
THE IMPORTANCE OF THE OFFLINE AND ONLINE MARKETING OF ROMANIAN INDUSTRIAL PARKS

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Abstract: In the last several years more and more industrial parks appeared in Romania. The Romanian Government emphasizes in its National Development Program the need and importance of supporting the creation and development of industrial parks. Romanian industrial parks have to face the challenges of globalization and of the rapid economic, social, technological and political changes of the business environment in which they try to fulfil their mission. Romanian industrial parks could play an important role in the economic development of the country, in sustainable industrial development, in regional development, in increasing global, regional or local competitiveness of the organizations which choose to activate inside an industrial park. Industrial parks contribute to the creation of new jobs, to the expansion of new technologies and business knowledge. In order to be successful, Romanian industrial parks should develop and implement appropriate marketing strategies and programs, and should integrate the use of offline and online marketing tools in their activities. The main characteristics of the Romanian industrial parks and their adaptation methods to the business environment in which these activate are reflected in their performances. The present paper underlines the importance of the use of offline and online marketing tools in order to assure or increase the Romanian industrial parks' competitiveness and fulfil their economic and social roles.

Keywords: industrial parks, offline marketing, online marketing, globalization, localization.

INTRODUCTION

Industrial parks are coordinated by specific organizations (called administrators), have a specific surface and infrastructure, and gather organizations from various industries (called residents), being focused on development and innovation, which attract investments and contribute to the creation of new jobs and to regional development, especially in underdeveloped regions. Gathering different organizations on a concentrated surface has a positive impact on the costs supported by these organizations, and can increase their productivity and efficiency. (Buzás&Lengyel, 2002)

In the last several years more and more industrial parks appeared in Romania. The Romanian Government emphasizes in the National Development Program the need and importance of the creation and development of industrial parks, and offers support and financial aid for this purpose.

Romanian Government plays an important role in the development of industrial parks, especially by creating a favourable legal frame, by offering incentives (but not just tax reduces or tax reliefs) and financial aid.

In Romania the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration is in charge of according the status of industrial park.

We can also mention that APITSIAR is the Association of Industrial, Technological, Scientific Parks and Business Incubators from Romania, which was set up in 2005, in Braşov by 7 founding members, in 2014 the number of the members were 22, in 2015 the number of members increased to 34. The main objective of this association is to represent, to serve the interests of, to provide assistance for and to promote sustainable development of the industrial parks, technological parks, scientific parks, business incubators which activate in Romania. (<http://www.apitsiar.ro/en/home.html>)

Industrial parks in Romania started to become integrated in the national economy, as they gather organizations which offer products or services, and operate in various industries, in many cases being facilitators for development of successful clusters. In some cases industrial parks include also business incubators, research centres.

Before 1989 Romania had planned economy, but after 1989 this was replaced by market economy, when the majority of industrial organizations faced economic problems and a lot of them failed and disappeared. The first industrial parks were established based on the existing infrastructures of these types of formal industrial organizations.

Industrial parks in Romania play the role of developing the competitiveness of industrial organizations which operate inside the industrial parks, but offers also opportunities for organizations which activate in the service sector of the economy.

In order to be successful, Romanian industrial parks should develop and implement appropriate marketing strategies and programs, and should integrate the use of offline and online marketing tools.

Successful industrial parks become more attractive for companies and their marketing value increases (Buzás&Lengyel, 2002).

The main characteristics of the Romanian industrial parks and their adaption methods to the business environment in which these activate are reflected in their performances.

Different hard and soft factors contribute to the competitiveness of an industrial park, and marketing activity is an important influencing factor of the industrial parks' competitiveness. (Kóródi, 2014)

The present paper underlines the importance of the use of offline and online marketing tools in order to assure or increase the Romanian industrial parks' competitiveness and fulfil their economic and social roles.

2. INDUSTRIAL PARKS IN ROMANIA

Romanian industrial parks have to face the challenges of globalization, of the rapid economic, social, technological and political changes of the business environment in which they try to fulfil their mission.

Romanian industrial parks could play an important role in the economic development of the country, in sustainable industrial development, in regional development, in increasing global, regional or local competitiveness of the organizations which choose to activate inside an industrial park (residents).

Industrial parks in Romania concentrate investments, knowledge, and the use of modern technology, include firms from various industries, increase productivity and efficiency of the included firms, producers and manufacturers, and thus the region can benefit from these advantages.

Romanian industrial parks rely on the regional workforce, environmental characteristics, business knowledge. (Meşter&Bugnar, 2013)

Generally Romanian industrial parks try to attract not only Romanian firms, but also organizations from all over the world, and of course multinational organizations, too.

By supporting and offering aid for development of industrial parks the Romanian Government also facilitates the stimulation of direct investments in different industries, in research and technological development, regional development, development and increasing the competitiveness of small and medium sized firms, decreasing the level of unemployment. Industrial parks contribute to the creation of new jobs, to the expansion of new technologies and business knowledge.

Some local authorities and governmental institutions from Romania support the activities of industrial parks, because their implication facilitates the development of the local and regional economic development.

At the beginning of 2013 there were released a project for a law which regulates the activities of the industrial parks in Romania (Bărboi, 2013).

Law nr. 134/2000 (Romanian Parliament, 2000) was the first law regarding industrial parks in Romania. It was replaced by Law nr. 186/2013 (Romanian Parliament, 2013), which regulates the creation and functioning of the industrial parks in Romania.

The Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration is in charge of offering the certificates for industrial parks, if they meet the established criteria, and of defining punishment and retrieval of industrial park certificates if they violate the legal regulations.

Among these criteria we can find the followings: the compact surface must be at least 5 ha; access to a national or European road; connection to infrastructure of public utilities; land owned, used or taken in concession by the administrative organization which applies for industrial park certificate or by its residents; etc. (Romanian Parliament, 2013).

The administrators of the industrial parks are organizations, which must send to the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration the annual report of the industrial park.

The administrators of the industrial parks in Romania create the strategy of the industrial parks related to the way of functioning and of developing the industrial park. The administrators try to attract residents (organizations which will operate inside the industrial park) and investors. Administrators will offer for the residents land, buildings, and access to public utilities and different services. Administrators of the industrial parks have the obligation to communicate with the local, regional and governmental authorities.

The industrial parks in Romania benefit from tax breaks and tax relief, as they got exemption from different taxes (Bărboi, 2013).

For the development of industrial parks in Romania it is essential to develop the proper infrastructure, to maintain the roads in good condition, to develop access to public utilities.

In 2012 there were 52 industrial parks in Romania, and 39 of them were operational, offering 34,541 jobs, on a total area of 2,337 ha. Taking in view the type of the ownership in 2012 there were 27 public owned industrial parks (especially by local authorities) (almost 52%), 19 private owned industrial parks (roughly 36.5%), and 6 public-private owned industrial parks (11.5%). (Bărboi, 2013)

We can mention the Eurobusiness Park from Oradea, which is a Greenfield one and has as administrator the Local Council of Oradea. It has roughly 121 ha, and succeeded to attract several residents. It reflects a good example how local authorities, local and multinational organisations can collaborate effectively and efficiently in order to develop a competitive industrial park, and how its residents obtain added value by moving in this park. The Eurobusiness Park uses both online and offline marketing tools, for its development purposes. (<http://www.eurobusinessparc.ro/>)

3. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE OFFLINE AND ONLINE MARKETING IN CASE OF ROMANIAN INDUSTRIAL PARKS

In order to become competitive, Romanian industrial parks should develop proper marketing strategies, which integrate their offline and online marketing strategies. The marketing activity of industrial parks plays an important role in assuring the success of each industrial park, and can improve the competitiveness of those organizations, especially companies, which activate in that industrial park.

Industrial parks have to do marketing research in order to be able to do market segmentation, to select their target market and to face the challenge of positioning.

First of all we can mention that the target market of an industrial park can be formed by the following types of organizations, taking in view the size of the organization: micro enterprises, small enterprises, medium enterprises, big companies. The industrial parks can target organisations from various industries.

Each industrial park should establish its target market, as the specific characteristics, needs and expectations of its “clients” will be the starting point in developing and implementing a proper marketing strategy and marketing mix.

In Romania industrial parks should emphasize on attracting especially more small and medium enterprises, because they can collaborate with big companies, and this could lead to local and regional development.

We can compare the marketing activity and marketing-mix implemented by an industrial park with those of an organization. We could speak about the marketing-mix developed and implemented by an industrial park, following the classical 4P model: product, price, place and promotion.

Any industrial park should offer a “product-mix” which should be attractive for those organizations, which chose to activate inside the industrial park. From this point of view the industrial parks should focus on the needs of these organizations and on fulfilling these needs.

Industrial parks should offer not just simply the land for constructing plants and other buildings to rent for business purposes, not just the infrastructure, but also different utilities, facilities, including rail-roads, roads, access to the main roads, and other services. (Buzás&Lengyel, 2002)

Among these special services which should be used by Romanian industrial parks we could mention the followings: banking services, financial services, accounting services, business consultancy, legal advice, management services, research and innovation services, marketing services, services related to distribution and logistics, education and training services, import-export services etc. (Meşter&Bugnar, 2013)

Of course we can underline that the dimension of the surface of the industrial park is a special characteristic, which can influence the companies to move in, and operate in a specific industrial park. Industrial parks can offer locations for plants, deposits, conference rooms, seminar rooms, exhibition hall etc. In Romania it is also a necessity to offer proper IT infrastructure, because companies need this for their business purposes.

As the legal frame in Romania is exposed to rapid changes legal advice services are vital to be offered in industrial parks, especially for micro and small enterprises, because generally they cannot afford to access these kinds of services regularly on an individual base.

Because Romanian companies could access European Funds for financing, it would be useful for industrial parks to offer services for project elaboration in order to attract EU funds. And offering also project management services for those companies which succeeded to attract financing from EU funds would be very important, in order to implement their projects successfully and respecting EU and national prescriptions and standards.

The marketing communication policy of the industrial park can contribute to its success. Industrial parks can use different offline and online marketing communication tools in order to attract and maintain companies.

A very common online marketing communication tool is the industrial park's website, where it can present information about the industrial park, the facilities and services offered etc. The industrial park can be promoted online also on the website of the local authorities (and not just when the local authority is among the owners of the industrial parks), on the website of the Association of Industrial, Technological, Scientific Parks and Business Incubators from Romania (which represents the interests of the Romanian industrial parks). The industrial parks can use the internet technology also in order to contact investors, to communicate with them and promote the industrial parks in order to attract investors.

As offline marketing communication tools can be used the followings: advertisements in mass-media; posters, brochures, leaflets and catalogues about the industrial park; participation to conferences and exhibitions in order to promote the industrial park etc. Personal communication can be very useful in developing partnerships with different organizations, which can become residents or investors in the industrial park.

Also the public relations activities of the industrial parks can be developed. Press releases are good examples in this direction, as they lead to development and maintenance of a positive image of the industrial park, and can contribute to the constructing of the corporate identity.

Romanian industrial parks can combine the online and offline marketing communication tools, but we can mention that due to globalization, the online marketing communication tools get more and more importance, especially in partner marketing, aiming to attract partners and investors from abroad.

The price policy is another important component of the marketing mix, and Romanian industrial parks should establish proper prices for the surface offered for selling or renting, for different equipment, utilities, facilities and services offered for those companies which will activate in that industrial park.

Romanian industrial parks can attract residents and investors directly, or through the intermediation of local, regional and governmental authorities, or professional associations from their industry.

Industrial parks have to develop and implement internal marketing activities oriented toward those companies which have moved inside the industrial park. These internal marketing activities should include marketing research activities, which have the main objective to reveal the needs and expectations of the included companies, the areas where the interests of the different companies can be coordinated and integrated in order to develop cooperation between these companies.

The industrial park has the role of mediator between the included companies, and the role of facilitator of their collaboration. As a result of this cooperation, companies can complement their activities and capacities, or can share different resources etc. (Buzás&Lengyel, 2002)

Related to the internal marketing of industrial parks, it would be useful if they could offer for the employees family supporting services, especially services for supervising children (for example kindergartens, even schools, or after school services), which for the moment is not specific in Romania. Other kind of family friendly services could be different catering services, medical services, sport and recreation facilities, shopping possibilities offered inside the industrial park for the employees and their family members. These family friendly services would improve the welfare of the employees, and if they are satisfied with these services their work performance will increase, and this will contribute to the higher performances of their organizations, companies too.

Industrial parks should emphasize their partner marketing activities, as they should create partnerships not only with those companies which activate inside them, but also with those companies which could offer supporting services for the included companies.

It would be also important to rely on the cooperation with universities, research institutes in order to facilitate research and innovative activities in the industrial park, or in order to create innovation and research incubators inside the industrial park, to become facilitators of innovation. Universities also could have the role of preparing well-trained specialists for the companies from the industrial parks, and companies from the industrial parks can offer for students the opportunity to gain professional experience in their organizations, as a result the university knowledge base is integrated in economy (Szabó&Kóródi, 2013). We can mention as a positive example the industrial park from Oradea, which reflects an openness regarding the cooperation with the universities from Oradea.

Other industrial parks can be considered as partners, too, as cooperation with other industrial parks can lead to mutual advantages, first of all for the implied industrial parks, and also for the companies included in the different industrial parks.

Event marketing has an important role in the success of an industrial park, as different events can become occasions for future business relations, can strengthen the relationships between partners of the industrial parks. These events can include the followings: business days, periodical meetings between representatives of the companies from the industrial park, business events, exhibitions, conferences, seminars etc.

Local, regional and territorial marketing has the role of developing a positive image of the location, region or territory where industrial parks will be created or developed, as they increase the attractiveness of that locality or region, which has positive impact on the investments in that region. The local and regional authorities, even governmental authorities can facilitate this kind of marketing activity, and they should imply intensively in these kinds of marketing activities and in facilitating different kinds of regional cooperation.

It would be useful if Romanian industrial parks would introduce an evaluation system regarding the companies included in the industrial park, they should monitor the residents' performances, because this kind of analysis can offer useful information for future improvements of the marketing and management activities of the industrial park. Industrial parks should monitor their own marketing performances in order to establish and implement corrective actions, which have as results different improvements in the quality of the industrial parks' marketing activities. This will lead to higher competitiveness of the industrial parks.

4. IN CONCLUSION

Development of industrial parks is a priority of the Romanian Government, as they fulfil important economic and social role, and play important role in local, regional, even national economic development.

The development of the main characteristics of industrial parks is related to their marketing strategies and activities, having an impact on their competitiveness in a rapidly changing business environment. In Romania, as in many other countries, in order to get the certificate of an industrial park, they must meet the minimal legal criteria established in national laws and monitored by authorities.

The main characteristics of industrial parks make possible their comparison, and evaluation of the level of services offered by them, from marketing point of view. Those organizations which want to become a member of an industrial park will take in view these specific characteristics, in order to choose one of them, which will assure and/or increase their own competitiveness, too. This will facilitate the competition between different industrial parks, and will determine them to make marketing efforts in order to become more competitive.

Obtaining the certificate of industrial park makes possible to access national and European funds for financing the development and activities of the industrial parks in Romania.

Because competition increases in case of industrial parks, in order to become and remain competitive Romanian industrial parks should develop and implement appropriate marketing strategies and marketing-mix.

It is not enough to offer land, buildings and access to public utilities, in order to attract investors and client organizations (residents), these "hard" characteristics should be doubled by "soft" characteristics, like reliability, willingness to serve the client organizations, politeness, kindness of employees of the administrative organisation of the industrial park etc.

Romanian industrial parks should emphasize on relation-marketing, internal-marketing, event-marketing, local and regional marketing, and as a result they could increase their marketing value, which will make them more attractive for investors and different organizations.

Marketing oriented, social marketing oriented and especially holistic marketing oriented industrial parks can obtain success for long term, because they use different online and offline marketing tools in order to develop durable competitive advantages, and they create and offer value for those organizations which activate inside the industrial park.

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