver personalized results (Jarek & Mazurek, 2019). AI applications may fundamentally change the way marketing is implemented in corporate practice (Kumar et al., 2019) and taught in tertiary education. Digitalization is a phenomenon that is not only linked to certain specific industries of the economy, but that affects the economy as a whole (Stacho et al., 2023).

The above text allows us to define a research question (RQ)1 - What topics are the focus of teaching in the Marketing Management course in 2023?

2.2 Researching Marketing Management

Marketing knowledge, skills, and capabilities can be selectively and strategically used by entrepreneurs to increase their competitiveness. A comprehensive assessment of marketing capabilities of SMEs was undertaken by Oduro and Mensah-Williams (2023). They reached the conclusion that marketing communication capability, distribution channel management capability and product development capability significantly and positively affect marketing performance and customer performance, but not financial performance. Sales capability and marketing planning capability have a significant positive effect on all manner of competitive performance, i.e., financial performance, marketing performance, customer performance, and the adaptability of business entities. Similar issues have been addressed by Joensuu-Salo et al. (2023). They examined the growth rate of SMEs over a three-year period, the relationship between company size and company growth, and the effect of marketing capabilities (resources and dynamic capabilities) on company growth. The results showed that company size is not related to the rate of change. Smaller SMEs have fewer marketing capabilities than larger SMEs.

Phokwane and Makhitha (2023) focused on the impact of marketing communications on SME performance. It was found that there is a positive correlation between marketing communication strategies and SME performance, and that some elements of marketing communication (sales support, personal selling, direct marketing) influence sales growth, customer relationships, customer loyalty, and profitability. They showed that there is a significant relationship between

the use of new media communication tools and increased profitability. Digital marketing and public relations are marketing communication strategies that influence customer loyalty.

Belas et al. (2022) explored differences in the use of marketing tools in the management of SMEs in the countries of the Visegrad Group (V4). The results of this analysis yielded interesting findings. Where a company primarily uses the tools of the classic marketing mix, it is likely that they do not use tools of a proactive marketing mix or the tools of online marketing. Currently, the tools of the classic 4P marketing mix are used to a minimal extent in the construction and service industries. Tools of a proactive marketing mix (4P, 4S, 4E, etc.) are most widely used in the transportation and retail sectors, and least used in the manufacturing, construction, tourism, and other business sectors. Online marketing tools are used particularly in the retail, tourism, and service sectors, and least in the agriculture, construction, and transport sectors. Businesses less than three years old use online marketing tools less than businesses that have been on the market for ten years or more. Limited liability companies use online marketing the least.

Nwankwo and Kanyangale (2023) examine the importance and impact of applying green marketing tools on the competitiveness of SMEs. The direct and indirect effects of business networks and the influence of the capability to implement online marketing on SME performance are discussed by Lubis et al. (2023). The relationships between static marketing capabilities, dynamic marketing capabilities and the international performance of SMEs are assessed by Reimann et al. (2023). According to Nwankwo and Kanyangale (2023), orientation on customer (CRM) has a significant and positive impact on the survival of commercial and manufacturing SMEs, followed by quality of service and scope of services offered to customers. Likewise, Nguyen-Tan et al. (2021) focus on sales practices involving the use of digital tools (omnichannel marketing, user-generated content, interactive content, live video/live streaming, influencer marketing, artificial intelligence applications, etc.) to develop and manage customer relationships. Saraswati (2021) devoted research to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) of SMEs and its impact on business success. Khalid et al. (2023) took on the objective of investigating the effect of sustainability marketing on customer brand loyalty. Pandya et al. (2023) explored implementing the most important Industry 4.0 technologies and taking maximum advantage of sustainability. Robledo et al. (2023) sought to understand the mediating effect of networking on the relationship between effectiveness and WOM marketing. A study by Wong and Haque (2022) examines the factors leading to online loyalty in relation to brand impact (i.e., brand innovation and brand love) as well as the effects of websites (i.e., visual appeal, perceived enjoyment and trust) on customer loyalty. The findings showed positive effects of the innovativeness of the brand on brand love, trust, and visual appeal. Kupec et al. (2021) examine whether there is a conceptual problem in the adequate application of internal audit and internal control in a real marketing environment.

It is evident from the text that most of the authors mentioned in these studies focused on individual topics, strategies, or tools of marketing mix and their effect and influence on customer loyalty or SME performance. A comprehensive treatment of the link between marketing theory and real-world practice only rarely appears.

The above text allows to define research questions (RQ 2-6) and Hypotheses H1-H3.

RQ2 addressed the following question: which of the parameters of marketing management is used by SMEs to the greatest extent?

RQ3 addressed the issue of whether overall marketing vitality is related to other factors, such as: business sector, company size by number of employees, and year the company was founded. This research question is followed by formulated hypotheses:

H1 There is a statistically significant relationship between the assessed marketing vitality parameters and business sector.

H2 There is a statistically significant relationship between the assessed marketing vitality parameters and company size by number of employees.

H3 There is a statistically significant relationship between the assessed marketing vitality parameters and year the company was founded.

RQ4 addressed the issue of what specific trending online marketing tools the company is aware of.

RQ5 addressed the issue of what specific trending online marketing tools the company actively uses for marketing management.

RQ6 addressed the issue of what specific trending online marketing tools (beyond the existing ones) the company plans to actively use for marketing management by 2025.

3 Methods and Data

Methods and data were also formulated for the section on teaching topics (at selected colleges and universities) and the section on evaluating marketing management tools (marketing vitality) in the real-world practices of companies in the Czech Republic.

3.1 Teaching Topics

Using comparative research according to Bryman and Bell (2015), we understand comparative research design as a social inquiry, a methodological approach focused on direct comparison of two or more units with the goal of identifying their similarities and differences. Hendl (2016) defines comparative design as a research plan for comparing the characteristics of selected cases. In typical sociological or marketing research, the cases studied may include countries, cultures, organizations, individuals, or different time periods. The main goal of comparative research is to understand, and above all to explain, the patterns of similarity and variability in social and behavioral processes. The sources of research data are publicly available information from the official websites of the schools and printed materials about degree programs and specific disciplines that involve teaching marketing management.

3.1.1 Selection of Countries and Universities for Comparison, Rationale for Their Election

When selecting countries and universities for this comparative study, several key criteria were specified:

- The selected institutions have a **high level of educational quality** and are internationally recognized for their educational programs, which gives them a **good reputation** in the area of tertiary education.
- Selected institutions offer a **master's degree program** in marketing management or a related field, which makes it possible to obtain more detailed information about teaching methods, content, and the range of topics taught.
- **Cultural diversity** allows for an examination of how pedagogical methods and approaches may differ in different sociocultural contexts.
- **Geographic coverage** was chosen to ensure a representative distribution from different parts of the world, which allows for a comprehensive view of global trends in teaching marketing management.

To analyze the documents, it was necessary in some cases to request detailed information about the degree program via a relevant web application (usually on the basis of simple registration). This ensured that the baseline data was current.

ČR	University of Finance and Administration, a.s., Prague
SR	Univerzita sv. Cyrila a Metoda, Trnava
UK	London Business School, London
USA	Rutgers University, New Jersey
SAE	The University of Dubai, Dubai

TABLE 1: Universities teaching the subject of Marketing Management

Source: Knihová & Petrů, 2023

3.2 Use of Marketing Tools in SME Practice

The target population of this study consisted of entrepreneurs (owners or managers) of enterprises operating in the Czech Republic. The random selection of the sample of respondents utilized a database of business entities created at VŠFS, a.s., that has been in use since 2015. As of the date of starting the study, it contained data verified in the ARES database of business entities (2,129 active business entities; in 2023 the database contained 2,730 records). The principle of random sampling was used to carry out the survey. The research conducted and the evaluation of the results obtained from it fall into the descriptive statistics field of exploratory data analysis. Data on firms were collected from multiple sources (Public Register and Collection of Deeds, Czech Statistical Office, company websites, etc.) so as to increase the validity of the study (Eisenhardt, 1989; Piekkari et al., 2009).

Primary data on the topic of use of marketing management tools was collected using a survey among active Czech business entities; the survey was based on a structured questionnaire. The first step of the survey was the design of the survey questionnaire. The survey was initiated by providing information about the researchers, the context, and the objectives of the survey and asking the participants for their consent to participate in the survey and to process their data. It is important to note that participation in the survey was voluntary and anonymous. The body of the questionnaire had three parts:

Part 1 identified basic demographic information about the company (Name, Legal form, ID number, ZIP code, CZ NACE number of main activity, Year founded, Number of employees).

In Part 2, respondents were asked to select answers on a Likert scale from 1 (lowest level) to 5 (highest level) from selected areas related to marketing. Parameters assessed - see Table 2. When compiling the parameters, the researchers drew on a review of scholarly marketing literature and clusters of marketing themes recurring in a systematic literature review, the questionnaire, and the outputs of research on marketing vitality and quality management (Petrů et al., 2020; Jáč et al., 2017; Rydvalová & Antlová, 2020). Partners with experience in marketing management, and business consulting from Deloitte collaborated in the development of the questionnaire. After two cooperative rounds among the participating partners, the final version was created of the assessed parameters.

Parameter assessed	Specification of the parameter	Abbreviation for statistical evaluation
Marketing management	Level and approach to marketing management.	MM
Inputs/outputs	The level of management, the stability of the company, and, at the same time, its ability to respond to market changes in relation to innovating the tools of the marketing mix.	IO
STP customers	The degree of use of segmentation, targeting, and positioning as part of marketing management.	STP
Internal communications	The internal communications capabilities of the company; the level and quality of internal communications.	IC
External communications	The scope, targeting, and systematicity of marketing communication tools used on customers.	EX
CRM	The ability of the company to manage customer relationships and the technology it uses for this purpose.	CRM
Marketing plan	The approach of management to planning and evaluating marketing activities.	MP

TABLE 2: Factors included in the questionnaire

Source: own processing, 2024

Part 3 focused on the use of specific trending tools of online marketing. This part was incorporated in 2023. Respondents were presented with three open-ended questions:

1. What specific trending online marketing tools is your company **aware of**?
2. What specific trending online marketing tools does your company **actively use** for marketing management?
3. What specific trending online marketing tools (beyond the existing ones) does your company **plan** to actively use for marketing management by 2025?

3.2.1 Data Collection Method and Time Frame

Data collection was conducted by trained field staff (research and teaching assistants) in the form of primary qualitative research, semi-structured interviews. From 20 October to 20 November 2020, a pilot testing period took place in order to obtain initial feedback and make corrections. The study was officially launched on 01 December 2021. During 2021-2023, information was collected from 450 business entities in the Czech Republic. Of these, 411 records were used after excluding incomplete or incorrect data (i.e., 91.33% were valid).

It was first necessary to convert the acquired data into a format that could be mathematically processed. Numerical codes were used for this purpose, which not only categorized the responses, but also assigned them a quantified outcome.

Statistical validation of the acquired data was carried out using Pearson's coefficient (Kilic, 2016; Conelly, 2011); the Student's t-distribution (Anděl, 1985) and Coefficient of Variance (Tomšík, 2017) were used where it made sense. In isolated cases, other statistical methods were also used. The study sample was tested in terms of the completeness of the test variables using the SPSS software. The sample met 100% data completeness. This was followed by a test of the reliability of all tested data by computing Cronbach's alpha. The value of Cronbach's alpha is 0.887 which translates to a good value of acceptability. The following values then applied for the Pearson correlation analysis: a value of 0.00-0.19 represented very weak correlation, 0.20-0.39 a weak correlation, 0.40-0.59 a moderate correlation, 0.60-0.79 a strong correlation, and 0.80-1.00 a very strong correlation. For the test of Student's t-distribution, the quantile was 6.31 given 95% probability (a significance level of 0.05) and a degree of freedom of 1. Based on the correlation and probability values calculated, the studied data can be declared reliable. The results and conclusions presented can thus be accepted with high probability.

The following factors were used as independent variables in the calculations: year founded, size category of the enterprise, and main business sector according to CZ-NACE categorization. The dependent variables used consisted of the average of the specified parameters (see Table 1, MM, IO, STP, IC, EX, CRM, MP). Given that number of employees covers a period longer than one year, these data were treated as continuous functions. Year founded and business sector are discrete variables and were processed accordingly.

Given the scope of the data, mathematical statistical methods from descriptive statistics, sum (sum) and average were used to evaluate the acquired data. No standard deviation or coefficient of variation was computed for the averages, as the differing character of the categories of the independent variables would mean there was nothing to compare them to, or would result in bias without significant predictive power. The responses to the open-ended questions were processed to determine word frequency using the cluster analysis method (Ostadi et al., 2023). All verbal responses were listed out on a single list in chronological order, i.e., in the order in which they appeared in the text of the questionnaire responses, then thematic clusters were created based on similarity, and their frequency was calculated (Koutná Kostínková & Čermák, 2013). The calculations and graphics of the clusters were processed in the JMP program.

Year of foundation	2021 n=157	%	2022 n=178	%	2023 n=76	%
until 1990	7	4,46	7	3,93	1	1,34
1991-2000	53	33,76	58	32,58	27	35,52
2001-2010	40	25,48	40	22,47	17	22,36
2011-2020	57	36,30	67	37,64	22	28,94
2021-2023	0	0	6	3,38	9	11,84
Σ	157	100	178	100	76	100

TABLE 3: Year founded

Source: own processing, 2024

From the above table, it can be seen that most of the business entities were founded between 1991-2010 (2021: 59.24%; 2022: 55.05%; 2023: 57.88%) and it can be assumed that they have had the opportunity during the course of their approx. 30-year existence to verify the knowledge, effectiveness, and efficiency of their use of marketing management tools in practice. Another factor that played a role is that a number of underperforming companies (also due to the impact of COVID-19, high inflation, disruption of supplier/customer relationships, and other macro-environmental factors) have gone out of business. The resilient firms with astute, efficient, and experienced management capable of guiding the firm through the crisis survived.

Number of employees	2021 n=157	%	2022 n=178	%	2023 n=76	%
0	6	3.82	3	1.69	1	1.32
up to 20 employees	82	52.29	85	47.76	34	44.74
up to 50 employees	25	15.92	42	23.59	22	28.95
up to 100 employees	20	12.72	17	9.57	5	6.58
up to 250 employees	11	7.00	11	6.18	6	7.89
up to 500 employees	8	5.08	5	2.80	2	2.63
over 500 employees	5	3.17	15	8.41	6	7.89
Σ	157	100	178	100	76	100

TABLE 4: Number of employees

Source: own processing, 2024

From the above table, it can be observed that most of the respondents (representatives of the business entities) can be categorized as SMEs, predominantly with up to 20-50 employees (2021: 68.21%, 2022: 71.35%, 2023: 73.69%). This is in line with the trend of the last twenty years in developed economies. Large companies with many employees have merged or been otherwise concentrated, resulting in an outflow of production capacity to countries with lower production costs. The smaller ones have remained on the market. In the Czech Republic, the share of small and medium-sized enterprises out of the total number of active business entities is about 99.83% (Ministerstvo průmyslu a obchodu ČR, 2018).

CZ NA CE No.	Definition of main sector	2021 n = 157	%	2022 n = 178	%	2023 n = 76	%
0	agricultural and livestock production, extraction of raw materials;	12	7.64	36	20.22	5	6.57
1	food, footwear, clothing, wood processing;	24	15.38	20	11.23	11	14.47
2	logging, chemical and pharmaceutical industry, manufacture of building materials, steel and metalworking, electrical equipment and electronics, engines and machinery, motor vehicles;	15	9.21	13	7.30	5	6.57
3	ships, aircraft, locomotives, and other modes of transportation, furniture, other processing industry, production and distribution of power, gas, and heat, water management, waste management;	3	1.91	8	4.49	1	1.31
4	construction, wholesale and retail trade, ground transport;	54	34.41	52	29.21	18	23.74
5	water and air transport, warehousing, accommodations, dining and hospitality, publishing;	12	7.74	11	7.43	6	7.89
6	radio, television, telecommunications, IT, banking, insurance, real estate;	16	10.34	16	7.98	15	19.73
7	business management, engineering, research and development, promotion, special services, veterinary, leasing, agencies;	10	6.36	10	5.61	8	10.52
8	security, cleaning, brokering, public administration and defense, education, social care, outpatient services;	7	4.47	8	4.47	2	2.63
9	arts activities, library, gaming and casino, professional organizations and associations, repairs, home improvement, mining and support industries;	4	2.54	4	2.24	5	6.57
Σ		157	100	178	100	76	100

TABLE 5: Business sector according to CZ-NACE

Source: own processing, 2024

From the above table, it can be seen that the business entities are represented in all business sectors. The majority of business entities can be classified according to CZ-NACE business sector into category 4: construction, wholesale and retail trade, ground transport; then into category 1: food, footwear, clothing, wood processing (in sum for these sectors, 2021: 49.79%, 2022: 44.44%, 2023: 38.21%).

4 Results

Results were also formulated for the section on teaching topics and the section on evaluating marketing management tools (marketing vitality, MV) in the real-world practices of companies in the Czech Republic. The significance of connecting theory with practice is then discussed.

4.1 Marketing Management Teaching Topics

The text of the theoretical background made it possible to define the research question: **RQ1** – What topics are the focus of teaching in the Marketing Management course in 2023?

Topic/keywords taught	CZ	SK	UK	USA	UAE
Topic 01/the importance of marketing for business management
Topic 02/situation analysis
Topic 03/marketing research	.	.	.	x	.
Topic 04/types of markets, STP
Topic 05/product mix
Topic 06/price mix
Topic 07/distribution mix
Topic 08/communication mix
Topic 09/media mix and social media	.	.	.	N/A ¹	N/A
Topic 10/branding
Topic 11/marketing planning
Topic 12/technology, innovation, applications, artificial intelligence

TABLE 6: Thematic focus of the marketing management course

Source: Kniňová & Petrů, 2023

RQ1, on what topics are the focus of teaching in the subject of Marketing Management in the year 2023, can be answered as follows:

- All of the selected universities incorporate traditional marketing topics in their teaching (see Table 6), although they teach them in different order and at different intensities with regards to the scope of the curriculum and the time commitments of the students.
- All of the selected universities devote attention to technology, innovation, and applications, including artificial intelligence. This highlights the growing importance of technological innovations in marketing and the need to prepare students for digital transformation in the field.
- Topics related to the media mix and social media are not represented in the teaching plans of the Marketing Management subject in the US and UAE. Given the importance that social media play in today's marketing environment, particularly in the US, it can be assumed that specialized courses with this focus are also represented in the degree program, and the topic is not taught directly in the Marketing Management course, or may be part of the communications mix, albeit without a specific emphasis on social media.

¹ Authors' note: N/A (Not Applicable) indicates that it was not possible to find information with this designation when analyzing the teaching plans and that the topic is not taught under the subject of Marketing Management according to available information.

The integration of business marketing management lessons into university curriculum is essential to prepare and orient students in the modern marketing environment. The following synthesis examines the interaction of key marketing themes with the existing theories and their implications for increasing the relevance and practice of the marketing management curriculum at higher education institutions.

The importance of **marketing for business management**. Marketing is considered a key function in business management in educational materials. It affects various organizational aspects, including strategic planning and creating a competitive advantage. The importance of marketing is underscored by its role in shaping consumer perception and behavior, especially through the pricing picture, which influences purchase probability and brand preference (Chernev & Hamilton, 2018). Teaching materials emphasize the necessity of integrating marketing strategies into broader business goals to increase organizational efficiency and adaptability (Gurel & Tat, 2017). This knowledge is essential for students to understand the strategic importance of marketing in driving business success, business resilience, and long-term sustainability.

Situational analysis and marketing research serve as an essential element in marketing management and enable businesses to effectively evaluate their internal and external environment. Tools, such as STEEP, PEST, SWOT, competitive benchmarking, etc. are vital for students because they facilitate informed decision-making (Wright et al., 2019). In addition, incorporating marketing research methodologies, including qualitative and quantitative analyses, is essential for understanding market dynamics and consumer needs. For example, the use of analysis for market segmentation allows businesses to more accurately tailor, personalize their product and service offerings to consumer preferences (Djokic et al., 2013).

Market types, segmentation, targeting, and positioning. Understanding market types and segmentation, targeting, and positioning (STP) processes is the foundation of marketing education. The STP framework allows both marketing and commerce to identify distinct consumer groups and tailor marketing efforts accordingly. This also increases the effectiveness of communication campaigns. Theoretical models that support these concepts, such as the 7P framework (product, price, location, promotion, people, process, physical evidence), provide students with a structured approach to developing comprehensive marketing strategies (Anggraeni et al., 2024). The knowledge gained is especially important in the context of digital marketing, where precise targeting can significantly affect the success of a communication campaign.

The **marketing mix**, including product, pricing, distribution and communication strategies, is an essential component of the marketing curriculum. Each element dynamically interacts and influences consumer behavior and business performance. For example, pricing strategies must take into account consumer perceptions of value and fairness, which are critical in competitive markets (Chernev & Hamilton, 2018). In addition, the integration of digital channels into the communication mix is becoming increasingly important. Businesses need to be able to navigate the complexity of online needs, requirements, expectations, and consumer engagement (Arifin et al., 2022). Teaching students and appealing to the importance of interplay of these elements will prepare them for current digital marketing challenges.

Branding is a crucial aspect of marketing that affects consumer loyalty and brand positioning in the market. Effective brand management strategies are essential, especially during an economic downturn, when maintaining brand value is becoming a crucial parameter for corporate marketing success (Drewniak & Karaszewski, 2016).

Marketing planning processes are essential for modern marketing management. Businesses can use trending AI applications and technologies to create comprehensive marketing plans. AI can improve decision-making by providing comprehensive and up-to-date market analysis, insights into consumer behavior in a specific market, and optimizing marketing strategies (Fayed, 2020). Universities must emphasize these trends in their teaching to ensure that students are well equipped for the evolving marketing environment.

Trending technologies, innovation – the rapid advancement of technology and innovation in marketing is reshaping all business sectors. Integrating AI into marketing strategies not only streamlines operations, but also improves the ability to analyze consumer data and predict market trends (Fayed, 2020). The ability to work with new technologies is essential for students. They must be prepared to use these tools in their future careers. Understanding the implications of digital transformation of marketing practices is significant for developing effective marketing strategies in today's and tomorrow's digital environments (Zhang, 2021).

It can be concluded that the interaction of marketing topics with established theories provides a robust framework for annually updating and improving the content of marketing management curricula at universities. By integrating modern elements into their learning experience, institutions can better prepare students for the complexities of modern marketing and ensure that they have the necessary skills and knowledge to ensure their success in the job market.

4.2 Results for the Use of Marketing Tools in SME Business Practices

RQ2 addressed the following question: which of the parameters of marketing management is used by respondents to the greatest extent?

Evaluated parameter	2021 n=157	2022 n=178	2023 n=76
Marketing management	2,08	3,08	3,25
Inputs/outputs	3,78	3,93	3,93
STP customers	3,44	3,65	3,78
Internal communication	2,60	2,75	3,16
External communication	3,09	3,31	4,01
CRM	2,71	3,08	3,20
Marketing plan	2,60	3,09	3,41
Σ	2,90	3,27	3,53

TABLE 7: Time series (2021-2023) of the average rating of the parameters according to the Likert scale (1-5)
Source: own processing, 2024

RQ2 may be answered as follows. Of the parameters evaluated, the companies make the most use of diversification of their product portfolio, pricing and distribution channels, a wide range of customers, and tried and tested suppliers. In principle, these are tools of the marketing mix. A significant advancement in the use of external communication tools took place in 2023. Corporations communicate with customers to the extent stipulated by law and use promotions in a targeted and long-term manner in conjunction with marketing tactical and operational plans. They financially evaluate the benefits of specific promotional activities. The time series also showed a year-on-year increase in average ratings. There was a 0.37-point increase in 2022 compared to 2021, a 0.26-point increase in 2023 compared to 2022, and a 0.63-point increase in 2023 compared to 2021.

RQ3, whether overall marketing vitality is related to other factors, such as business sector, company size by number of employees, and year the company was founded, gave rise to hypotheses H1-H3.

H1 There is a statistically significant relationship between the assessed parameters and business sector.

The results of the statistical analysis are provided in Table 8.

CZ NACE/year of research	average marketing vitality, 2021	average marketing vitality, 2022	average marketing vitality, 2023
0	3,34	3,4	3,64
1	3,07	3,38	3,42
2	3,13	3,29	3,51
3	2,8	3,64	2,42
4	2,94	3,11	2,88
5	2,55	3,14	2,88
6	3,08	2,99	3,95
7	2,85	3,41	3,92
8	3,59	3,39	3,42
9	2,89	2,96	3,45
Pearson	0,09	0,44	0,19
Student T-test	0,08	0,12	0,13
average	3,02	3,27	3,35
dispersal	0,08	0,04	0,21
σ	0,28	0,20	0,46
% σ	9.2	6.2	13.8

TABLE 8: Dependence of MV on CZ-NACE business sector

Source: own processing, 2024

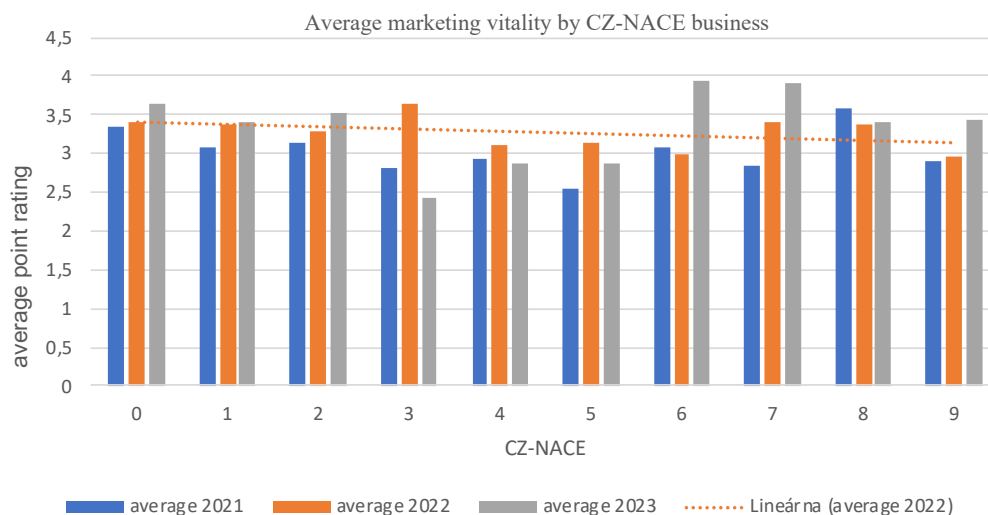


FIGURE 1: Average marketing vitality by CZ-NACE business sector

Source: own processing, 2024

It is not possible to validate H1. According to the Pearson's coefficient of the values (0.09, 0.44, 0.19), there is a very weak to moderate positive correlation. There are no significant differences in overall Marketing Vitality values among the individual business sectors of the main business activity of the companies according to the statistical number of the main CZ NACE business sector. The results in the survey conducted differ from each other slightly from one year to the next, but the differences between the individual business sectors and the average Marketing Vitality value are 6-14%. These are therefore less significant differences.

H2 There is a statistically significant relationship between the assessed MV parameters and company size by number of employees.

Number of employees/ year of research	2021	2022	2023	average MV	% MV
0	2,33	2,95	2,5	2,59	10.63
20	2,76	2,93	3,19	2,96	12.13
50	3,02	3,33	3,74	3,33	13.65
100	3,17	3,68	3,14	3,33	13.65
250	3,76	3,78	3,61	3,72	15.23
500	3,87	3,95	4,42	4,08	16.72
5 000	4,37	4,35	4,45	4,39	17.99
Σ	23,28	24,97	25,05	24,40	
Pearson	0,71	0,71	0,61		
Student T-test	0,14	0,14	0,14		

TABLE 9: Dependence of average Marketing Vitality (MV) on number of employees

Source: own processing, 2024

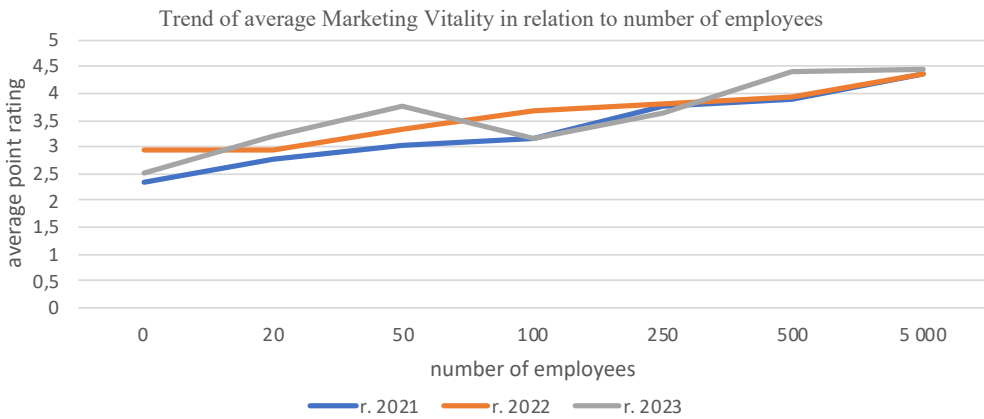


FIGURE 2: Trend of average Marketing Vitality in relation to number of employees

Source: own processing, 2024

H2 There is a statistically significant relationship between the assessed parameters and company size by number of employees. This hypothesis can be validated. Based on a calculation of the Pearson coefficient (0.71, 0.71, 0.61), there is a strong positive correlation. The dependence of Marketing Vitality on number of employees was unambiguously proven. The bigger the company, the more attention it devotes to marketing. From the calculated results it is clear that the value of Marketing Vitality starts to increase in the interval between 5 and 20 employees. It then increases up to the interval of 50-100 employees, at which point it stagnates in accordance with Parkinson’s laws. From 250 employees onwards, these now constitute large enterprises, with a team of collaborating specialists with the ability to outsource individual marketing work to external vendors. For this reason, the values for Marketing Vitality once again start to increase.

H3 There is a statistically significant relationship between the assessed marketing vitality parameters and year the company was founded.

year the company was founded/ year of research	2021	2022	2023	sum of averages by year of establishment	% MV by year of establishment
Until 1990	3,5	3,57	3,28	10,35	26.19
1991 - 2000	3,12	3,33	3,16	9,61	24.32
2001 - 2010	2,91	3,21	3,47	9,59	24.27
2011 - 2020	2,93	3,17	3,87	9,97	25.23
Σ	12,46	13,28	13,78		
Pearson	0,09	0,28	0,08		
% share	31.53	33.60	34.87		
sum of surveys	39,52				

TABLE 10: Dependence of average Marketing Vitality (MV) on year the company was founded

Source: own processing, 2024

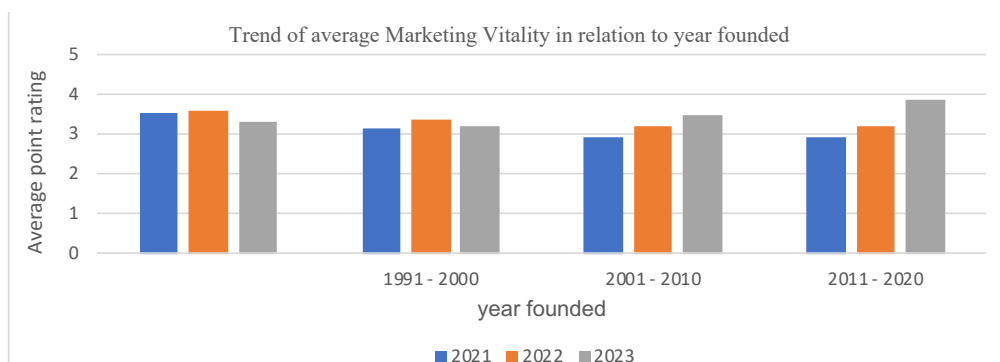


FIGURE 3: Trend of average Marketing Vitality in relation to year founded

Source: own processing, 2024

H3 There is a statistically significant relationship between the assessed parameters and the year the company was founded. According to the Pearson coefficient, it can be stated that the value of the correlation (0.09, 0.28, 0.08) can be considered a very weak positive correlation. The hypothesis cannot be refuted or validated. The results from the acquired data are too close. At the same time, the coefficient of variation comes out at 10%, so it is exactly the threshold value. Nonetheless, it appears that companies founded before 1990 are the best off in terms of the use of marketing tools and marketing itself. One possible explanation for this is that companies are continuously being created and dissolved. Only those with a good market position and capable management will survive. That is to say, the companies with the requisite managerial and marketing expertise. An interesting, though as yet unexplained result of the dependence studied is that, when the individual years are examined in detail, it appears that there is a 7-year period when marketing vitality reaches its highest values.

RQ3 addressed whether overall marketing vitality is related to other factors, such as business sector, company size by number of employees, and year founded. Based on the above calculations and the commentary on the hypotheses, it can be concluded that:

- Marketing vitality is not dependent on the companies' main business sector, but on the individual approach of the individual companies to the use of the individual marketing tools. The differences found in the different years the surveys were conducted suggest that there may be trends and changes in MV in different years and sectors, but this could not be clearly demonstrated.
- A dependence was proven for Marketing Vitality on number of employees. Marketing is almost non-existent in micro-enterprises with up to five employees. It begins to manifest in small businesses with 5-20 employees. And yet the highest level of marketing vitality is

achieved by large companies. To what extent this is due to ownership by foreign capital or the option to deploy the necessary capacities is debatable.

- c) From the surveys conducted and the results evaluated, it appears that older companies have a higher level of marketing vitality. Although the results for newly established companies provide similar Marketing Vitality values, given the small number of companies surveyed that were founded between 2021 and 2023, these cannot be accepted as statistically significant. The results also suggest that there could be an improvement in Marketing Vitality for companies founded from 2011 through 2020.

Given that positive growth in external marketing communications was predicted and subsequently demonstrated, and building on the insights of the theoretical background in terms of the importance of communication in the online environment, researchers in 2023 sought answers to the following:

RQ4 addressed the issue of what specific trending online marketing tools the company is aware of. **RQ5** addressed the issue of what specific trending online marketing tools the company actively uses for marketing management.

With all open-ended questions, it was possible to list out several tools (e.g. social networks in general, then specifically Facebook, Twitter, etc.; web interfaces in general, then specifically websites, email, newsletters, etc.). The authors sorted the answers obtained based on frequency and similarity into the clusters Social network, Google, Seznam [Czech web portal and search engine], Web interface, Data storage, Team communication, Software, Artificial intelligence.

Tool	Known	Actually uses	Tool	Known	Actually uses	Tool	Known	Actually uses
Social networks in general	74	42	Google in general	56	10	Seznam in general	55	6
Facebook	49	30	Google analytics	28	12	Seznam search	12	4
Instagram	45	15	Google search	30	3	Seznam advertising	4	2
Youtube	32	10	Disk Google	12	2	Demand server (firmy.cz)	2	12
Linkedin	29	15	Google Tag Manager	3				
Twitter	18	3	Google Search Console (SEO)	2				
Tik Tok	10	2	Google My Business (google maps)	4	1			
Other	4	1	Google Calender	4	2			
			Google Adwords	2				

Tool	Known	Actually uses	Tool	Known	Actually uses	Tool	Known	Actually uses
Web interface in general	54	25	Data storage Cloud	20		Team communication	33	
website	32	70	Google Apps for Work	3		Microsoft Teams	14	14
e-mailing	44	75	T-cloud (T-mobile)	4	2	Google meet	9	10
e-shop	14	21	Master DC	2				
newsletter	6	4	One Drive	4	6			
podcast	16	2	Salesforce	1	2			
discussion forums	2	1	M365	2	4			
blog	6	1						
influencer	15	1						
Trip advisor, Heuréka (reviews)	4	2						
Mailforce (e-mail campaigns)	2							
Tool	Known	Actually uses	Tool	Known	Actually uses	Tool	Known	Actually uses
Software	16		Artificial intelligence	20				
Realman (realestate)	2	2	GPT, Textie, Baib	6	6			
MY FOX (booking)	2	1	Digiskills	3				
Pokladní software	3	3	Vaibe - graphics	2				
Helios, CRM, Pohoda, Sap, Trello, Business Manager, Typo3, Wordpress, Sklik, Caflou, Inviton	6	55	chatbot	10	4			

TABLE 11: Knowledge and real-world use of online marketing tools

Source: own processing, 2024

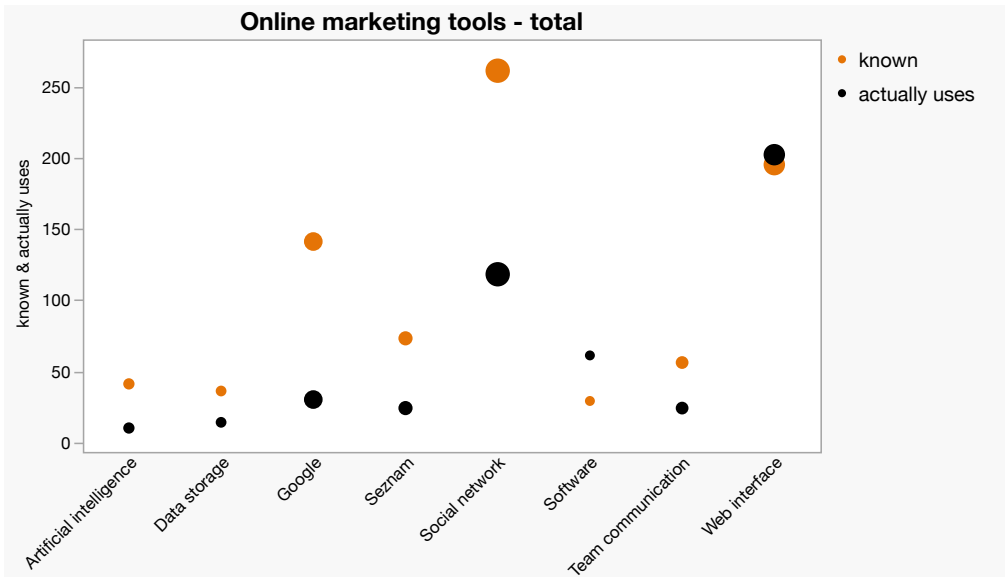


FIGURE 4: Cluster analysis of familiarity with and actual use of online marketing tools – total

Source: own processing, 2024

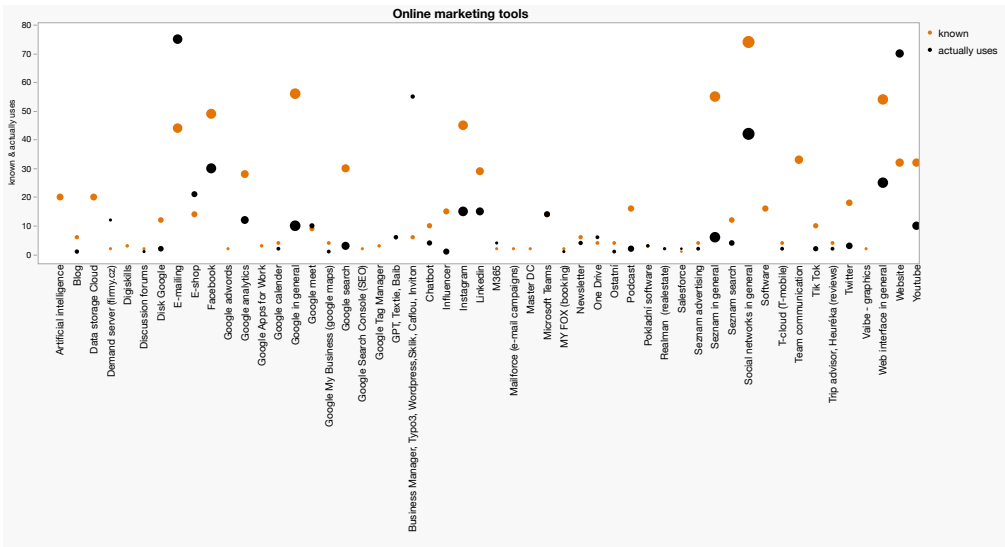


FIGURE 5: Cluster analysis of familiarity with and actual use of online marketing tools – detail

Source: own processing, 2024

RQ4 addressed the issue of what specific trending online marketing tools the company is aware of. Through the clusters created, it can be stated that the greatest familiarity is shown with the tools Social network, Web interface, and Google. The lowest familiarity was stated in the cluster of Software, Data storage, and Artificial intelligence (AI).

RQ5 addressed the issue of what specific trending online marketing tools the company actively uses for marketing management. Through the clusters created, it can be concluded that companies make the most use of the tools associated with the clusters of Web interface and Social network.

RQ6 Addressed the issue of what specific trending online marketing tools the company is actively planning to make use of by the year 2025 (beyond those presently in use). The respondents unanimously stated that they would focus on introducing and implementing trending online marketing tools between 2021 and 2023. In relation to social media, they mentioned the need for updates and regular communication, with 10 respondents planning to introduce new communications on Facebook, 4 on Instagram, 4 on YouTube, 4 on LinkedIn, and 2 on TikTok. 2 respondents are considering apps or software, tools for creating and sending emails and managing campaigns, and newsletters (Ecomail, Mailchimp, Hubspot). Demos and product presentations in 3D and virtual reality are being planned by 6 respondents. 7 respondents are considering communication on websites via Chatbots and only 2 respondents mentioned artificial intelligence (AI) without a specific application.

5 Discussion and Recommendations

In relation to the scope of teaching marketing management, it can be assumed that the basic marketing topics include those mentioned, for example, by Kotler and Levy, 1969; Daymon and Holloway, 2011; Casotti, 2019; Lahtinen et al., 2020; Pecot et al., 2018, and other scholars. What is changing, however, are modern technologies and software applications that enable effective assessment of big data, personalized results, and guided implementation of omnichannel marketing. Artificial intelligence (AI) tools or applications are also likely to become part of teaching. According to Kniňová (2024), artificial intelligence – when applied ethically, sensitively, and conscientiously – leads to flowering of human creativity by eliminating mundane tasks, freeing people’s hands for more creative activities. It can therefore be recommended that modern technology and software applications be incorporated into teaching.

Given the turbulent changes in the market, the changing needs of customers, the demands of companies in relation to the digital skills of graduates, and rapid developments in the field of AI, regular updates of learning materials and resources can be recommended. Students should always be informed about the newest trends and innovations, which is fully in line with the research of Shen (2023) and Tsai and Yao (2023).

The integration of marketing education into university curricula has significant implications for real-world practice. Recent academic literature highlights various elements of a marketing curriculum that can directly impact marketing outcomes in practice. Experiential learning and the Sustainable Development Goals – Current studies highlight the importance of experiential learning in marketing education, especially in the context of the integration of the SDGs. Satyam and Aithal (2024) explore how incorporating ESG into marketing management teaching content through experiential projects can improve students’ understanding of real-world marketing challenges, while promoting sustainability. This approach not only equips students with practical skills, but also allows them to align their knowledge with global sustainability initiatives. This, in turn, will increase the importance of marketing education for current marketing and business practices in the corporate environment. Similarly, Tomasella et al. (2024) discuss the broader implications of incorporating an ESG strategy into college marketing curricula, suggesting that such integration promotes a more socially responsible mindset among future marketers.

The implementation of problem-based learning in marketing education has been shown to significantly improve students’ skills involving critical thinking and decision-making based on evaluating the effectiveness of different options for solving a marketing problem. Rosário and Dias (2024) provide a comprehensive overview of how problem-based learning can bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application in marketing, how it can prepare students for real-world challenges. This pedagogical approach encourages students to engage with real-life marketing problems, fostering a deeper understanding of market dynamics and consumer behavior, which are crucial for effective marketing strategies.

The integration of marketing analytics through trending technologies into curricula is increasingly recognized as essential for aligning learning outcomes with the needs of the real market. Keiper et al. (2024) highlight the existing education gap in marketing analytics tools, noting that teaching is slowly adapting to firms' demand for knowledge about big data-driven decision-making. By incorporating digital analytics into their marketing curriculum, universities can better prepare students to use data in creating effective marketing strategies, ultimately leading to improved marketing performance in their future careers. In addition, the role of digital analytics in improving marketing results is underscored by the findings of studies that highlight the need to justify marketing spending in terms of measurable ROI.

Kamkankaew and Thanitbenjasith (2023) discuss the integration of macromarketing principles and circular economy concepts into marketing education in Thailand, highlighting the benefits of preparing students to address the current challenges of natural resource depletion and sustainability. This shift in the curriculum should improve students' understanding in relation to sustainable strategies, but also equip them with the knowledge to implement these principles in real-world conditions of different business sectors.

Current literature emphasizes the importance of integrating practical elements into marketing education in order to increase its relevance and applicability in real business contexts. By focusing on experiential learning, analytics, sustainability, and CSR, universities can better prepare students for the challenges of modern marketing, ultimately leading to improved marketing outcomes in their professional careers.

In relation to the assessment of marketing vitality, it can be concluded, in line with Oduro and Mensah-Williams (2023), that the use of the tools of the marketing mix and capacities for marketing communications, distribution channel management, and product development significantly and positively influence marketing performance – as demonstrated by the highest average assessments of this tool. The findings of Belas et al. (2022) may be considered in terms of the use of the tools of the marketing mix in the individual business sectors. This is due to the variety of market segments (B2B, B2C) that individual companies serve. The above study did not confirm a correlation between business sector and overall marketing vitality. The differences point to a need for individual setup of marketing concepts in companies operating in different industries.

In contrast, it can be agreed that there is an influence of the ability to implement online marketing on the performance of SMEs as per Lubis et al. (2023). Our research showed an increasing tendency and knowledge of the use of online marketing tools to increase its effectiveness.

The limitations of our research can include the willingness of respondents to participate in the research (business owners during 2020-2023 were dealing more with existential problems in relation to the need to respond to current threatening macroeconomic factors) and the fact that the research mostly involved representatives of small and medium-sized companies. It can be assumed that if more large companies or multinational corporations operating in the Czech Republic had been represented in the sample of respondents, their marketing vitality would show a higher average score. In order to realistically demonstrate the influence of marketing vitality on the economic efficiency of a company, it would be advisable also to correlate the results with the financial indicators of the companies (financial statements). And yet due to their size, most respondents are not required to disclose these results annually under the Accounting Act. If the effect of marketing vitality on economic indicators were to be demonstrated, then the study would have to focus on companies meeting the minimum **borderline values, which have been set as follows**: net assets: CZK 40 million; annual turnover: CZK 80 million; average number of employees: 50.

Another limitation is the rapid development that is currently taking place in the implementation of trending online marketing tools. For this reason, we attempted to assess the knowledge, practical use, and planned implementation of online marketing tools in corporate practice. It turned out that even owners of SMEs are familiar with the trending tools, but do not always

apply them in real-world practice. They encounter obstacles in terms of lack of confidence, lack of willingness, the time demands of implementing the change, and the anticipated financial costs in relation to demonstrating the impact on customer satisfaction or sales. The fact that the study was conducted only in the Czech Republic is also a limitation. In the future it would be interesting to compare marketing vitality at least among the V4 countries. Another limitation is the fact that the responses are self-assessments of owners or managers that may or may not correspond to real-world practice.

In order to ensure that the content of teaching is in line with the actual needs of the market and business practice, it may be recommended that new opportunities be sought for intensive cooperation between universities and corporate partners and experts from various institutions, marketing agencies, marketing consultants, etc. Through partnerships, universities and commercial companies can share their resources, knowledge, and practical experience confirmed by research by Yessimova et al. (2023).

6 Conclusion

In the course of developing this study and in searching for and processing scholarly publications and resources, the authors encountered many innovative approaches and techniques in the field of marketing management, teaching, and the teaching approaches of the universities examined, especially in light of the growing importance of technologies and applications using AI. These technologies offer a number of opportunities for making teaching and marketing management more effective, and for more successful implementation of business strategies, marketing research, and tools of the marketing mix, based on a more accurate and detailed understanding of the needs, requirements, expectations, and behavior of customers and companies on a globalized market.

It can be assumed that the application of these innovations will have a direct impact on market management, not only through more effective and targeted communication with customers, but also through the ability of graduates to actively use new technological tools. These will help companies in the process of rapidly adapting to changing market conditions and becoming more resilient, competitive, and sustainable. The overall level of human resources is not linked to growth rates, but marketing skills are. It can also be assumed that SMEs could make significant and rapid progress if they invest in all-round human capital, especially in marketing and in the capabilities of employees to use trending technologies.

Universities face a monumental task in guiding and preparing future professionals in this dynamically changing environment. Their key role is not only to provide students with knowledge, but also to equip them with the skills and tools needed for the real world of business practice. It is the responsibility of educators to prepare the incoming generation for the challenges and opportunities that await them in the future. This can be aided by the outputs of further research into the application of trending marketing tools in relation to business performance, customer loyalty, brand awareness, social responsibility, etc. not only in the business environment of the Czech Republic. There is the possibility of cooperation with other, especially foreign universities, e.g. universities from the V4 countries. It will be interesting to explore whether AI applications will fundamentally change the way marketing is implemented in corporate practice (Kumar et al., 2019) and taught in tertiary education. It also raises the question of which controlling tools will enable effective management of marketing.

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Authors



Assoc. Prof. Naděžda Petrů, PhD.

University of Finance and Administration
Faculty of Economic Studies
Estonská 500,
101 00 Prague 10
CZECH REPUBLIC
petru.nada@mail.vfsf.cz
ORCID ID: 0000-0002-9927-3337

Assoc. Prof. Naděžda Petrů, PhD., is the vice-dean for research and development and the guarantor of the Economics and Management study program at the University of Finance and Administration in Prague. She focuses her lecturing and research activities on the possibilities of combining theory and practice of managing small and medium-sized enterprises, family business. She regularly publishes in the field of marketing, management, business models, controlling, and currently focuses on research into the resilience and sustainability of family businesses.

Ing. Peter Stuchlík, CSc., CTex ATI

CEO, KORCHEM s.r.o.
Mlýnská 668,
683 52 Křenovice
CZECH REPUBLIC
stuchlik@korchem.cz
ORCID ID: 0000-0002-2515-6955



Ing. Peter Stuchlík, CSc., CTex ATI is a scientist who enriched humanity with a number of world-used technologies and methods, especially in the fields of healthcare, textiles and chemistry. Outside of professional scientific publications, he devotes himself to fiction in his spare time. At the University of Finance and Economics, he taught the course Marketing management of the company, led student research projects.



Ing. Oskar Crnadak

University of Finance and Administration
Faculty of Economic Studies
Estonská 500,
101 00 Prague 10
CZECH REPUBLIC
oskar.crnadak@mail.vfsf.cz
ORCID-ID: N/A

Ing. Oskar Crnadak is a PhD. student. Due to his interest in active sports, he obtained a bachelor's degree in the field of Physical Education and Sports at VŠTVS. As a potential successor in family business interested in economic education, he obtained the Ing. degree in Economics and Management at the University of Finance and Administration. He is currently supplementing his knowledge of finance studying for a PhD. degree at VŠFS. In his professional life, he mainly deals with the purchase and sale of real estate, the creation of macroeconomic and market analyses, controlling and marketing communication.