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## SPORTSWEAR PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY ADAPTED TO E-COMMERCE

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**ABSTRACT:** *E-commerce is present in all industries, as well as in the clothing industry. For successful e-commerce, a product development strategy is needed and its adaptation to the requirements of e-commerce. Market research shows that price is an important factor in making a customer interested in a product. In addition to price, website security, detailed product descriptions, variety and availability in large quantities are also important for customers. Whether the customer will be interested in the product depends on the customer's age as well as the customer's gender.*

**Keywords:** *E-commerce, development strategy, sportswear, product.*

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## STRATEGIJA RAZVOJA PROIZVODA SPORTSKE ODEĆE PRILAGOĐENOG E TRGOVINI

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**APSTRAKT:** *E trgovina je zastupljena u svim industrijama, kao i u odevnoj industriji. Za uspešnu e trgovinu potrebna je sreategija razvoja proizvoda i njegovo prilagođavanje zahtevima E trgovine. Istraživanja tržišta pokazuju da je cena bitan faktor da se kupac zainteresuje za proizvod. Osim cene kupcima je bitna bezbednost sajta, detaljan opis proizvoda, raznolikost i dostupnost u više veličinskih brojeva. Da li će kupcu biti proizvod zanimljiv zavisi i od starosnog doba kupca kao i od pola kupca.*

**Ključne reči:** *E-trgovina, strategija razvoja, sportska odeća, proizvod.*

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Given that E-commerce has become a practice in most industries, the question is not whether to do business through E-commerce, but the question is which product



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development strategies to apply in order to get as close as possible to online customers, their needs and habits.

E-commerce has its own specifics and target group. Products intended for sale on the Internet should be adapted to this type of sale, and they may differ from products sold in retail stores. This is particularly characteristic of the clothing industry, because customers need to feel the material from which the garment is made and to discover its fit to the body. Therefore, it is necessary to create a strategy for the development of products, existing and new, in order to correspond to E-commerce.

When revenue growth is planned based on the improvement of existing or the introduction of new products on the existing market, it is a product development strategy. The essence of this strategy is to use all the possibilities of the existing market, focusing on modifying the existing one and creating a new product. It is considered that the product development strategy has the highest risk especially in the case of inadequate analysis of the existing market. The product development strategy answers the question: why did we decide to stay on the existing market [1].

Introducing innovations into existing products requires an organization to spend a significant research budget. A product that has been innovated should be the result of an effort to respond more effectively to demand and be in line with the latest trends in the industry. As with other strategies, defining the marketing strategy is one of the priorities (distribution channels, promotional activities). The key features of the innovated products should be the following:

- They are more functional than previous versions of the product;
- Aesthetics are more challenging for consumers. But they resemble the previous version of the product;
- They provide a better user experience [1].

The product development strategy aims to extend the life cycle of the product. The analysis of the life cycle concluded that the product is in a phase of stagnation or even decline, so a modality of survival on the market is sought. Any drop in demand for a product should be a signal for deeper analysis and a potential decision to implement a product development strategy [1].

## **2. DESIGNING A SPORTS T-SHIRT MODEL FOR THE NEEDS OF E-COMMERCE**

For the purposes of this research, a publication prepared as part of the initiative of the Ecommerce Association of Serbia (ECS) was used.

The first report entitled "E-commerce market research in the Republic of Serbia in 2023/2024" aims to systematically investigate all the participants present in the domestic e-commerce sector, while identifying obstacles that limit the growth and progress of e-commerce [2].

3,537 people participated in the research. The online shopping survey aimed to better understand the needs and habits of customers.

The results of the survey showed that clothing (sportswear), footwear or accessories represented a percentage of 69.8%, and sports equipment (including sportswear) with 28.5% (Figure 1). Given that clothing (including footwear and accessories) is the commodity that is most often purchased online, this paper will present a proposal for a designed model of a sports t-shirt.

**Graf. 10.** Koju vrstu robe ste kupili (u privatne svrhe) putem interneta u poslednja tri meseca? (%)



**Figure 1:** The result of the survey on the question: What kind of goods have you bought online in the last three months? [2]

According to the survey, 99.5% of respondents used online shopping, most often using a mobile phone in 62.3% and a desktop computer or laptop in 60.1%. 40.5% of respondents shopped online several times a month, 36% once a month, and 14.1% shopped several times a week. To the question: Do you think online shopping saves you time, 99% of respondents answered yes.

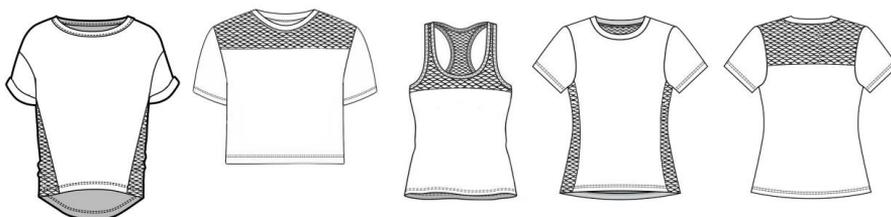


**Figure 2:** The result of the survey on the question: What are the decisive factors of online shopping?; How much do you spend on average per order?[2]

The decisive factors that make the customer decide to buy online are first of all the price of the product 72% of the respondents chose that answer, followed by a large selection of products and sizes 66.9%, free delivery 63.8% the possibility of choosing a delivery method (Figure 2).

According to the survey, 50.1% of customers spend up to 5000 RSD per order, 29% up to 3000 RSD and 20.4% over 5000 RSD (Figure 2).

Based on the results of the survey, it is possible to design a model of a women's sports shirt that would meet the expectations of customers: variety of models and sizes, price up to 5000 RSD, models that are interesting to the population from 18 to 45 years old (picture 3)



**Figure 3:** Models of sports women's shirts

The first model is an oversized t-shirt with a longer back, it can be worn for training or some daily activities, it also suits the older population. The side trim parts can be made of mesh or they can be made of the same material but in a different color

Another model is a crop top sports shirt, intended for the younger population, it can also be made in one material or in combination with mesh. It is intended for daily activities or fitness. This model is current among the younger population and combines well with leggings.

The sleeveless top, which is made of mesh in the upper part, emphasizes the shape of the body, is intended for yoga, pilates, fitness. This model is functional and breathable and is ideal for training. Special comfort can be given by seamless seams.

The fourth t-shirt with mesh details (Mesh Active Tee) has an ergonomic shape, good fit to the body, can be worn for various sports, including those that require long hours of activity. Additional comfort is provided by seamless seams.

These are the four basic models that can be made from different materials: Cotton, cotton in combination with elastin, polyester, polyamide... Each of the shirts can be made in a wider range of colors and sizes. Depending on whether the t-shirt is worn as a fashion item, the choice of material is cotton, viscose or with the addition of elastin, and sports t-shirts are made of wool, polyester, polyamide with the addition of elastin. Seamless seams are recommended on sports shirts. Also, each t-shirt has enough space to print a logo or a larger print on it, which additionally gives the possibility to create a larger number of models.

Given that the clothes have a lot of performance, it is difficult for the customer to conclude, based on the photo, how a particular model looks in real life. Therefore, it is necessary to



provide a detailed description of the model, the material it is made of, the raw material composition, the type of printing used, as well as a precise table of measurements. In the case of t-shirts that are intended for users who are more active in sports, it is necessary to write in the description of the t-shirt whether it is: Dry Fit, Quick Dry, whether the material has additional antibacterial protection of Poligiene that prevents the appearance of unpleasant odors, whether it has light reflective details... If wool were used for t-shirts with additional performance, the price would increase and the price range would be above 5000 RSD.

For new customers, it is extremely important that the website has a 63.4% security certificate. And for customers who shopped on the website, the most important factor in order to repeat the purchase is satisfaction with the service 86.9%, Loyalty card 76.1%. In addition to these benefits, customers are also attracted by seasonal sales and volume discounts.

According to the survey, in addition to the above requirements, customers also want to feel safe when shopping online. That is why their choice is cash on delivery, 67% of the respondents chose this method, online card 39%, card on delivery 15%, M banking 12%, E banking 11%. Most users are afraid of data theft 55.2%. One of the advantages of the domestic market (besides cheaper or free delivery) is that users prefer shopping at domestic online stores 61.7%, equally at foreign and domestic online stores 37.2%, foreign online stores 11.1%. 56.6% want home delivery, and 31.5% at parcel machines.

One of the disadvantages of E-commerce is the appearance of fraudsters on the market. One of the signs of abuse by advertisers is the use of urgency to encourage users to respond by clicking a link or replying to an email. Also messages starting with "free gift", "you've been chosen" or "you've won" should be avoided.

The rapid development of digital devices has enabled their use in various areas of electronic business. In parallel with the ubiquitous use of digital devices, various abuses and frauds have been enabled. [3]

### 3. CONCLUSION

E-commerce is no longer just trade that is expected in the future, E-commerce is trade that is currently intensively taking place and will be even more intensive in the future.

Many advantages of E-commerce compared to the classic way of trade, such as: saving time, significantly larger offer, availability from all over the world, overcoming linguistic and territorial distances, and many others, make E-commerce very desirable.

The development and representation of E-commerce is constantly increasing, which is expected in the future as well. For better business and success in online sales, it is necessary to know the habits of customers, their needs and fears. Online sales cause fear of fraud among customers, due to the appearance of fake websites, misuse of data, unauthorized withdrawal of funds from cards...

In the clothing industry, an additional requirement and disadvantage of E-commerce is that the customer cannot try on the garment, cannot feel the texture of the material and



cannot feel the fit of the garment. These shortcomings can be overcome with a good product description, adequate photos and accurate body measurement charts. If the manufacturer constantly maintains the quality of the product, using quality materials and a good fit, customers will gain trust and will very quickly know what they can get from that manufacturer and will always return to him.

In its offer, the manufacturer should be guided by the results of market research, he should take into account which population he is addressing, what are its habits and requirements. The manufacturer should offer a satisfactory number of items and size numbers. It should also take care of site security, payment options and favoring loyal customers.

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