

Summary of Ph.D. thesis

The significance of generational belonging in building relationships in the B2B market in Poland

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Globalization and the rapid development of modern technologies are driving continuous changes that define the 21st century. These changes impact all market sectors, regardless of the type of relationship within the supply chain or the size of the enterprises, from microbusinesses to large corporations. They bring new challenges, such as increasing customer expectations, heightened consumer awareness, and the need for rapid responses due to widespread Internet access. This is particularly evident in the B2B market, where purchasing decisions should be rational and based on objective criteria. Companies must adapt to these dynamic conditions by maximizing emerging opportunities and minimizing associated risks.

Another current challenge in the business market is the presence of four different generations in the workforce, resulting from demographic changes like an aging society and the entry of younger generations into the job market. Companies are increasingly recognizing the need to manage a diverse work environment, as generational differences affect values, needs, motivation, and the use of new technologies by employees. Different generations also have varied approaches to building business relationships. The significance of generational belonging in building relationships in the B2B market in Poland is the focus of this dissertation.

Based on identified gaps and research problems, the primary goal of the dissertation was to determine the importance of generational belonging in building business relationships in the B2B market. To achieve this goal, specific objectives were set, including analyzing the impact of generational belonging on the choice of relationship marketing tools.

The research revealed that generational belonging influences how business relationships are built and the choice of relationship marketing tools. Differences are particularly evident between the oldest generation, Baby Boomers, and the youngest generation, Z, mainly due to varying approaches to new technologies. Measures of dispersion and concentration indicate diverse use of marketing tools across generations. Generations X and Y show smaller differences in relationship-building approaches, possibly due to their role as intermediaries between older and younger employees. Study participants intuitively divide the relationship-building process into three stages: acquaintance, development, and deepening. Age,

generational belonging, and the nature of the relationship (client versus supplier) were not primary determinants of the choice of marketing tools and relationship-building methods.

The structure of the work aligns with the set research objectives and consists of four chapters. The first chapter provides the theoretical foundations for analyzing relationship marketing, discussing the evolution of marketing approaches, definitions of relationship marketing, and the characteristics of the B2B market in Poland. The second chapter focuses on the generational belonging of B2B market participants, presenting the characteristics of different generations and their impact on market strategies. The third chapter describes the research methodology, including methods, techniques, research tools, and data analysis. The final chapter presents the empirical research findings on building relationships in the B2B market, discusses the role of generational belonging in this context, and offers practical recommendations for managing relationships across different market generations.