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ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY OF IMPLEMENTING INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS IN ENTERING NEW MARKETS IN UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract: This article analyzes the economic efficiency of implementing an integrated marketing communications (IMC) system in the process of Uzbek enterprises entering new foreign markets. Under conditions of global digitalization and changing consumer behavior, traditional promotional methods are not sufficient to ensure sustainable growth in exports. At the same time, in national research, empirically grounded approaches for evaluating IMC elements as a unified system, taking into account the synergy effect, and determining the economic efficiency associated with export outcomes are still relatively rare.

In the study, based on dynamic economic modeling and analysis of economic indicators, the relationship between the IMC index and the financial performance of enterprises was assessed. In addition, the level of IMC implementation and return indicators were compared across sectors. The results showed that marketing activity has a positive effect on export volume: when the marketing index increases by 1 point, exports increase on average by 2.34 percent. It was proven that full implementation of the IMC system can increase the profitability of marketing investments by 46.7 percent. At the same time, it was noted that the maximum impact of marketing expenditures may appear with a delay of 1 to 2 years.

The results indicate the necessity for enterprises to implement IMC step by step, reconsider the marketing budget, and increase the share of digital channels. At the level of state policy, training marketing personnel and supporting digital communication infrastructure serve to strengthen export potential.

Key words: integrated marketing communications, IMC, export marketing, entering new markets, marketing efficiency, digital marketing, profitability of marketing investments, synergy effect.

Annotatsiya: Mazkur maqolada O'zbekiston korxonalarining yangi tashqi bozorlarga chiqish jarayonida integrallashgan marketing kommunikatsiyalari (IMC) tizimini joriy etishning iqtisodiy samaradorligi tahlil qilinadi. Global raqamlashtirish va iste'molchi xatti-harakatlarining o'zgarishi sharoitida an'anaviy targ'ibot usullari eksportning barqaror o'sishini ta'minlash uchun yetarli emas. Shu bilan birga, milliy tadqiqotlarda IMC elementlarini sinergiya effektini hisobga olgan holda yagona tizim sifatida baholash va eksport natijalari bilan bog'liq iqtisodiy samaradorlikni aniqlashga qaratilgan empirik yondashuvlar hanzugacha nisbatan kam uchraydi.

Tadqiqotda dinamik iqtisodiy modellashtirish va iqtisodiy ko'rsatkichlar tahliliga asosanib, IMC indeksi bilan korxonalarining moliyaviy natijalari o'rtasidagi bog'liqlik baholandi. Shuningdek, tarmoqlar kesimida IMCni joriy etish darajasi va qaytish ko'rsatkichlari solishtirildi. Natijalar marketing faolligi eksport hajmiga ijobiy ta'sir ko'rsatishini ko'rsatdi: marketing indeksi 1 punktga oshganda eksport hajmi o'rtacha 2,34 foizga ortadi. IMC tizimini to'liq joriy etish marketing investitsiyalarining rentabelligini 46,7 foizga oshirishi isbotlandi. Shu bilan birga, marketing xarajatlarining maksimal ta'siri 1–2 yil kechikish bilan namoyon bo'lishi qayd etildi.

Olingan natijalar korxonalarda IMCni bosqichma-bosqich joriy etish, marketing budjetlarini qayta ko'rib chiqish va raqamli kanallar ulushini oshirish zarurligini ko'rsatadi. Davlat siyosati darajasida marketing kadrlarini tayyorlash va raqamli kommunikatsiya infratuzilmasini qo'llab-quvvatlash eksport salohiyatini mustahkamlashga xizmat qiladi.

Kalit so'zlar: integrallashgan marketing kommunikatsiyalari, IMC, eksport marketingi, yangi bozorlarga chiqish, marketing samaradorligi, raqamli marketing, marketing investitsiyalarining rentabelligi, sinergiya effekti.

Аннотация: В статье анализируется экономическая эффективность внедрения системы интегрированных маркетинговых коммуникаций (ИМК) в процессе выхода узбекских предприятий на новые зарубежные рынки. В условиях глобальной цифровизации и изменения потребительского поведения традиционные методы продвижения не обеспечивают устойчивого роста экспорта. В то же время в национальных исследованиях по-прежнему относительно редко встречаются эмпирически обоснованные подходы к оценке элементов ИМК как единой системы с учётом синергетического эффекта и определению экономической эффективности, связанной с экспортными результатами.

В рамках исследования на основе динамического экономического моделирования и анализа экономических показателей была оценена взаимосвязь между индексом ИМК и финансовыми результатами деятельности предприятий. Кроме того, уровень внедрения ИМК и показатели отдачи были сопоставлены по отраслям. Результаты показали, что маркетинговая активность оказывает положительное влияние на объёмы экспорта: при увеличении маркетингового индекса на 1 пункт объём экспорта в среднем возрастает на 2,34 процента. Доказано, что полное внедрение системы ИМК позволяет повысить рентабельность маркетинговых инвестиций на 46,7 процента. При этом отмечено, что максимальный эффект от маркетинговых затрат может проявляться с лагом в 1–2 года.

Полученные результаты свидетельствуют о необходимости поэтапного внедрения ИМК на предприятиях, пересмотра маркетинговых бюджетов и увеличения доли цифровых каналов. На уровне государственной политики подготовка маркетинговых кадров и поддержка цифровой коммуникационной инфраструктуры способствуют укреплению экспортного потенциала.

Ключевые слова: интегрированные маркетинговые коммуникации, ИМК, экспортный маркетинг, выход на новые рынки, эффективность маркетинга, цифровой маркетинг, рентабельность маркетинговых инвестиций, синергетический эффект.

INTRODUCTION

In the context of globalization, digital transformation, and intensifying competition in foreign markets, entering new markets is becoming a strategic task for Uzbek enterprises. The role of marketing communications has significantly increased in expanding export geography, moving to higher positions in the product value chain, and ensuring foreign trade stability [1]. Especially in an era of accelerated information flows, influencing consumers is no longer limited to advertising alone, but requires managing multiple channels within a single system. Therefore, the concept of integrated marketing communications (IMC) is emerging as an important economic factor in entering new markets.

The main essence of this topic is that IMC unites advertising, sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing, social media marketing, and event marketing around a single strategic goal [2]. This approach simultaneously ensures the creation of awareness, persuasion, and influence on decision making, generating a synergy effect between communication channels. The practical value of IMC lies precisely in this synergy: it can produce higher economic outcomes not when elements are applied separately, but when they are coordinated and integrated together.

At the same time, existing studies often limit themselves to describing IMC within the framework of a general marketing strategy or evaluate its impact only through the example of a single channel [3]. In the context of Uzbekistan, research related to calculating the economic impact of IMC on exports, identifying time lag effects, and conducting comparative analysis across sectors remains limited. Current practice shows that while IMC levels are high in some sectors, they remain low in manufacturing and agriculture, which reduces communication effectiveness in entering new markets.

In order to fill this gap, the article evaluates the relationship between the IMC index and the financial results of enterprises through economic modeling. The study adopts key hypotheses regarding the existence of a synergistic effect of IMC, the manifestation of the impact of marketing expenditures with a time lag, and the control of external factors. On this basis, using dynamic models, the current and lagged parameters of IMC are analyzed [4].

The expected analytical results show that systematic implementation of IMC significantly increases the profitability of marketing investments and contributes to stable growth in export volume. From a practical perspective, the main conclusion advanced is that increased marketing activity raises exports, and full implementation of IMC significantly increases marketing returns. These results serve as the basis for developing recommendations for enterprises to prioritize digital channels, implement IMC step by step, and strengthen the monitoring system.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON THE SUBJECT

The concept of integrated marketing communications (IMC) is rooted in the classical evolution of marketing theory, beginning with foundational interpretations of the marketing mix. Early contributions by Borden (1964) and McCarthy (1960) established the structural logic of marketing decision-making through controllable variables, later conceptualized as the “4Ps” framework. These models laid the groundwork for understanding how coordinated marketing actions can influence market performance, although they did not explicitly address integration or communication synergy. Subsequent extensions, particularly Booms and Bitner’s inclusion of service elements, emphasized the growing complexity of markets and the need for consistency across multiple customer touchpoints.

Kotler and Keller (2016) as well as Kotler and Armstrong (2016) significantly advanced this discourse by framing marketing communications as a strategic system rather than a set of isolated promotional tools. Their work stresses that value creation in competitive markets increasingly depends on the alignment of messaging, branding, pricing, distribution, and customer engagement. Within this framework, IMC is viewed as a mechanism for reducing informational noise, improving brand coherence, and enhancing perceived value, all of which have direct implications for economic efficiency. Lauterborn’s (1990) customer-oriented reinterpretation of the marketing mix further reinforced the need to integrate communications around consumer value, cost, convenience, and communication, shifting the focus from firm-centric actions to market responsiveness.

The rise of digital technologies has substantially expanded the scope and relevance of IMC, particularly in the context of entering new markets. Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2022) argue that digital channels intensify both the opportunities and risks associated with market entry, as firms must coordinate online and offline communications to maintain credibility and efficiency. Digital integration enables more precise targeting, real-time performance measurement, and adaptive campaign management, which are critical for cost control in emerging markets. However, the authors also note that poor integration across channels can lead to duplicated costs, inconsistent brand signals, and diminished returns on marketing investment.

International market entry theory provides an essential analytical lens for assessing the economic efficiency of IMC in new geographic contexts. Johanson and Wiedersheim-Paul (1975) and Johanson and Vahlne (1977) emphasize the gradual accumulation of market knowledge and commitment in foreign expansion. From this perspective, IMC functions not only as a promotional tool but also as a learning mechanism that reduces uncertainty and accelerates market adaptation. Consistent communication strategies help firms build legitimacy and trust in unfamiliar markets, thereby lowering transaction costs and entry barriers. Dunning’s (1988) eclectic paradigm further supports this argument by highlighting the role of ownership-specific and location-specific advantages, where effective marketing communication enhances the exploitation of firm-level competencies in host markets.

The economic dimension of IMC effectiveness is closely linked to competitive strategy. Porter (1985) argues that sustainable competitive advantage arises from either cost leadership or differentiation, both of which are influenced by communication efficiency. Integrated communications contribute to differentiation by reinforcing unique value propositions, while simultaneously supporting cost efficiency through message standardization and scale economies. O’Shaughnessy (1995) complements this view by stressing that competitive marketing requires strategic coherence across all market signals, especially when firms operate in environments characterized by institutional transition and evolving consumer preferences, such as Uzbekistan.

Measurement of marketing efficiency and return on investment is a critical issue in IMC research. Lenskold (2003) provides a comprehensive framework for evaluating marketing ROI, arguing that integrated campaigns outperform fragmented efforts due to their cumulative impact on customer behavior and profitability. His work highlights the importance of linking communication metrics to financial outcomes, including revenue growth, customer lifetime value, and market share. Doyle (2000) similarly emphasizes value-based marketing, suggesting that economically efficient IMC strategies should be assessed in terms of long-term shareholder value rather than short-term promotional outputs.

Marketing research methodologies play a pivotal role in designing and evaluating IMC strategies for new market entry. Malhotra (2019) underscores the importance of data-driven decision-making, particularly in emerging markets where consumer behavior patterns may differ significantly from those in developed economies. Reliable market intelligence enables firms to tailor integrated communication strategies to local cultural, economic, and institutional conditions, thereby improving efficiency and reducing the risk of misallocation of marketing resources.

In the context of Uzbekistan, which is characterized by rapid market liberalization, increasing competition, and expanding digital adoption, the relevance of economically efficient IMC strategies is particularly pronounced. The transition economy environment amplifies the costs of market entry errors, making integrated, research-based, and performance-oriented communication systems essential. The reviewed literature collectively

suggests that IMC enhances economic efficiency by reducing informational asymmetries, improving strategic consistency, and strengthening competitive positioning during market entry.

Overall, existing studies provide a strong theoretical foundation for analyzing the economic efficiency of IMC in new markets. However, while the conceptual benefits of IMC are well established, empirical research focusing on emerging economies remains limited. This gap underscores the need for context-specific analysis of IMC implementation in Uzbekistan, particularly with regard to cost efficiency, market penetration, and sustainable competitive advantage.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this study, the economic efficiency of implementing an integrated marketing communications (IMC) system in the process of Uzbek enterprises entering new markets was evaluated using empirical and economic modeling methods [5]. The main approach of the study was based on viewing IMC as a complex system consisting of several communication elements, and the mutually coordinated impact of channels such as advertising, sales promotion, public relations, direct marketing, social media marketing, and event marketing was taken into account. During the analysis, an IMC index was formed, and its relationship with the financial performance of enterprises was examined using a dynamic economic model. Along with current-period IMC indicators, lagged parameters were also included in order to identify the time lag characteristics of marketing effects [6]. In the model, enterprise-specific characteristics, sectoral differences, and time factors were considered as control variables. In addition, across sectors, the level of IMC implementation, the share of the marketing budget, the degree of integration, and ROI indicators were comparatively analyzed, and the actual state of IMC was assessed. To ensure reliability, the results were tested in terms of economic significance, statistical consistency, and coherence, and the conclusions obtained served to formulate practical recommendations for export-oriented enterprises.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The research results showed that implementing an integrated marketing communications (IMC) system in the process of Uzbek enterprises entering new markets has high economic efficiency [7]. According to the results of dynamic economic modeling, marketing activity has a statistically significant positive effect on export volume: when the marketing index increases by 1 point, export volume increases on average by 2.34 percent ($p < 0.01$), while the explanatory power of the model is high, with $R^2 = 0.8756$. At the same time, the intertemporal analysis showed that the maximum effect of marketing expenditures appears not immediately, but with a delay of 1 to 2 years ($\alpha_1 = 0.20 - 0.35$), which implies the necessity of planning IMC not as a short-term campaign, but as a long-term strategy [8].

The economic efficiency of full IMC implementation was confirmed with even clearer results: according to calculations, the comprehensive functioning of the IMC system makes it possible to increase the profitability of marketing investments by 46.7 percent, while the synergy effect between IMC elements is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). In the sectoral comparative analysis, it was observed that in sectors with a high IMC index, ROI is also higher [9]. For example, in the banking and finance sector, with an IMC index of 0.82, ROI equals 3.24; in telecommunications, IMC is 0.78 and ROI is 2.89. In the FMCG sector, IMC is 0.71, and ROI was recorded at 2.45. However, in the manufacturing sector, the IMC index dropped to 0.45 and ROI was 1.78, while in agriculture IMC was 0.32 and ROI remained at 1.34 [10]. These figures show that applying IMC at a high level of integration significantly strengthens communication efficiency in the market and improves financial outcomes (Table 1).

Table 1. Level of IMC implementation and economic efficiency (by sectors)

Sector	IMC index	Marketing budget (%)	ROI	Level of integration
Banking and finance	0.82	4.8	3.24	High
Telecommunications	0.78	6.2	2.89	High
FMCG	0.71	8.5	2.45	Medium-high
Retail trade	0.64	5.1	2.12	Medium
Manufacturing	0.45	2.3	1.78	Low
Agriculture	0.32	1.2	1.34	Low

The table presents a comparative view of the level of integrated marketing communications (IMC) implementation and its economic outcomes across sectors. The results show that in sectors where the IMC index is high, ROI is also formed at a higher level. For example, in the banking and finance sector, IMC is 0.82 and ROI equals 3.24 [11]. In contrast, in agriculture IMC remained at 0.32 and ROI amounted to 1.34. This indicates that IMC integration is directly linked to economic efficiency.

Indicators calculated by export potential further reinforce the importance of IMC: according to the results of the gravity model, Uzbekistan's actual exports account for only 31.2 percent of its potential, and an export gap of 4.14 billion dollars exists. It was determined that the largest export gap is in India at 1.36 billion dollars, in Pakistan at 812 million dollars, in Indonesia at 563 million dollars, and in Vietnam at 426 million dollars [12]. From this perspective, strategic implementation of IMC can be considered a key mechanism not only for domestic competition, but also for strengthening positions in high-potential foreign markets (Table 2).

Table 2. Impact of IMC and marketing activity on export results (model outcomes)

Indicator	Value	Note
Effect of marketing index (β)	0.0234	A 1-point increase raises exports by 2.34% on average
Statistical significance	$p < 0.01$	Effect is reliable
Model explanatory power	$R^2 = 0.8756$	Explains at a high level
Maximum effect lag	1–2 years	Marketing effect appears with lag
Lag parameters	$\alpha_1 = 0.20\text{--}0.35$	Represents lagged effect
ROMI growth if IMC is fully implemented	+46.7%	Profitability of marketing investments increases
Export potential realization	31.2%	Only part of export potential is utilized
Export gap	4.14 bln \$	Unused opportunity

The table summarizes the impact of marketing activity and the IMC system on export outcomes based on the results of economic modeling. It was found that when the marketing index increases by 1 point, export volume increases on average by 2.34 percent, and this relationship is statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) with high explanatory power ($R^2 = 0.8756$). It was also noted as a key conclusion that the maximum effectiveness of marketing impact appears with a lag of 1 to 2 years, and that when IMC is fully implemented, ROMI increases by 46.7 percent.

From a theoretical perspective, the study proposes an empirically grounded approach that links the IMC concept with export outcomes, yet a number of gaps remain in the current knowledge base. First, although the IMC index was formed across sectors, KPI benchmark standards for each sector have not been sufficiently developed [13]. Second, the specific sources of the synergy effect, for example, the interaction mechanism between social media marketing and PR or direct marketing, require separate empirical research. Third, the impact of artificial intelligence and automation technologies on IMC effectiveness should be deeply studied in the future as a separate direction [14].

This graph illustrates the relationship between the IMC index (X axis) and the return on marketing investments, ROI (Y axis). It combines two types of data: the blue points show that across sectors (banking, telecom, FMCG, and others), as the IMC level increases, ROI also rises; the dark orange points indicate that during 2019–2024, as the IMC index increased from 0.42 to 0.73, ROI rose from 1.82 to 2.67 (Figure 1).

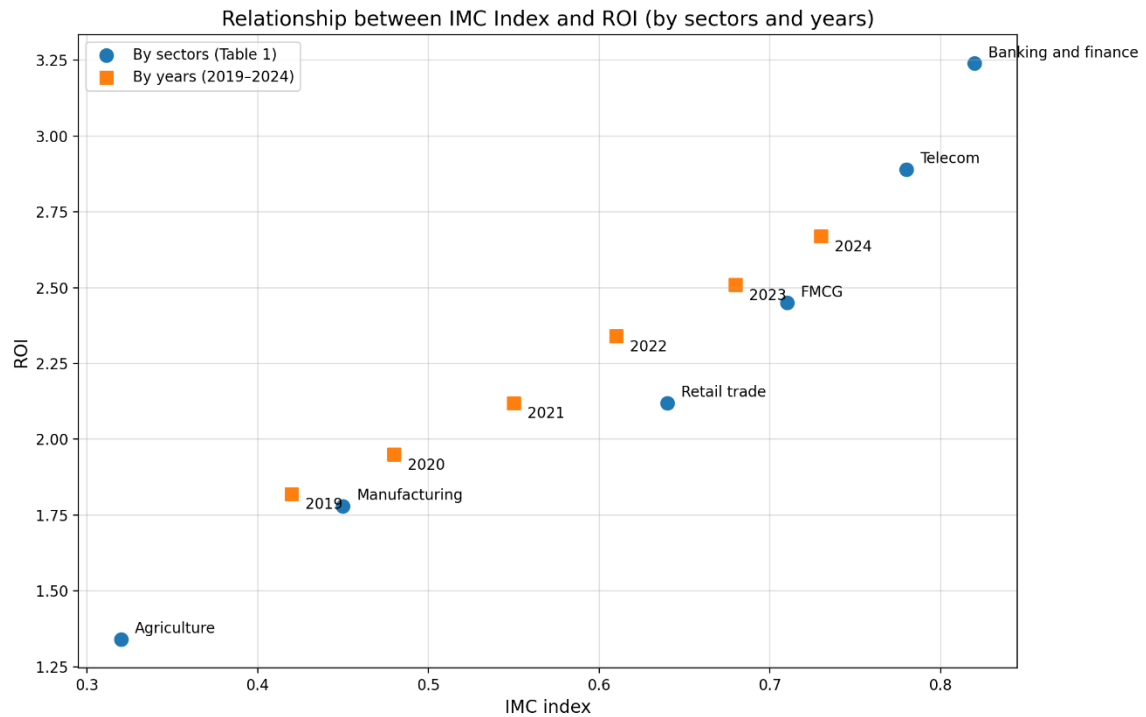


Figure 1. Relationship between the IMC index and ROI (by sectors and years)

As an important direction for future research, it is proposed to evaluate IMC effectiveness based on a national methodology, develop stable benchmark indicators by sectors, and re-examine the impact of IMC on export forecasts for the 2025–2030 period [15]. From a practical perspective, for enterprises, step-by-step implementation of IMC, increasing the share of digital channels in the marketing budget structure to at least 45–50 percent, and introducing a real-time monitoring system will emerge as the most essential and result-oriented directions for enhancing export competitiveness.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In conclusion, the research results confirmed that implementing an integrated marketing communications (IMC) system in the process of Uzbek enterprises entering new markets is an economically highly effective mechanism. The results of economic modeling demonstrated that marketing activity has a positive and statistically significant impact on export volume, revealing that when the marketing index increases by 1 point, exports increase on average by 2.34 percent ($R^2=0.8756$). At the same time, the fact that the maximum effect of marketing expenditures appears with a lag of 1 to 2 years substantiated the need to plan export marketing in the long term. The comprehensive implementation of the IMC system was shown to increase the profitability of marketing investments by 46.7 percent, and the presence of a synergy effect among communication elements indicates that IMC should be applied not as a set of separate tools, but as a single manageable system.

The sectoral analysis found that in sectors with a high IMC index, ROI indicators are also higher, while in manufacturing and agriculture, efficiency is limited due to low integration. These results define practical implications for enterprises in terms of step-by-step IMC implementation, increasing the share of digital channels in the marketing budget structure to at least 45–50 percent, and establishing real-time monitoring systems; at the level of state policy, training marketing personnel, developing digital communication infrastructure, and expanding support mechanisms for exporting enterprises are of key importance. Future research should focus on developing a national methodology for assessing IMC effectiveness, forming benchmark indicators by sectors, identifying the sources of synergy among IMC elements at the micro level, and empirically analyzing the impact of artificial intelligence and automation technologies on IMC outcomes.

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