

## UKRAINIAN CHRISTIAN MARKETING: COMMUNICATIONS, VERBAL POSITIONING OF RELIGIOUS SERVICES AND GOODS

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**ABSTRACT:** Communicative features of religious marketing are new objects of study for the Ukrainian scholars. The actuality of the study is stipulated by the fact that the studied subjects belong to such general communicative and linguistic problems as linguistic programming of personality, language and religious identity, semiotic code, God substitution, communicative manipulation, suggestion, etc. The cognitive significance of religious marketing for Ukrainians is determined by the factors of its influence on the consumers. Consumer behavior depends on the communicative specifics of religious marketing texts. The authors distinguish the pathogenic influence and influential texts with pragmatic function. The objects of our research are the communicative features of the Christian marketing, Islamic marketing and Judaic marketing in Ukraine. The subjects of our article are the marketing of communications, positioning of religious services and goods. The tasks are the following: to analyze the communicative aspects of religious marketing of Christians, Muslims and Jews in Ukraine. The methodology of the research is based on the current approaches to scientific studying of religious communication and channels of its promotion. We use discourse analysis (critical) for the science qualification of interactional aspects, socio-psychological and socio-cognitive characteristics, frameworks and contexts. Religious marketing communication great progress has been made in new media. Within the frames of marketing linguistics, new media linguistics peculiarities are also analyzed.

**KEYWORDS:** religious marketing, communicative features, Christian marketing, Islamic marketing, Judaic marketing, religious advertisement, services, goods.

### Introduction

Experts estimate that, like other countries with the recent atheist past, Ukraine has developed a market of diverse religious ideas, goods and services (Marakhovska, 2019, p. 116) marked with a rather high competition level. It is also argued that, in addition to other factors, believers in their religious practices become subject to marketing strategies since one's choice of religion is influenced by the advertising scale of a church, its authority and social activity rather than the theological elaboration of its doctrine (Bukin, 2018). Among the different aspects of religious marketing studies, scientists are especially interested in specificity of communication as an independent topic for scientific analysis, which takes into account numerous ethno-specific and confession-specific features. The objects of linguistic research can be religious media as channels of information dissemination, including electronic means, religious advertising, naming, effective speech to enhance goods and services, communicative aspects of discursive (personal and group) success, psychography of communication of different segments of religious consumers and services, etc. It is obvious that the communicative component of religious marketing is related to religious identity, the creation and consolidation of certain sociolectic standards is part of the production and consumption technologies of various goods and services and impacts the selection and purchase criteria of both commercial and information goods marked by discursive affiliation. This determines the scientific topicality and practical value of studying communicative specificity of the religious market.

### Object

Our scientific study targeted the communications, verbal positioning of religious services and goods in Christian religious marketing in Ukraine. The linguistic components of religious marketing were analyzed in the interdisciplinary field of such linguistic areas as marketing linguistics, suggestive linguistics, sociolinguistics, media linguistics, etc. The subjects of our article are the marketing of communications, positioning of religious services and goods. The tasks are the following: to analyze the communicative aspects of the religious marketing Christians in Ukraine.

### Methodology

In order to study the linguistic phenomenology of religious marketing, we chose Fairclough's methodological approach, a critical discourse model which has three dimensions: 1) oral or written texts,

2) discursive practice, which extends to the production and interpretation of the text and 3) social practice (Fairclough, 2003, p. 454 – 456).

The research is based on media texts circulating in modern religious communication in Ukraine. These are mainly texts of the institutional sites, banner and Internet advertising, as well as texts that represent the Christian narrative in Ukraine.

### **Cognitive style of Christian marketing in Ukraine**

To analyze the innovative processes in the field of religious marketing, it is necessary to provide some statistics. According to official data, there are 35 210 religious communities, 536 monasteries with 6 844 novices, 84 brotherhoods, 369 missions, 207 religious educational establishments with 7 772 full-time and 10 164 part-time students, 13 220 religious schools (also known as Sunday schools), 540 periodicals (325 of them are printed and 189 are electronic)<sup>1</sup>. These figures prove that communication marketing has been modernized in new social circumstances and the range of communication channels with the parish has been extended. The above point to the relevance of studying language specifics and the Ukrainian religious market, which has emerged from a “lethargic state” caused by the earlier period of militant atheism, and is actively changing by mastering the communicative potential of media resources and international experience in applying innovative marketing practices in a globalized world (Boreyko, 2017). The increase in the communicative capacity has enabled presenting new ideas as attractive information products on the religious market. Employing religious information and relaying religious values from political platforms using budgetary funds have caused widespread debate in the Ukrainian society. Within this approach, the dualism of the sacred and the secular began to weaken. This approach can be illustrated by two types of interactions between religion and the media: the reporting on religion in mainstream media; and the presentation of religious content on non-religious commercial media. Time has shown that this trend is promising and now extends to other religious marketing, in particular it remains relevant to Christian marketing in Ukraine. The coverage is often able to be characterized as, event-driven and focused on, polarizing issues (Gould, 2017, p. 33) or as agreed position (In particular, the third option characterized the position of the churches on COVID-19 pandemic)<sup>2</sup>. According to some religious marketing researchers (Devlin, 1999), Christians are generally conservative in the implementation of marketing innovations. Such prejudice is rooted in the episteme of the sacred text, where traders were driven from the temple, while the moral and ethical aspects of merchant and craft activities were hotly discussed and argued in the community.

Indeed, in modern approaches to the conceptualism of the biblical text, which are transmitted in academic works, selected for publication in religious encyclopedias and dictionaries, which are translated into foreign languages and widely published, it is noted that the successful results of human labour are not measured by commercial equivalents, but primarily by the ability to increase the power of God’s glory (Novyi, 2001, p.199 – 201). Value judgments relevant to attitudes toward wealth are mostly negative, and earthly treasures are contrasted with real treasures, i.e. the wisdom and knowledge inherent in Jesus Christ (Novyi, 2001, p. 778). However, the indisputable authority of precedent texts in the Christian spiritual tradition is not amplified by the development of religious markets. In the Ukrainian reality, pastors and ministers of Protestant churches have joined the renewal of information marketing caused by the institutional split in the Orthodox segment, with the initiative to reconsider the paradigm of modern Christianity in general. The leader of the Christian Bloc, Bishop S. Balyuk, said: “Earlier, we, especially pastors, saw only the church model of the world, where everything revolves around the church. Now we must perceive the church as one of the institutions of this society, along with culture, science, industry, and so on. At the same time, the church must actively influence all neighboring areas<sup>3</sup>.”

<sup>1</sup> Report on the network of religious organizations at 01.01.2020. [URL:https://data.gov.ua/dataset/5ed01094-1e32-4f37-a412-faf9e369420b/resource/1fc2bcdb-f0a5-4d2f-bbd2-e666498a738c/download/forma-1.csv](https://data.gov.ua/dataset/5ed01094-1e32-4f37-a412-faf9e369420b/resource/1fc2bcdb-f0a5-4d2f-bbd2-e666498a738c/download/forma-1.csv)

<sup>2</sup> Religious organizations in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. National Institute for Strategic Studies. Information and analytical material /Tokman . Retrieved from: <https://niss.gov.ua/sites/default/files/2020-04/relegiyni-organizatsii-covid.pdf> 30.04.2020

<sup>3</sup> Religious Panorama: Information and Analytical Journal, 2008, iss. 7(94), p. 16 – 17.

Looking at modern Ukraine today, we believe that the institutional renewal taking place at the current stage of religious discourse development and activated axiological transformation are most important in the development of the religious market. The vector for revising the religious paradigm of value was expressed primarily in modern genres of religious communication, particularly in **religious banner advertising** in Ukraine. At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, religious advertising served as a regular information platform for announcements of church community initiatives and church events. However, in the first decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, religious advertising became the main channel for disseminating the idea of an independent Ukrainian church.

Religious advertising as a mass media phenomenon forced Ukrainians to reconsider their personal relationship with God and implement a new version of the religious paradigm of value in the worldview of their 21<sup>st</sup> century contemporaries. This type of advertising managed to resolve several important tasks, namely modernizing communication and transmission codes, as well as obtaining and consolidating communication with God, whose authority different political forces attempted to monopolize.

In particular, the break with Russian Orthodoxy and the idea of legalizing the Ukrainian language in all church communications were advocated in hybrid religious and political advertising texts as an important concept in expanding contacts with believers. Despite the fact that the promotion of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church brand was initiated by politicians, its professional positioning in information space, the selection of effective tools and channels for brand representation, and their creative versions ensured the cultural value of such hybrid advertising in a broader political context.

In addition, it should be noted that political religious advertising has received an unexpected development in religious advertising with a social dominance, which has caused controversy. This type of religious advertising used communication codes that were completely different from the politicized version, but, like ideological codes, broke the tradition at the functional and stylistic levels. Emphasis was especially placed on the linguistic personality of God inherent in the ethno-psychological Ukrainian specificity of communicative recognition in the dichotomy of certain linguistic markers: OWN – FOREIGN. God's linguistic personality was implicitly modeled by such features as: “close”, “loving”, “safe”, “beloved”, “partner”, “open”, “accessible”, “friendly” and other ethnospecific verbalizers relative to the OWN concept in the Ukrainian worldview (Dubchak, 2009).

Thus, it was possible to synchronize the substitutional features of God with Ukrainian reality, to revise sensory and non-sensory markers of the sacred in public paradigms of value and to move significantly away from atheistic ideology towards a better understanding of one's own ethnospecific beliefs. In today's Ukraine, religious advertising as a mass media phenomenon has become a contemporary postmodern form of mediation between the people and higher powers. It relates primarily to faith in God, and to a lesser extent, to religious canons.

As a marketing phenomenon, religious advertising fulfills the church's missionary function. Its meanings are perceived as spiritual messages, through which the church continues to control people's behaviour, beliefs and sentiments, taking into account the material and spiritual priorities of this target audience. Ignoring the latest communicative interaction formats, which successfully adapted to the “clip consciousness” of data consumers, were restricted by their business activity and semantic oversaturation of the paradigm of value, would just make it impossible to effectively adapt church institutions to modern conditions.

There are some new ideas as attractive information products on the Ukrainian religious market. Here we mean first of all artificial and parody religions as a form of postmodern social reflection that positions itself as a subtype of modern religions on the religious market. In particular, researchers point out the following new churches: the Great Duck's Church (GDC), the Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster (CFSM), Discordianism, the Church of the SubGenius, Eventualism, the religion of the Invisible Pink Unicorn, Kibology, the Last Thursdayism, the First Church of the Last Laugh, Bokononism, Dudeism, Gadgetology, Googlism, Jediism, Kopimism, the Church of Maradona, the International Church of Cannabis, the United Church of Bacon, Silinism (the official religion of the micronation of the Aerican Empire that worships Forsteri, the Great Penguin) (Ageyev, 2021, p.17). This phenomenon rests exclusively on its postmodern and mass media nature that stems from the transformational passivity of the traditional churches, which is compensated for by activating the capitalist “market of satisfying religious needs” (Ageyev, 2021, p. 28-29).

This linguistic research focuses on the exotic naming of these churches that expresses the intention to transform the traditional Ukrainian representation of spiritual and religious ideas. Communicative efficiency of the names from the examples above is secured by the cognitive metaphor that marks the psychoemotional priorities of modern people who consume religious doctrines of “the mass media type”. In other words, it draws on ritualization of culinary, IT, entertainment, educational, recreational and other consumerist cultures. Word-building patterns, the semantic component of the key lexeme, affixes, associations actualized in the name, etc. help to decode the cognitive metaphor of the name (Pastafaryanstvo – from ital. Pasta + some Ukrainian suffixes with the meanings of generalization; Googlism – from Google + suffix *ism*; the Great Duck’s Church originates from the association with the Christmas dinner table). Yet, the interpretation of the names also leaves some room for guessing. Consumer attractiveness of these exotic religions on the religious market, just like in the case of advertising, is incorporated in the reductionist principle of information delivery where language play becomes an acceptable source of meaning. Under these circumstances, the advantage of the names lies in that that the recipient’s perception does not appeal to different interpretations and does not go deep into ancient languages, history, exegesis or hermeneutics. On the contrary, decoding of the names is based on markers of modern problems, modern ideals and is readily provided in the consumer-friendly form. Researchers argue that “deriving a religion from a high-quality artistic narrative that is produced by a certain author rather than deriving a religion from an ancient myth, transformed through translations into several languages and cultural epochs, wrapped into historicism of the crucified-for-Pontius-Pilates type is much more honest and effective with modern consumers who are open to experiments with religions” (Ageyev, 2021, p.31). Thus, what we find here is the postmodern objectification of the isomorphism between a name and religious needs.

Ageyev writes: for psychology of religion, for Cognitive Religious Studies, for Neurotheology as well as for delivering the religion-related processes of central nervous system to a wide audience, this reductionism is an advantage since it postulates the possibility to deconstruct and apply the modular approach to the exploration of religious phenomena from the elementary biological level to complex social constructs of well-developed and well-established religions while avoiding any pitfalls of metaphysics (Ageyev, 2021, p. 31).

It is yet too early to talk about the mass scale of interest in such information products among Ukrainians. This is elite content that requires special cognitive marketing but even today experts argue that understanding the role of “artificial religions without taking into account the context of modern globalized and digitalized consumerist culture can hardly be successful” (Ageyev, 2021, p. 32). The mere existence of these churches on the Ukrainian religious market proves that, when there is a lack of spiritual leaders and values, humanity, trust and positive emotions, consumerism encroaches on non-material phenomena, causes changes in the paradigm of status values and stimulates the search for their new hierarchies within the framework of behavioral targeting.

Religious communication as space for positioning and promoting the abovementioned religious doctrines focuses on its target consumers’ needs (biological needs, safety, social needs, needs of respect, etc.) and responds by elaborating solutions and by creating axiological content beneficial for current and would-be consumers. It also becomes the platform where, with the help of technologies, an idea is transformed into an event. The potential performative charge of a language sign, the impact of a simulacrum, makes this communication efficient and helps new religions preserve their power over people. In addition, the general atmosphere that invites New Religious Movements to the Ukrainian religious market is based on that “in the situation when historical churches are not engaged in any missionary activity, an attempt (even an occasional one) to familiarize people with a new doctrine has always been and still is effective for a religious mission or preacher whose actions are combined with true charity. Hence, effective support offered to those who are in need materially or spiritually facilitates the advent of alternative modern religions in Ukraine” (Dudar, 2000, p. 29)

Less exotic **neo-Christian movements** in Ukraine are novel churches that are also sponsored from abroad. These are the Church of Our Lady, the “New Generation” Church, the New Apostolic Church, the New Church (the Church of New Jerusalem), the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (the Mormon Church), the Church of the Full Gospel, the Salvation Army, the New Life Church in Kyiv, the Praise and Worship Center, the Word of Faith Church, the Lord’s Word Church, the Cliff Church, the Philadelphia Church of God, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Star-world Christianity –

free world religion (“Taolan”), the Church of the Risen Christ, the Church of the Living God, the Alpha and Omega Church, etc. (Dudar, 2000, p. 29).

The examples above show that, besides the traditional reference to the sacred text, their naming contains verbal markers of novelty or implied connotation to the controversial interpretation of the dogmas (e. g., the Church of the Full Gospel, the Church of the Risen Christ, the Church of the Living God). The emphasis on the cognitive metaphor in the name enables to objectify the vector of a new interpretation and replacement of the old with the new. This reframing secures the name’s communicative efficiency. Yet, the items in our sample also objectify a pathogenic potential relevant to revisionist intentions of cultural and axiological paradigms. It should be noted that the latest religious communication genres (a viral advertising, prayer breakfasts and prayer movements, thematic prayer marches, protest prayer tribunals in front of the Verkhovna Rada) intensify the conflict discourse initiated by representatives of the Orthodox Churches. The rhetoric of these genres is rooted in political ideologemes though their names contain components referring to the PRAYER concept. Within this approach, there are also radical appeals to “pray and shoot” opponents (Korczyński, 2020).

Thus, communicative dynamics of religious communication in the Ukrainian context reflects diverse and intense needs of people who consume religious information; it correlates with the polarized worldviews and contributes to the conflict discourse. Meanwhile, the pluralist tendency balances the extremes. For example, the polarization tendencies are counteracted with initiatives supported by Orthodox and Catholic churches. The initiatives aim at creating an ecological religious worldview (Kovalenko, 2018, p. 83-97). In particular, September 1 has been officially proclaimed a day of praying for environmental protection<sup>4</sup>. There are also various annual ecological media events designed to inform believers that “destructive exploitation and pollution are undoubtedly a sin against the Creator”<sup>5</sup>. The information space of religious communication has acquired the verbalizers ecological/sustainable – virtue, unsustainable – sin that have been enhanced through the information campaign where GOD and DEVIL appear as nuclear concepts. To further this campaign, mass media proposed to define the ecological approach as well as the vector of the worldview revision within the Orthodox tradition so as to mentally rationalize the religious picture of the world and the value system.

The features of texts that promote the ecological approach in Orthodoxy enable us to uncover the “smart-power strategy” in media as well as the tactic of emphasizing advantages on the level of content actualization. Simultaneously, the innovated religious narrative elaborates on the primary verbalizers (ecological/sustainable – traditional) by a range of associations: it is ecological/ sustainable when there are live flowers on graves – it is a sin when there are artificial flowers; the new burial, funerary and commemoration culture that relies on new technologies, photo-, audio- and video content, etc. opposes the old culture (dilapidated concrete cities of the dead, necro-megapolises, tombs, funeral dinners, etc.); the new modernized tradition – in contrast to the old rituals; the new sermon of belief in possible resurrection and eternal life in the digital format or with the help of artificial intelligence, etc. The cognitive style used to represent the doctrine of ecological/sustainable Orthodoxy synthesizes confrontational paradigms (scientific and religious, sacral and secular). The new conceptual system is promoted in media through skillfully applied methods of human behavior programming where verbal stimuli loaded with the compliance function emphatically obtain a special emotional and axiological status (“one should not expect God to filter water for us”<sup>6</sup>).

Within this approach, different types of information seem to complement each other; the validity of each of the information types is acknowledged due to usage verification; each type gains its sensory objectification. This kind of text representation facilitates modeling GOD – DEVIL concepts by adding imagery and metaphorical substitutional features with an emphasis on their axiological qualities. The above-mentioned initiative has also introduced “The ecological calendar of an Orthodox

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<sup>4</sup> Orthodox Church of Ukraine. The message from the Primate of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine on the Day of praying for the environment (2019) URL: <https://www.pomisna.info/uk/vsi-novyny/zvernennya-blazhennijshogo-mytropolyta-epifaniya-z-nagody-dnya-molytvy-za-dovkillia/> (30.08.2019)

<sup>5</sup> The message from the Primate of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine on the Day of praying for the environment (2020) URL: <https://www.pomisna.info/uk/epistle-post/poslannya-do-dnya-molytvy-za-dovkillia-blazhennijshogo-mytropolyta-kyivskogo-i-vsiyeyi-ukrayiny-epifaniy> (30.08.2020)

<sup>6</sup>Kovalenko, George (2018). Epiphany. God is not a filter. URL: <https://tsn.ua/blogi/themes/zhittya/vodohrescha-bog-ne-filtr-573700.html>

Christian that would contain both new dates (for example, September 1 as a day to pray for the environment) and traditional holidays with their consecration, whose religious content may be coupled with ecological meanings<sup>7</sup>. It should be noted that the regularity of ritual practices also has a programming effect. In addition, there is a suggestion to reconsider the philosophy of the religious fast that should be perceived as primarily a spiritual ecological practice (compare, for example, advertising slogans: “The main thing during Lent is not to devour one other!”, “Lent is a celebration of liberation from the material world!”). Thus, the initiative to start ecological Orthodoxy contains features of rebranding of the religious doctrine.

Summing up the study of innovative information products in the Ukrainian religious market, it should be noted that they are aimed at updating the cognitive value of religious messages and activate new stereotypes of sensory and non-sensory experience in the perception of consumers. These stereotypes reflect the idea of reconstructing the Absolute in any form. At the same time, their linguistic objectification is crucial.

**Services/Practice.** In Ukraine, church institutions are motivated in their marketing activity by the need for timely implementation of competitive strategies and tactics related to their own positioning and in accordance with the global trend (Iyera, 2014). As Ukraine’s authorities have failed to resolve many socially important problems, including spiritual and cultural issues, church institutions are encouraged to strengthen their authority in local spheres. This is indicated by church initiatives supplying humanitarian assistance to the sick, children addicted to alcohol or drugs, victims of abuse, individuals involved in military conflicts, etc.<sup>8</sup> Religious services related to baptism, funerals, weddings, consecration of housing and food, etc. are traditional in Ukraine. The newest services include: family festivals with a wide range of creative activities for adults and children, workshops, trainings, quests, Christian film festivals, family talk shows. Protestant and charismatic churches are most active in such proposals. Emphasis is placed on spiritual support measures, including those related to pandemic restrictions<sup>9</sup>.

Cognitive renewal has also affected gender issues. In particular, the idea of reviving the institution of women's deacon service is developing within the framework of Orthodox theology. Therefore, there are proposals for specialized training of women’s deacon<sup>10</sup>. One of the most effective mobilization applied genres, the effectiveness of which has commercial equivalents, is to seek assistance required to implement service initiatives<sup>11</sup>. The main message in this type of communicative interaction was and remains the slogan “God is Love”. The issue of substituting God in people’s lives, fundamental to any religious communication, is resolved here by guaranteed (financial/free/privileged/material things, etc.) or spiritual (prayer for...) targeted assistance by a network of fraternal organizations. The dilemma objectified on religious media resources - Who should help when troubles arise? The state or the church? - is decided personally, of course. Nevertheless, the empathic nature of this advertising genre has a mobilizing effect on people who read such ads. Like lexical modal operators (words: have, must, should, etc.), it encourages programmed behavioural reflection. Various markers of collective approval from aid providers, calls to imitate their actions, etc. are also used. While such texts correspond to the concept of CHARITY in messages by traditional denominations, openly manipulation methods are used by marginal denominations. Therefore, the use of mass media channels for retranslation of religious ideas, in which the media literacy is ignored, promotes the growth of the all types of verbal manipulation. However, at the level of institutional perception, such texts in religious media achieve their advertising function when the object of advertising is a charity promoted by a denomination. They are also indirectly involved in relaying pragmatic factors in image descriptions of church leaders, etc.

Thus, such fundraising announcements or other forms of support should not be underestimated as a mass media format in religious marketing, which constitutes a promising element for boosting

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> See: UPC KP URL: <https://www.cerkva.info>; UPC MP URL: <https://news.church.ua>; UGCC URL: <https://ugcc.ua>

<sup>9</sup> See: <http://www.facebook.com/fest.ff>

<sup>10</sup> Deaconesses in the Orthodox Churches: peacemaking potential or a source of conflict? / Nadiya Belyakova. September 1, 2018. SUA Center for Women's Studies at UCU.

URL: <https://lektoriy.ucu.edu.ua/about/>

<sup>11</sup> Christian solidarity changes but does not fade with the coronavirus. Retrieved from: <http://www.mudrasprava.fund/pages/ugccdonaion>

religious meanings, values and behavioural patterns in the minds of the target audience. Use of tokens with a positive component and meliorative constructions; tokens with emotional-evaluative semantics introduced into the text, which have a high manipulative potential and reduce the level of critical perception of the message ("implantation" of emotions in the text); metaphorization of media texts, appeals to facts and statistics; repetition of semantically "strong" words, etc., we define as characteristic features of these texts. Special attention should be paid to institutionalization of military chaplaincy in Ukraine<sup>12</sup>. When the potential of social narratives connected with the institute of Ukrainian chaplaincy is concerned, it should be mentioned that it is relevant not only to the strategic priorities of the Armed Forces of Ukraine but also to the inter-religious dialog since religious discord prevents the Ukrainian society from advancing in various epistemes in the humanitarian dimension. The epistemes have been traditionally borrowed from the religious worldview and incorporated in the cultural and ethnic picture of the world. Instead, the chaplaincy project has managed to unite standpoints of different churches and to reach consensus. Some social and community initiatives implemented through the media and the Internet also contribute to bringing back religious values into the lives of Ukrainians.<sup>13</sup> It is important that it simultaneously revitalizes in the cultural sphere of Ukraine those religious opinion leaders whose authority is paramount. Starting from the beginning of the pandemic, according to the estimates of experts from Qrator Labs Company, the volume of traffic on religious sites has increased by 30 – 500%, which results both from the fact that many people have started participating in church services via online video and from the fact that people have turned to priests with their problems.<sup>14</sup>

On their part, churches have succeeded in offering believers new types of support<sup>15</sup>. In Ukraine, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church has made a weighty contribution to process of coping with the pandemic.<sup>16</sup> Among its communicative initiatives, it is worth mentioning the online marathon "How to use self-isolation effectively and prevent plunging in depression". The marathon consisted of a month of webinars held with psychologists, psychotherapists, coaches who instructed people on the new social reality created by the coronavirus outbreak. In addition, during the pandemic, the Greek Catholics started up a phone help-line designed to provide both parishioners of the Greek Catholic Church and those in need for solace with emotional and spiritual support in the format of a prayer, counsel or conversation. This form of spiritual communication is expected to continue until the end of the quarantine in Ukraine. One of the most vulnerable spheres of religious life during the pandemic restrictions has been religious tourism. Before pandemic restrictions marketing innovations are developing in an appropriate manner, especially in religious tourism. The communicative specificity for pilgrimages is rooted in direct references to the sacred. Biblical texts are often employed in naming as a marketing tool for religious tourism, offering different pilgrimage routes. For example: "Jerusalem Pilgrim" (Zaporizhzhya Diocese), "Orthodox Planet" (Zaporizhzhya Diocese), "КОВЧЕГ" (ARK) (Izyum Diocese), "Orthodox Shrines" at the Church of Sts. Cosmas and Damian (Kyiv Diocese), Panagia Pilgrimage Service at the Orthodox Heritage of Ukraine Charitable Foundation at Holy Mount Athos, etc. This type of advertising creates favourable conditions for tourists, because it latently affects quality evaluation of tourist services, their moral and ethical potential, etc.

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<sup>12</sup> See: Information portal of chaplaincy service «Капеланство.info» (2020). Retrieved from: <https://kapelanstvo.info>; the Corps of military chaplains (2020) Retrieved from: <https://crs-center.org/pidrozdily-hsp/korpus-vijskovykh-kapelaniv/>; the Center of military chaplaincy of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (2020). Retrieved from: [www.facebook.com/Центр-Військового-Капеланства-УГКЦ476149199073378](http://www.facebook.com/Центр-Військового-Капеланства-УГКЦ476149199073378)

<sup>13</sup> [http://zik.ua/ua/news/2015/04/21/telefonna liniya sheptytskogo pratsyuvatyme\\_z\\_3\\_travnya\\_583055](http://zik.ua/ua/news/2015/04/21/telefonna liniya sheptytskogo pratsyuvatyme_z_3_travnya_583055)

<sup>14</sup> During the pandemic, the popularity of crypto-exchanges and sites about religion has grown (2020). RBC, 13 April. Retrieved from: [https://www.rbc.ru/technology\\_and\\_media/13/04/2020/5e90a9929a7947e709631e88](https://www.rbc.ru/technology_and_media/13/04/2020/5e90a9929a7947e709631e88)

<sup>15</sup> Religious organizations in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. National Institute for Strategic Studies. Information and analytical material /Tokman . Retrieved from: <https://niss.gov.ua/sites/default/files/2020-04/relegiyni-organizatsii-covid.pdf> 30.04.2020

<sup>16</sup> The Governor of Lviv Region thanked the Head of the UGCC for his significant contribution to preventing the spread of COVID-19 / RISU. Availed: [https://risu.ua/gubernator-lvivshchini-vruchiv-podyaku-glavi-ugkca-vagomij-vnesok-u-zapobigannya-poshirennyu-covid-19\\_n109017](https://risu.ua/gubernator-lvivshchini-vruchiv-podyaku-glavi-ugkca-vagomij-vnesok-u-zapobigannya-poshirennyu-covid-19_n109017)

The complete register of pilgrimage services is posted on the website of the UOC Pilgrimage Centre<sup>17</sup>. It includes an interactive map of Ukrainian monasteries, which is also a new genre of religious information. Now in Ukraine, just like in other countries of the world, there have appeared offers of virtual pilgrimage<sup>18</sup>. Besides, there is a discussion of future changes in religious practices and pilgrimage services that should meet international safety standards after the pandemic is over (Borysova, 2021). Religious narratives relevant to these processes are motivated by the significance believers put in the practice of visiting sacred places and, at the same time, in the need for safety, self-hygiene and responsibility for their own health. The concerns have been severely aggravated by fear caused by the pandemic. Here, God is positioned as a partner in the struggle for a human life but not its root cause. Therefore, religious services contribute to the rebranding that aims at changing the image of modern churches in the Ukrainian society.

**Religious goods.** This is probably one of the weakest positions of Christian marketing in Ukraine. It is necessary to emphasize that the quality of information marketing of religious goods has been enhanced. Recently, information about religious goods has been channeled effectively in Ukrainian cities<sup>19</sup>; it has also appeared on popular trading online platforms.<sup>20</sup> The commodity on offer is predominantly church furniture, icons, items of ritual priests' clothes, crockery, candles, religious books, calendars. There are also consecrated clothes for lay people, rings, genuine leather accessories decorated with quotes from the sacred text, souvenirs made of gems or wood, etc. One may notice other proposals "of a larger scale": these are the construction of "personal" churches or chapels on private land, preparation of relevant design documentation, etc. Thus, the target audience' demands are met mainly according to the key words. The correlation of lingual and extralingual components in this marketing is based on appealing to the "insider group", group empathy, precedential discourse phenomena ("candles from Athos"), etc. However, religious goods are overall a weak point in Ukrainian religious marketing. These are primarily medicines or natural foods (milk, butter, church wines, kvas, etc.). Until recently, Russian religious laws were applied in this field in Ukraine, but today the situation is gradually changing. It should be noted that Monastyrsky products and Valaam brands are considered promising in Russia. Moreover, their market positioning is consciously expanding due to the activation of non-confessional cognitive associations and neuromarketing techniques. Studies of cognitive associations with VALAAM revealed that people's brains assimilate, among other things, such verbalizers as "nature", which are often unmarked by conceptual connections with religious thematic meanings. This lays the basis for the careful selection of triggers for packaging. These include a specific colour schemes for packages (a bright yellow circle, associated with the sun, is placed against a white background, associated with purity), the image of a milk bottle on a paper milk bag (repeated usage of the phrase "milk bottle") and glasses for kefir (because it is "a glass of kefir"), etc. Developers have deliberately decided not to mention the monastery or Orthodoxy in order to increase their consumer audience<sup>21</sup>. Expanding the line of discursively labeled religious goods is objective, so experts are actively discussing the idea of introducing Orthodox standards in Christian countries, such as Halal in the Muslim community or Kosher products in the Jewish community.

We can see that the consumption of Halal and Kosher products in advertising is positioned as a component of religious identity. On the other hand, systematically used verbalizers conveying a positive assessment of quality, healthy lifestyle, environmental friendliness, cleanliness, pricing, etc. objectify implicit scenarios and other types of social identity, including elitism. This fuels the expansion of consumer demand, growth of the target audience and increase in sales revenue.

### Conclusion

<sup>17</sup> Pilgrimage trips, bus tours. Patriarchal Pilgrimage Center. Available: <http://pilgrims.in.ua>

<sup>18</sup> Wonderful virtual pilgrimage. Raphael Pilgrimage Center. July 4, 2016. Available:

<https://m.facebook.com/palomnyk.rafail/posts/1036768046391664>; The annual meeting continues... Available: <https://www.vaticannews.va/uk/church/news/2021-01/koordynacijna-grupa-svyatoji-zemli-2021.html>. 18 .01.

2021; A virtual pilgrimage to Lourdes continues

// Credo. July 16 2020. <https://credo.pro/2020/07/269384> .

<sup>19</sup> Religious goods in Kyiv: list, map, addresses, phone numbers

- Locator.ua or <https://list.in.ua> (Religiyni tovary u Kyjevi: spysok, mapa, adresy, telefony)

<sup>20</sup> Religious goods for the Orthodox in Ukraine- Prom.ua

<sup>21</sup> News. The strength of a brand is in believing in an honest product – the branding agency Depot / URL : [https://www.depotwfp.ru/news/sila\\_brenda\\_v\\_vere\\_v\\_chestnyy\\_produkt/](https://www.depotwfp.ru/news/sila_brenda_v_vere_v_chestnyy_produkt/)

We can see that Ukraine has developed a market of diverse religious ideas, services and goods. Communications marketing has shown the highest level of renewal. The cognitive style of Christian communication marketing is characterized by epistemological plurality, which corresponds well with the religious tolerance of Ukrainians. At the same time, signs of reframing are present in the informational representations of most denominational communities. Internal optimization through verbal influences (keywords, conceptual verbalizers, evaluation verbalizers, affective emotional correlation, parcel syntax, etc.), which have proven their influential effectiveness in business interaction, is a common feature of the analyzed marketing strategies in religious communication. At the same time, institutional religious communication in Ukraine remains a conflicting discourse. That is why the market for religious ideas is being updated most actively. Our study revealed that the most significant breakthrough in marketing happened primarily in the media sphere. In Ukraine, church institutions are motivated in their marketing activity by the need for timely implementation of competitive strategies and tactics related to their own positioning. As Ukraine's authorities have failed to resolve many socially important problems, including spiritual and cultural issues, church institutions are encouraged to strengthen their authority in local spheres. The language specifics of service marketing also correspond well with the mobilizing ability of linguistic influential technologies. Good marketing is probably one of the weakest positions of Christian marketing in Ukraine. Marketing of religious services and religious goods is in the early stages of formation.

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