

SOCIAL ADVERTISING FEATURES IN LITHUANIA



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Abstract. The article analyses the meaning of social marketing, discusses the main social marketing tools, investigates social marketing models, and presents a case study of social advertising campaigns in Lithuania. The article highlights the role of social advertising by drawing attention to social challenges that require actions in order to address specific problems. In short, social advertising is used as a means for introducing an important problem to the society. The problem-solving process by using social advertising campaigns is effective when a campaign includes specific memorable characteristics; therefore, the main social advertising features are a topical subject. The authors of the article aim to investigate social advertising features in Lithuania and observe the main social marketing campaign elements that evoke strong feelings and encourage representatives of various audience groups to change behavioural pattern. The paper relies on scientific literature overview, statistical data analysis, and a case study. A case study as a research method is selected in order to investigate social advertising campaigns that were launched in Lithuania during the last decade (before and after the pandemic) as well as to perform a comparative analysis of the main elements and models used. As a result of the article, four main goals for social marketing advertising for Lithuanian market are distinguished: (1) to encourage changes in behaviour, (2) to spread information, (3) to form a public need, (4) to develop and support the promoted idea. Moreover, the performed analysis reveals the importance of *publicity* and *strong emotional response* evoked by shocking images as the main elements of Lithuanian social marketing campaigns launched during the last decade.

Keywords: social marketing, marketing, social marketing tools, social advertising.

JEL code: M30, M31

Introduction

The term *social marketing* appeared for the first time in 1970s, when Philip Kotler and Gerald Zaltman discovered the possibilities to apply the main marketing principles of selling products to consumers in order to implement social ideas, attitudes, or behaviours. Nowadays these techniques can be used in international programmes to change social behaviour in general. If the principles of commercial marketing are to be followed, the first task of social marketing would be to focus on the consumer in order to understand what are their wants and needs as well as to persuade the consumer to buy what is being offered. For the last years social marketing has been widely studied not only by foreign but also by Lithuanian researchers (Akbar et al., 2021; Bastos et al., 2021; Bhat et al., 2019; Johns, 2020; Kennedy, 2016; Truong et al., 2019; Jokubauskas, 2003). In other words, social marketing has become an important factor in attracting customers. It is important for customers to know how a product is made, e.g. whether cosmetics and perfumery products are not tested on animals. When choosing a product, the customers take into consideration their own expectations regarding not only the product but also the company that provides or manufactures the product.

Scientific issue. The concept of social marketing is especially relevant in the 21st century, and social marketing is primarily focused on drawing public attention, promoting desired behaviour, and addressing topical issues. Similarly to other countries, currently in Lithuania social advertisement is used to encourage people to get vaccinated, to sort rubbish, or to donate to various relief campaigns as well as to discourage them from discriminating against children living in orphanages. Nonetheless, the question which often arises is: whether all these social advertisements displayed in Lithuania have achieved their goals?

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The aim of the research. The authors of the article aim to investigate social advertising features in Lithuania and observe main elements and models of social marketing campaigns that evoke strong feelings and encourage various audience groups to change their behaviour.

Research methods. The paper relies on scientific literature overview, statistical data analysis, and a case study. A case study as a research method is selected in order to investigate social advertising campaigns that were launched in Lithuania as well as to perform a comparative analysis of the main elements and models used.

1. Social marketing definition

Social marketing is closely related to processes in the society and it supports social changes as well as implements policies which were developed based on the interests of wider social groups (Kostin and Yumasheva, 2020). Hence, social marketing involves both – individual and organizational – policies as they affect not only individuals but wider interest groups too. There is no doubt social marketing is also closely related to business marketing as the former has been developing along with the latter.

Table 1 presents social marketing definitions that reflect the potential of social marketing in the 21st century.

Table 1

Social marketing definition

Authors	Main aspects of social marketing definitions
Dann, S. (2010)	Social marketing relies on the application of modern commercial marketing theory and practice as a tool to guide and support social change campaigns.
Bhat, S. A., Darzi, M. A., Hakim, I. A. (2019)	Social marketing is not a theory itself; it is rather extension of marketing principles based on social cause. It is based on theories and models taken from others behavioural sciences and it applies them in order to identify main behavioural changes.
Lefebvre, C. R. (2012)	There are different definitions of social marketing that reflect different aspects and emphasize elements of social marketing other than "changing the individual behaviour for the benefit of society." The main purposes are: (1) Using marketing power to improve wealth and protect lives; (2) Ensuring equitable distribution and access to measures that increase well-being; (3) Developing and improving marketing systems that support consumer welfare.
Akbar, M. B., Gomez, I. G., Ndupu, L., Barnes, E., Foster, C. (2021)	The most common factors for successful social marketing interventions are the collective goal of behaviour change, market segmentation, and communication strategy. It is indicated that the main objectives and the focus of the interventions depend on age group and / or specific audience that expect change in societal behaviour.
Bach, Ch., Alnajar, E. (2016)	Social marketing often targets complex and controversial behaviours, providing far-reaching and delayed benefits to a target audience that often fails to realize its own problems.
Truong, V. D., Saunders, S. G. & Dong, X. D. (2019)	Social marketing is recognized as a means of promoting change in the behaviour of individuals in pursuing public interest. There is a wide range of views on the possibility to influence society or to provoke the change that would lead to the development of macro- or systemic social marketing (SSM) concepts and ideas.
Johns, R.(2020)	Social marketing seems to be changing in terms of implementation, following its previous approach.

Source: made by the authors

Social marketing is characterized by application of traditional marketing principles to solve social problems, such as the use of alcohol, the use of drugs, or the fight against communicable diseases. Social marketing has been treated differently in the scientific literature. It can be used to change a person's behaviour, for example, to fight addiction to alcohol, drugs, tobacco (Vinerean and Opreana, 2021). Other researchers associate social marketing with the social responsibility, for example, some cosmetics companies do not test their cosmetics on animals because they are prepared to protect the flora and fauna of our planet (Yousef et al., 2021). Companies implementing social responsibility activities try to attract the attention of the target audience, to stand out from their competitors.

According to the Center for Communicable Diseases and AIDS (2015), social marketing is a method of changing behaviour, still more often used to achieve positive change in behaviour of individuals and groups of people supporting the change. The most important factor in social marketing is the purpose to achieve social or societal benefits, i.e. benefits to groups, communities, or societies. These social benefits may be related to health and well-being, such as, maintaining a healthy environment, reducing crime, or other social policy purposes (Yousef et al., 2021). Therefore, social marketing is not limited to health-related topics, it can be used for a variety of social purposes to achieve and maintain other benefits. Helmig and

Thaler (2010) point out that social marketing continues to play a crucial role in society due to the ubiquity of social issues, even though they may vary according to particular circumstances. Therefore, scientific conclusions about the effectiveness of social marketing are particularly topical.

Wymer (2017) notices that social marketers develop their own strategies for solving social problems; however, it would be beneficial if they identified the causal effects on the social issues first. This impacts the goal of social marketing campaigns. The most contributing cause of a social problem becomes the most prominent goal of the strategy and contributes to the subsequent tactical plan or campaign of social marketing. Bastos et al. (2021) cite Kennedy (2016) and mention that social marketing seeks structural change through policy-makers, and macro-social marketing seeks the change in the institutional norms surrounding the essential problem in such a way that a systematic change can finally occur. Macro-social marketing approach refers to the extent to which a marketing problem arises and affects the whole societal system, which requires system-wide intervention. Hastings and Saren (2003) notice the symbiotic relationship between social, commercial, and critical marketing thinking. In their opinion, marketers seek to influence consumer behaviour, as many health problems and many other social problems are caused by human behaviour. Social marketing considers this aspect and uses marketing insights to address the social behaviour. Both branches of the discipline – exchange theory and relative thinking – can be used in this process, and the article illustrates this with examples. In short, social marketing recognizes the impact of the environment on societal behaviour and treats commercial marketing as an important part of this impact.

2. Social marketing tools and model theories

Social marketing is used in product, service, and advertisement development as a tool for introducing a social idea and allowing consumers to make choices. Many authors remind that social advertising is a part of non-profit marketing (Barbier et al., 2021); therefore, professionals often apply the usual principles of commercial marketing to run successful social advertising campaigns. These principles are transposed, adjusted, and adapted to achieve the goal of social advertising. Social advertising is not intended to mislead but rather to ensure that the consumer or the recipient of the advertisement has all the information in order to make the right decision. At the same time social marketing creates ideas to meet consumer needs as well as identifies the desires and interests of the target market and thus satisfies them by improving the well-being of consumers and the whole society (Kostin et al., 2020; Yousef et al., 2021). According to Luzon et al. (2022), social advertising activities are planned according to a budget. It is implemented in order to evaluate advertising activities and their effectiveness. In authors opinion, social advertising seeks to make an impact not on an individual level but rather on a particular section of society.

Some authors believe that social marketing is focused on an individual level rather than on a community level; however, social marketing tools must be accessible and acceptable by all sections of the society (Vinerean and Opreana, 2021). Researchers (Barbier et al., 2021) investigating social marketing agree that it can use the same tools as commercial marketing. However, the most common tools are not good enough to ensure the effectiveness of social marketing when planning a strategy. Additionally, it is important to provide feedback and evaluate society's response to social marketing campaigns.

Lefebvre (2012) identifies six universal components of the social marketing model: (1) equity, (2) social networks as determinants of behaviour, (3) critical marketing, (4) sustainability, (5) scaling, and (6) comprehensive programming or the total market approach (TMA). Lefebvre (2011) highlights the importance of the first component as a philosophy of equal status and social justice, the second element explains the meaning of social change programs, when social marketers can have a strong position to cope with changing determinants which influence individuals, networks, and communities. Finally, the TMA offers

an international model for social marketers as it eliminates the gap between public, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector in offering campaign applications, products, and services.

As a result, Lefebvre (2000) compares three main social marketing model theories. He believes that the *theory of reasonable action* is designed according to behavioural and normative beliefs, attitudes, intentions, and behaviours. The theory includes an additional construct of self-efficacy—perceived control over performance behaviour. In case of the *sound action theory*, the most important predictor of further behaviour is the intention to act. This intention is influenced by the attitude towards involvement in behaviour and the subjective norm a person has about behaviour. Finally, the *social cognitive theory* explains behaviour through triad reciprocity ("mutual determinism") which includes behaviour, cognitive and other interpersonal factors, and environmental events as interacting determinants. In contrast to previous theoretical models, the *social cognitive theory* clearly recognizes that behaviour is not only determined by essential factors influencing an individual, but the individual influences their own personal characteristics and their own reaction to the environment.

3. Theoretical background for Lithuanian social advertising

In Lithuania social advertising helps to implement state policy in social sphere, to solve social challenges, and it educates the society (Ruzevicius and Ruzeviciute, 2011). It is defined as a science that combines theories from psychology, management, and communication as it promotes and strengthens social welfare, pays attention to existing social problems, and pursues social policies through all forms and means of advertising.

The study of Lithuanian academic literature reveals that the goals of social advertising are: (1) to encourage changes in behaviour and to form new habits (driving with a seat belt, not smoking, sorting waste etc.), (2) to spread information (on environmental protection, protection of thieves in public transport etc.), (3) to form a public need (not to drive after drinking, help the hungry, not to give bribes), (4) to develop and support the promoted idea (fight against cancer, human trafficking, migration etc.). According to Jokubauskas (2003), social advertising differs from commercial advertising, since the former is non-commercial and seeks societal purposes. However, the means used in both forms of advertising are essentially the same.

Poskus (2016) points out that social advertising aims to shape the desired behaviour of society, thus increasing the well-being of society. In this case, it is crucial to effectively promote desired behaviour. Poskus et al. (2018) state that the perception of social advertising depends on different references and illustrations. All social advertising campaigns are focused on efforts to make its impact targeted. As a result, one of the main characteristics of social advertising is publicity. It means that the advertising message is addressed to everyone and it should be clearly understood. In addition, social advertising affects the majority of the society, thus it can impact public opinion. Individual behaviour, beliefs, and attitudes can be affected in a number of different ways. The most popular and successful way to influence people appeals to human feelings and emotions. In social advertising this effect can be achieved by demonstrating shocking images that evoke a strong emotional response.

Similarly to global trends, the most important goal of social marketing in Lithuania is a positive change in the field of social life, which can be achieved by changing attitudes and beliefs towards a specific social problem in the society (Ruzevicius and Ruzeviciute, 2011). In Lithuania the main social problems are related to poverty, emigration, human trafficking, alcoholism which becomes a cause of domestic violence. As with global trends, people in Lithuania are encouraged to consume organic products, sort garbage, avoid tobacco or alcohol.

4. Empirical research methodology

After scientific literature overview, empirical research based on comprehensive approach is performed. The methodology consists of two parts:

- 1) statistical data;
- 2) case study analysis.

The statistical data analysis aims at establishing the most useful advertising tools according to expenditure analysis. The data of Kantar, an international evidence-based marketing agency, are used. The differences over the last two years between the advertising market as a whole and online marketing in particular are examined.

The case study analysis is performed in order to indicate the main changes in the way social marketing campaigns have been launched in the last decade. The emphasis is put on changes in social marketing models and their practical application while interacting with various segments of the society. The most popular social marketing campaigns of the largest outdoor advertising company JCDecaux are analysed.

5. Advertising market in Lithuania: statistical data analysis

According to the data by Kantar (2021), the Lithuanian advertising market decreased by 12.5%, or by 15 million EUR in 2020. The largest share of advertising in 2020 belonged to television and the Internet, which accounted for 46.7% and 20.5% of the market respectively. About 10% of the market was outdoor advertising and radio. Almost 6% was advertising in newspapers and magazines. The recent data is important for evaluating social marketing campaigns as the channels mentioned are the most useful for their purposes.

Table 2

Expenditure on advertising in Lithuania

Media	2019 (mln. EUR)	2020 (mln. EUR)	Change (%)
Television	52.3	49	-6.3
The Internet (its Lithuanian segment)	23	21.5	-6.5
Outdoor advertising	13.7	11	-19.7
Radio	11.3	10.1	-10.6
Magazines	8.5	6.2	-27.1
Newspapers	8.1	6.1	-24.7
Cinema	1.8	0.3	-83.3
Indoor advertising	1.3	0.8	-38.5
Total	120	105	-12.5

Source: Kantar (2021)

Advertising on the Internet is quite stable despite the negative effect of pandemic years. According to the data by Kantar (2022), in the pandemic years the budgets for online banners fell by 6.5%, but it still accounts for the largest share of online advertising at 22.5%, or 215 million euros.

Table 3

Expenditure on online advertising in Lithuania

Channel	2018 (mln. EUR)	2019 (mln. EUR)	2020 (mln. EUR)
Banners in Lithuanian segment of the Internet	21	23	21.5
Facebook	9.5	21	16
Mobile advertising	7	16	-
Auction advertising (e.g. Google Display Network)	11.5	14	13
YouTube	6	12	13
Google	7	14	12
Video advertising in Lithuanian Portals	5	7	6
Instagram	-	-	6
Influencer advertising	-	-	3
Other channels on the Internet	1	2	4
Total	68	110	95.6

Source: Kantar(2021)

The process of digitalisation has increased the popularity of online advertising in Lithuania. The rise in budget expenditure can be observed in cases of YouTube, Google, Auction advertising, and other channels on the Internet; therefore, it is possible to predict an increase of social marketing campaigns online.

6. Lithuanian social advertising campaigns: case study analysis

The largest outdoor advertising company JCDcaux, which owns most of the outdoor advertising facilities in Lithuania, is engaged in social advertising. One of its' campaigns was developed to draw attention to the fact that the meaning of "the dog" and "the bastard" is not identical, and according to the Lithuanian dictionary, the last word can be explained as "scoundrel, wicked, mischief". Posters were distributed in the streets and showcases of major Lithuanian cities.

The campaign aimed not only to rehabilitate the image of dogs but also to encourage people to take care of stray dogs. It is possible to find the desired pet and provide a home for a stray dog in an interactive way.

Tamutiene and Vveinhardt (2006) point out that social advertising, without a commercial imperative, plays an informative role. According to the aforementioned authors, the main aspect of social advertising content is a moral imperative conveyed by emphasising the negative consequences of one or another action, using metaphors, additional contextual associations, which is reflected in the example of the social marketing campaign "A dog is not a bastard".

Next social advertising campaign that highlights the impact of discrimination was launched in order to encourage the society to recognize the manifestations of discrimination, discriminatory behaviour, to reveal its harmful effect, and to develop respect for diversity. Birzietiene (2012) believes that the addressee should be convinced based on logical thinking (logos argument), but this assumption is not predominant. The author emphasises that in terms of persuasion, there are three types of arguments: ethos, logos, and pathos.

The campaign was successful and it increased awareness of the problem due to active involvement of many media channels and features including television, outdoor advertising, posters, and postcards.

According to the market research company Nielsen (2016), there are about a thousand people with Down syndrome living in Lithuania. The name of the genetic disorder has become a synonym for a specific part of the society, and the next social marketing campaign was designed to change the attitude of the society.

According to the Down syndrome awareness survey conducted by market research company Nielsen (2016), 40% of the respondents saw a boy in the photo of a person with Down syndrome by the end of the campaign. However, in the beginning of the campaign the number of those or similar answers made only 6% of all responses.

According to Nielsen (2016), Neringa Salugiene, who is the head of the Association of People with Down Syndrome and their Caregivers, says that the use of the term "down" is abnormal and is more common in the former Soviet countries. However, people with Down syndrome are much more likely to live better social life, work, do sports, and give lectures in developed countries. According to Neringa Salugiene, the social advertising campaign on outdoor billboards has slightly improved general public understanding of the Down syndrome.

The outdoor advertising "Don't be a "goose" [irresponsible person], fasten your seatbelt" has been around in Vilnius for almost two decades. According to Kudarauskas (2019), advertising stands in cities or near the busiest roads in Lithuania are not unique; however, some ads draw the attention of the drivers because of their content and their longevity. This advertising has been especially important in Lithuania as road accidents were a serious problem.

Finally, the Lithuanian Swimming Federation has created a shocking social advertisement in which the father who brought the offspring to the lake is actually drowning him. By giving a shock the creators of the ad hoped to further increase public awareness of the high number of drowning victims in the country. There has been a lot of discussion on social networks about the latest social advertising of the Lithuanian Swimming Federation. According to **Adomaviciene** (2021), in the beginning of the ad, a happy dad is seen holding the son's hand and leading him towards a lake, but suddenly he is grabbing the child and immersing him into the water.

The Lithuanian Swimming Federation's marketing campaign was intended for households' members with young children. Every year the Lithuanian Swimming Federation organises a project with swimming activities and safe behaviour lessons inside and outside the water. The learning cycle consist of 36 lessons, and the project attracts about 10 thousand people that take part.

Dapkeviciene and Marijauskaite (2014) believe that social advertising encourages changes in intolerable behaviours in the public sphere or simply teaches how to behave appropriately. This type of advertisement is aimed at a certain part of the society – teenagers are no exception. In their study Dapkeviciene and Marijauskaite (2014) come to a conclusion that less than half of the older teens surveyed understand what social advertising is. Additionally, Toleikiene and Karpinaite (2008) state that the role of public administration institutions in shaping social advertising is instrumental as these institutions use social advertising as an effective tool to help them implement their social policy.

7. Discussion

The results of the case study highlight the significance of the interaction of cognitive, emotional, and behavioural factors, as the perception of social advertising depends of the socio-psychological impact of the advertising. For this reason, the attention in the semantics of social advertising content needs to be drawn to the moral imperative and metaphorical form of advertising.

The results of the study reveal that the understanding of social advertising is more perceived at the level of cognitive understanding, but lacks sufficient emotional stimulus for the change. The authors of this article emphasise the importance of publishing advertising on social networking sites in order to reach younger audience.

However, the addressee should be convinced based on logical thinking (logos argument), but this approach is not predominant. Nonetheless, there are three types of arguments – ethos, logos, and pathos – and the authors of the article believe that arguments for pathos prevail: the problems posed by social advertisements aiming to create strong feelings have to be based on negative associations, such as disguise, fear, and anger.

The authors agree that social advertising carried out by Lithuanian public administration institutions can be considered as one of the most effective means of maintaining public relations and solving emerging problems.

Table 4

Results of the case study: comparative analysis

Social marketing campaign	Take a stray dog home	Social advertising against discrimination	Safe driving campaign	Drowning prevention campaign
Year	2015	2016	2019	2021
Target audience	Women	Wider society	Drivers	Young households
Goal of the campaign	To develop and support the promoted idea	To form a public need	To encourage changes in behaviour	To spread information
Specific features	Strong emotional response	Publicity	Publicity	Strong emotional response
Social marketing model	Sound action theory	Social cognitive theory	Theory of reasonable action	Social cognitive theory

Source: made by the authors

The comparative analysis of the main social marketing campaigns launched in Lithuania in the last decade (before and after the pandemic) revealed some important aspects:

- 1) Social marketing campaign topics are becoming more focused on unique needs of specific segments of the society rather than on general issues.
- 2) Four main purposes remain in social marketing campaigns: to encourage changes in behaviour, to spread information, to form a public need, to develop and support the promoted idea.
- 3) The specific features of Lithuanian social marketing campaigns are *publicity* and *strong emotional response*, supported by shocking images.
- 4) The *theory of reasonable action* and the *social cognitive theory* that emphasise behavioural, cognitive, and other interpersonal factors are becoming dominant in Lithuanian social marketing domain, while the *sound action theory* remains more important for immediate actions.

At the same time, there are some additional aspects that need to be taken into consideration. One of the main trends is related to process of digitalisation. Rahman and Rashid (2018) note that fast growth of social media around the world and its revolutionary changes have impact on younger generation. The statistical data analysis of Lithuanian advertising market indicates the increase in budget expenditure in cases of YouTube, Google, Auction advertising, and other channels on the Internet; therefore, it is possible to predict an increase of social marketing campaigns in order to reach the younger generation online.

Conclusions

The *scientific literature analysis* revealed that the purpose of social advertising is to pay attention to the most pressing problems and moral values of society and to change the attitudes (behaviour) of society towards them. If one compares commercial advertising with social advertising, the latter refers to the extent to which the marketing problem, which requires system-wide intervention, arises and affects the whole societal system. The system-wide intervention includes exchange theory and relative thinking in the process of social marketing campaign creation.

There are six universal components of the social marketing model, which include: (1) equity, (2) social networks as determinants of behaviour, (3) critical marketing, (4) sustainability, (5) scaling, and (6) comprehensive programming or the total market approach (TMA).

There are three theories for social marketing models: the *theory of reasonable action* designed according to behavioural and normative beliefs, attitudes, intentions, and behaviours; the *sound action theory* which highlights the intention to act, and the *social cognitive theory* which explains behaviour through triad reciprocity ("mutual determinism") which includes behaviour, cognitive and other interpersonal factors, and environmental events as interacting determinants.

After the analysis of Lithuanian scientific literature, a list of four main goals for social marketing advertising was created: (1) to encourage changes in behaviour, (2) to spread information, (3) to form a public need, (4) to develop and support the promoted idea.

The *statistical data of Lithuanian advertising market analysis* shows that the process of digitalisation has increased the popularity of online advertising in Lithuania. The increase in budget expenditure can be observed in cases of YouTube, Google, Auction advertising, and other channels on the Internet; therefore, it is possible to predict an increase of social marketing campaigns online. By carrying out the *case study analysis* the authors of the article investigated the most popular social marketing campaigns that were launched in the last decade (before and after pandemic) in Lithuania, observed the main elements and models of social marketing campaigns targeting various society groups, and came to following conclusions:

- 5) Social marketing features specific to Lithuanian social marketing campaigns are *publicity* and *strong emotional response* evoked by shocking images.
- 6) The *theory of reasonable action* and the *social cognitive theory*, which emphasise behavioural, cognitive, and other interpersonal factors, are becoming dominant in Lithuanian social marketing market, while the *sound action theory* remains more important for immediate actions.
- 7) At the same time attention needs to be drawn to the moral imperative and metaphorical form of advertising and its content. Following this line of thought, social advertising carried out by Lithuanian public administration institutions can be considered as one of the most effective ways of maintaining public relations and solving emerging problems. Thus, in order to get younger audience involved, advertising on social networking sites needs to dominate the dissemination.

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