

THE INTERNET – A SUCCESSFUL TECHNOLOGY FOR THE FOOTWEAR FACTORIES FROM THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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Abstract. Today, the importance of the Internet in any field of activity, whether economic or less economic, is no longer under discussion. The Internet is the one that can be used by anyone to achieve their desired goals. The access to information and the development of new technologies have now reached an unprecedented level in history, hence the ability of economic agents to reach out to prospective buyers much more than ever before, but unfortunately, the internet is often not used to its true value. Thus, on the national market, out of the 17 (100%) footwear factories analyzed none owns online trade, 12 (71%) own the web page and 5 (29%) – do not. The success of businesses across the country in the future depends to a large extent on their ability to integrate into the wave of digital change. The Internet in Moldova is developing, being an opportunity for domestic companies to produce quality footwear and affordable products.

1 Introduction

Over the past two decades, the unprecedented development of information technologies has revolutionized the global economy. The new economy is based on computer networks and information technologies where the internet plays a key role by diminishing the physical and economic barriers of the traditional economy. The Internet represents new opportunities for traditional companies [1].

The historical events in the Information Technology and Communication (IT&C) sector, such as the launch of the first personal computer and the commercial launch of the Internet, are conditioned by the change in the world economy, inaugurating a new technological and economic era. The digital revolution has become a major factor in economic growth and social change. Thus, at the beginning of the third millennium, we talk about the information society as a new stage in the development of human civilization, as a revolution in information and communication technology and the nature of work [1].

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2 Trends in the development of the Internet in the Republic of Moldova

The IT&C sector is among the growing economic sectors, with one of the fastest developments and growths. Sustainable economic development of the country depends primarily on the ability to efficiently use information and communication technologies that contribute substantially to increasing labor productivity [1-2].

In the Republic of Moldova, the IT&C sector is one of the main promoters of change in society and in the business environment, and maintains a steady development dynamic [3]. Figure 1 shows the number of computers for the period 2014-2017, where in 2014 they were 191,467 computers, and in 2017 there is a significant increase of 221,213 computers. It also represents the number of computers with access to Internet, where in 2014 there were 141,590 computers and in 2017 – 177,124 computers [4].

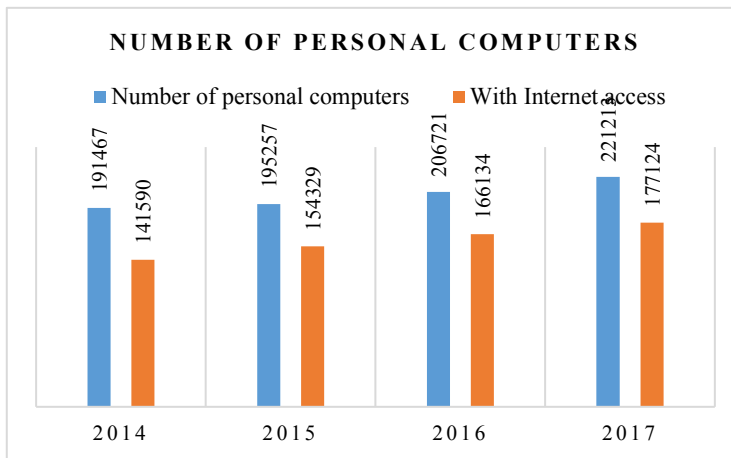


Fig. 1. Number of computers with/without Internet access in the Republic of Moldova 2014 – 2017 [4]

We notice that the number of purchased computers rise since 2014, the trend of the number of computers connected to the Internet is almost constant (~80% from the total of computers). Figure 2 shows the number of users in the Republic of Moldova who have had access to the Internet, from 2014 to 2017.

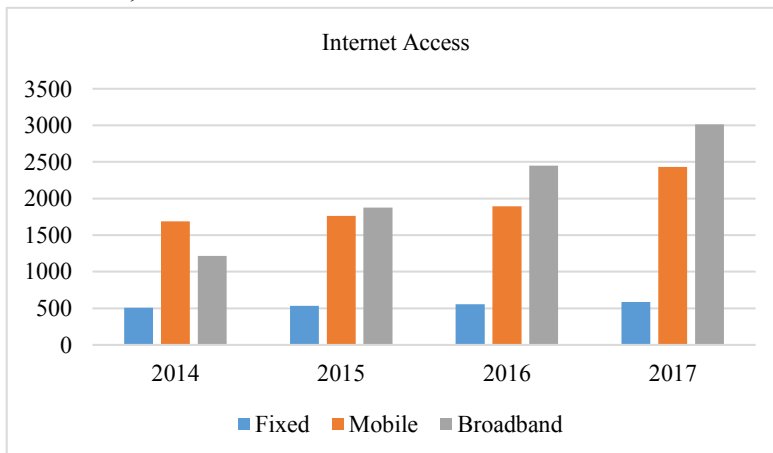


Fig. 2. Number of users with Internet access 2014 - 2017 in the Republic of Moldova [4]

According with Fig.2, since 2017 there was a considerable increase of the Internet access. The attitude of the population towards modern technologies differs considerably. Both consumers and businesses are reserved to or not to use the Internet to get to know the market or to promote themselves, or simply to benefit from lower costs. Those who have understood the opportunities offered by the internet, already have new profits in their accounts [5].

3 Current status in the Republic of Moldova

The textile and leather industry of the Republic of Moldova is one of the oldest branches of the national economy and has a valuable experience. This is a component part of the manufacturing sector of the Republic of Moldova, being a branch that includes the following types of activity [4]:

- fabrication of textile products (fiber preparation and spinning, fabrication, finishing of textiles, including carpets, ropes);
- manufacture of garments (garments, leather apparel, underwear, fur apparel, knitted apparel, crocheted, including stockings and dry goods);
- tanning and finishing of leather; travel manufacture and haberdashery, harness and footwear; preparation and dyeing of fur;
- manufacture of travel goods, harness and other articles of leather;
- manufacture of footwear.

Figure 3 graphically represents the number of textile and leather industry factories in 2014-2016. It is necessary to mention that in the textile and leather industry approx. 95% of the number of factories are private, and practically all are small and medium-sized factories. The textile and leather industry is the only Moldovan industry that has a rather uniform location throughout the republic. Currently about 50% of the total number of factories are located in the central area, approx. 10% of the total number of factories are located in the southern and Gagauz region and the remaining 30% in the northern area of the country [6,7].

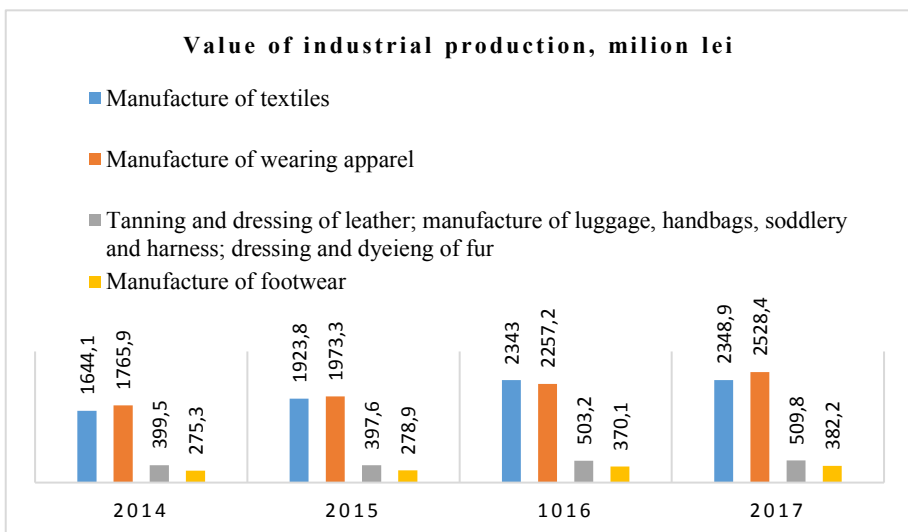


Fig. 3. Value of industrial production during 2014-2017. [4]

The success of businesses across the country in the future depends to a large extent on their ability to integrate into the wave of digital change and last but not least on the country's ability to overcome the key obstacles that currently hinder the move forward. For businesses to be known, they require promotion and publicity in the on-line environment.

Figure 4 shows the number of businesses that have the web page. According to the data in the analyzed figure, we see an increase of the companies that have a web page.

The footwear industry has known in its development three distinct periods: development during the USSR (1945-1991) - the first stage; the second stage covers the 1992-2008 period, characterized by the cooperation of CMT (cute, make & trim) and the current period, since 2009, when the native producer has to redirect the development policy, seeking strategies to allow it to diversify production, to balance external orders in relation to its own production, to increase domestic sales, to look for niches outside, to implement on-line commerce [8].

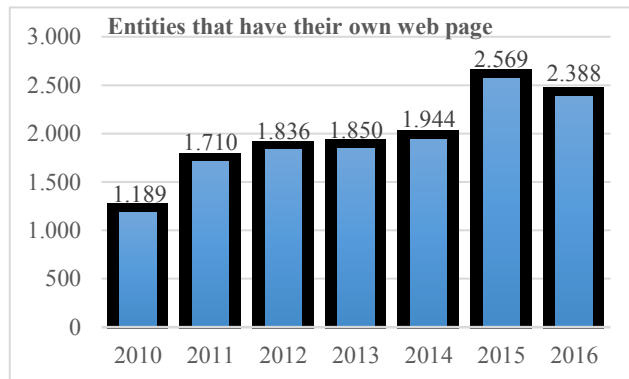


Fig. 4. The number of businesses that have their own web page [6]

Table 1 analyzes part of the footwear factories in the Republic of Moldova, which have their web site, shops in the country and who trade online [9-10].

Table 1. Analysis of some footwear factories in the Republic of Moldova

No.	The footwear company	Year of establishment	Web page	Online commerce	Own shops in the Republic of Moldova	'From the Heart'
1	"Zorile" SA	1945	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
2	"Hîncu.Com" SRL	1996	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
3	ÎCS "Cristina Mold – Rom Simpex" SRL	1996	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
4	"Olsa Shoes" SRL	1998	Yes	No	No	Yes
5	"Oldcom" SA	1994	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
6	"Rotan" SA	1996	Yes	No	No	No
7	"Potehin" SRL	2005	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
8	"Tabita.Com" SRL	2004	Yes	No	No	Yes
9	"Tiras" SRL	1992	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
10	"Tighina" S.A.T.Î.	1989	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
11	"Floare" S.A.D.	1974	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
12	"Armir" SRL	1993	No	No	No	Yes
13	"Nires International" SRL	2011	Yes	No	No	Yes
14	"Maritan-Sor" SRL	2006	No	No	No	No
15	"Geman Shoes" SRL	2006	No	No	No	No
16	"Garenterprise" SRL	2008	No	No	No	No
17	"Armonimob" SRL	2002	No	No	No	No

On the national market, one of the few footwear factories analyzed does not hold on-line trade. Of the 17 (100%) factories, 12 (71%) own the web site, and 5 (29%) - no. The success

of businesses depends to a large extent on their ability to produce shoe products on the market. Of the analyzed factories, only 8 (47%) physical stores in the Republic of Moldova, the other 9 (53%) do not own shops. Also, 12 (71%) businesses are part of the "From the Heart" project. It is attested that businesses have market experience from 7 to 73 years. For some manufacturers, the accumulated experience has allowed them to grow from small or medium to large business.

4 Conclusions

At present, the Internet is that open a door that gives consumer fit a multitude of possibilities to be them as close to the consumer as possible and to know it as much as possible in order to offer what he wants. Using the Internet, businesses get lower costs, focusing on a larger number of potential customers and time. By earning in time the businessman can free his staff from some routine tasks which can be solved by using the internet, so employees can spend more time solving problems that require more creativity that is important enough to high textile and leather on the market between so many competitors. In the Republic of Moldova, the Internet is under development, being an opportunity for domestic companies to produce quality and affordable footwear.

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