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COMPETITIVENESS OF PACKAGING MANUFACTURERS

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In the context of globalization and increasing quality requirements for packaging products, ensuring competitiveness is becoming strategically important for the effective operation of enterprises across various sectors. In this regard, the study of the theoretical foundations of packaging product competitiveness, the identification of key evaluation parameters, and the directions for quality improvement are gaining particular relevance. Summarizing theoretical and methodological approaches to enhancing the competitiveness of packaging product enterprises involves systematizing scientific perspectives, as well as examining the impact of product competitiveness on the efficiency of their operations, their economic stability, and development prospects. Parameters that shape the competitiveness of products in the packaging industry are proposed, with economic and technical factors taken as the basis. Special attention is given to the study of the main technical parameters of packaging products, whose weighting coefficient is 0.7, while that of economic parameters is 0.3. Furthermore, a scoring scale from 1 to 5 was developed, and three experts were involved, which made it possible to determine the competitiveness coefficient for each of the three selected enterprises. The quality level of packaging products indicates competitiveness and the potential for entering the international market and engaging in foreign economic activity. Specific indicators of competitiveness for packaging industry enterprises and weighting coefficients for each are proposed, with the highest coefficients assigned to product quality and cost (0.3 each), and the lowest to product renewal and the provision of repair services. In addition, the study evaluates the competitiveness of three Ukrainian enterprises and identifies the leader. Attention is given to the study of the pallet market in Ukraine. Directions for improving the quality of packaging products are considered, which will ensure proper transportation, loading and unloading operations, storage and warehousing, and eliminate damage and spoilage of goods. The materials of the article will help Ukrainian manufacturers in the packaging industry focus on modern market requirements and develop practical skills to enhance their competitive positions in both domestic and foreign markets.

Keywords: competitiveness of packaging products, score evaluation, competitiveness parameters, enterprise competitiveness.

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Problem statement

Economic transformation and the crisis state of the economy have led to the development of competitive relations, where competition has become an integral part of the market mechanism. Today, competition is intensifying both in domestic and

foreign markets, directing the efforts of enterprises in the packaging industry towards solving the problems of increasing competitiveness, as they play a significant role in meeting the needs of manufacturing, agricultural, transport, and trade enterprises. This, in turn, strengthens environmental requirements for



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packaging in the context of Ukraine's integration into the global economy.

The development of the packaging industry in Ukraine is constantly constrained by systemic problems related to the complexity of renewing fixed assets, the implementation of innovative technologies, the strengthening of environmental solutions, instability in the supply of raw materials, financial limitations, a shortage of qualified personnel, and the state of war. The competitiveness of production demonstrates the ability to manufacture products of appropriate quality in terms of functional characteristics, price, and design, in accordance with international standards and contributing to the development of foreign economic activity. It is under conditions of intense competition that an enterprise's competitiveness, resilience, and ability to maintain its market position and occupy a certain share are revealed.

There are many definitions of the concept of competitiveness, approaches to its classification, and methods of assessment. However, summarizing the views of both contemporary domestic and foreign scholars, competitiveness is most often considered from the perspective of products. The main parameters of product competitiveness are technical (characteristics of properties related to consumption and performance during operation), regulatory (compliance with standards, technical specifications, technical regulations, or legislation), and economic (the economic effect of consumption or operation and the level of costs for acquisition or consumption).

Therefore, the study of the competitiveness of Ukrainian packaging manufacturers under the challenging conditions of the national economic system is a relevant and significant issue, both in the current context and in the future, since no industry today can operate without pallets.

Analysis and research of publications

Despite the relevance of defining enterprise success and the thorough study of competitiveness, there is no universal approach to its interpretation. The methodological foundations of enterprise competitiveness have been developed in the works of M. Porter, J. Lambin, Y. B. Ivanov, I. Ansoff, O. M. Tyshchenko, S. Y. Khaminich, O. Y. Kuzmin, S. I. Savchuk, and others.

A review of the literature shows that authors' perspectives differ: some emphasize the ability of an enterprise to maintain its position in a particular market, others consider the effective use of resources as a priority, while some associate enterprise competitiveness with product competitiveness.

Theoretical foundations of enterprise competitiveness have been addressed by I. Ansoff,

P. Kotler, S.I. Savchuk, A.A. Thompson, J. Robinson, and others, while practical aspects have been covered in the publications of O.I. Dragan, I.Z. Dolzhanskyi, O.Ye. Kuzmin, T.O. Zahorna, V.A. Taran, I.V. Piddubnyi, A.S. Mokhnenko, and others.

An analysis of the economic literature indicates various approaches by scholars to the characterization of competitiveness indicators, which differ depending on the enterprise's potential, field of activity, and market share. However, achieving a high level of competitiveness is more often considered from the perspective of product competitiveness.

Modern science offers a sufficient number of approaches to assessing competitiveness, but despite the ongoing process of creating and searching for new options, a single approach does not exist, given the study of different fields of activity and the influence of various factors.

The purpose of the article

The purpose of this article is to summarize theoretical approaches to enhancing the competitiveness of packaging product enterprises and to examine the impact of product competitiveness on the effectiveness of their operations. To achieve this goal, the article provides a systematization of scientific approaches to determining enterprise competitiveness, a generalization of the key factors influencing its formation, and a justification of the role of product quality as a foundation for ensuring stable market positions under intensified competition in both domestic and international markets.

Statement of the main material

In the context of digital transformation of society and the economy, as well as the rapid development of technologies, the competitiveness of enterprises is a crucial condition for their functioning in the market of a particular industry. According to scholars, competitiveness is viewed from the perspective of its concept, enterprise, product, or service. Most authors believe that the competitiveness of an enterprise depends on the competitiveness of its goods or services, while others consider it as the result of effective economic activity in a competitive market or as a comprehensive comparative characteristic reflecting the level of competitive advantages [1-4]. We agree with all the authors, as their views demonstrate the depth of this concept and emphasize the significance of each interpretation.

Recent studies on the competitiveness of manufacturing enterprises' products are based on the resource-based approach and dynamic capabilities, and demonstrate that the competitiveness of manufacturing enterprises is determined not only by the availability of resources, but also by their ability to adapt to

market changes through the implementation of innovations [5].

Emphasizing innovative development and digital transformation, innovative activity becomes particularly significant, as it ensures technological renewal of the manufacturing enterprise, improvement of product quality, and digitization of all processes, enabling prompt responses to market fluctuations.

In this context, the competitiveness of manufacturing enterprises' products is viewed as the result of the interaction between resource potential, innovative capabilities, and the ability to adapt and secure stable positions in both domestic and international markets. To ensure product competitiveness, which significantly affects the performance of manufacturing enterprises, the implementation of quality management systems becomes crucial, as it guarantees the stability of production processes and compliance of products with international standards.

In their work, D.A. Russ and S.K. Kucherenko emphasize that the competitiveness of products in the domestic market is primarily determined by their qualitative characteristics, price parameters, and ability to meet needs, where quality becomes the key factor in forming the market advantages of a manufacturing enterprise. This is achieved through the effective application of quality management practices at all stages of the production process [6]. The study by Potkбny and co-authors has proven that quality management practices are a key mechanism for increasing the efficiency of manufacturing enterprises, as they ensure the stability of production processes, reduce defect rates, optimize costs, and improve productivity, which affects not only technical and economic indicators but also the competitiveness of the enterprise itself [7]. Combined with the results of D.A. Russ and S.K. Kucherenko, who highlight the importance of product quality, it can be concluded that quality acts as an integrating factor between the level of product quality and the effectiveness of the manufacturing enterprise's operations.

It should be agreed with the authors that the level of an enterprise's competitiveness directly depends on the competitiveness of its products, as the products themselves are the key factor in market success. The products reflect the results of production and innovation activities, shape the enterprise's image, and distinguish it among competitors.

Despite the significant number of scientific works devoted to the study of the competitiveness of manufacturing enterprises, there is a lack of methodological approaches to evaluating the competitiveness of packaging products, and existing

models are focused on generalized indicators and do not take into account the specifics of the industry.

The assessment of the competitiveness of packaging products is carried out based on three key groups of parameters that comprehensively characterize their market attractiveness, quality, and compliance with established standards, namely: economic, technical, regulatory.

Economic parameters determine the cost of the product, technical parameters define consumer characteristics and intended use, while regulatory parameters guarantee safety and environmental compliance. The selection of parameters depends on the object of study and methodological approaches.

For the study of the competitiveness of packaging products, technical and economic indicators were used. To determine technical indicators, a scoring scale for evaluating the main parameters was developed, ranging from 5 to 1 points according to the requirements of the standard SSU 9557-87 “Flat Wooden Pallet” (Table 1).

Table 1

Scoring scale for evaluating the main parameters of packaging products

Parameters	Points	Parameter Characteristics
Length, 1200 mm	5	1200
	4	1199
	3	1198
	2	1196
	1	Less than 1196
Width, 800 mm	5	800
	4	799
	3	798
	2	796
	1	Less than 796
Cross board thickness, 22±3 mm	5	22
	4	21
	3	20
	2	19
	1	Less than 19
Moisture, not more than 26%	5	25-26
	4	26-27
	3	27-28
	2	28-29
	1	More than 29
Load capacity, kg	5	Up to 2500 kg
	4	From 2200 to 2400
	3	From 2000 to 2200
	2	From 1800 to 2000
	1	Less than 1800
Completeness of marking	5	Complete.
	4	One mark missing.
	3	Two marks missing.
	2	Three marks missing.
	1	Incorrect marking.

The quality assessment of three pallets was conducted using the scoring system proposed by a manufacturing enterprise in the Dnipro-city.

According to the results of the expert evaluation of the three selected pallet samples, it is evident that Sample 3, the "Eurostandard" pallet, received the highest average score, achieving the maximum number

of points across six indicators – a total of 30 points, with an average score of 5. Second place was taken by Sample 2, the "Standard" pallet, which received 28 points and an average score of 4.67. In third place was Sample 1, the "Superlight" pallet, which received 27 points and an average score of 4.5 (Table 2).

Table 2

Summary results of the score-based evaluation of the three selected pallet samples

Quality Indicators	Tested Sample Types								
	Sample 1 – "Superlight" pallet, points			Sample 2 – "Standard" pallet, points			Sample 3 – "Eurostandard" pallet, points		
	Experts			Experts			Experts		
	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Length	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Width	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Board thickness	5	5	5	4	4	4	5	5	5
Moisture	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5
Load capacity	3	3	3	4	4	4	5	5	5
Completeness of marking	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Total points	27	27	27	28	28	28	30	30	30
Average score	4.5			4.67			5.0		
Product quality, %	90			94			100		

Source: created by the authors

The number of points was reduced for Sample 2, the "Standard" pallet, for the parameter of cross board thickness, which accordingly affected the load capacity of the pallet, although the cross board thickness is within acceptable limits. Therefore, these two parameters received 4 points each out of a possible 5. As for Sample 1, the "Superlight" pallet, which ranked third, the moisture content was rated at 4 points, and the load capacity at 3 points.

The competitiveness of each sample was determined taking into account both cost and technical characteristics,

using a weighting coefficient where quality has a coefficient of 0.7 and cost has a coefficient of 0.3.

Calculations showed that the competitiveness of Sample 1 compared to Sample 2 is 0.93, which means that Sample 2 is 0.7% more competitive than Sample 1. The competitiveness of Sample 1 compared to Sample 3 is 0.83, indicating that Sample 3 is 0.17% more competitive than Sample 1. The competitiveness of Sample 3 relative to Sample 2 is 1.13, which demonstrates the highest level of competitiveness for Sample 3 compared to Sample 2 (Table 3).

Table 3

Competitiveness of the pallets of the studied enterprise

Value of the Competitiveness Coefficient (CCP) of the Selected Pallet Samples	Sample 1 "Superlight" pallet	Sample 2 "Standard" pallet	Sample 3 "Eurostandard" pallet
	83	93	1,13

Source: created by the authors

Using the competitiveness coefficients of the pallets, the competitiveness of manufacturing enterprises in the packaging industry was determined.

The following indicators were selected as the basis for assessing enterprise competitiveness: product quality, product cost, quantity of supply, renewal of

supply, provision of pallet repair services, the possibility of using pallets in foreign economic activity, and supplier reliability.

Each indicator was evaluated using a developed five-point scale, and the results are presented in the form of a table (Table 4).

Table 4

Score-based evaluation of competitiveness indicators of manufacturing enterprises in the packaging industry

No.	Competitiveness indicators of enterprises	Experts			Weighting coefficient
		LLC VUD “Paletten Express Service”	PE “Skify”	LLC “Niko-Pallets”	
1	Product quality	5	5	5	0.3
2	Product cost	5	5	5	0.3
3	Quantity of supply	5	4	4	0.1
4	Renewal of supply	4	4	5	0.05
5	Provision of repair services	5	5	5	0.05
6	Possibility of use in foreign economic activity	4	3	3	0.1
7	Supplier reliability	5	5	5	0.1
	Total	4.71	4.42	4.57	1

Source: calculated by the authors

Among the studied manufacturing enterprises, LLC VUD “Paletten Express Service” has the highest average score for competitiveness indicators, with 4.71 points. In second place is LLC “Niko-Pallets” with 4.57 points, and in third place is PE «Skify», whose average competitiveness score is exactly 4.42 points.

Considering that all enterprise competitiveness indicators have different levels of significance, the weighting coefficient for each was determined as follows: product quality (0.3); product cost (0.3); quantity of supply (0.1); renewal of supply (0.05); provision of repair services (0.05); possibility of use in foreign economic activity (0.1); supplier reliability (0.1).

The obtained results are presented in a table (Table 5).

Table 5

Evaluation of competitiveness indicators of manufacturing enterprises considering the weighting coefficient

No.	Competitiveness indicators	Weighting coefficient	LLC VUD “Paletten Express Service”	PE “Skify”	LLC “Niko-Pallets”
1	Product quality	0.3	1.5	1.5	1.5
2	Product cost	0.3	1.5	1.5	1.5
3	Quantity of supply	0.1	0.5	0.4	0.4
4	Renewal of supply	0.05	0.2	0.2	0.25
5	Provision of repair services	0.05	0.25	0.25	0.25
6	Possibility of use in foreign economic activity	0.1	0.4	0.3	0.3
7	Supplier reliability	0.1	0.5	0.5	0.5
8	Total	1	4.85	4.65	4.7

Source: calculated by the authors

Research has shown, it can be concluded that, based on the use of weighting coefficients for each competitiveness indicator, the first place was taken by LLC VUD “Paletten Express Service” with a total score of 4.85. In second place is LLC “Niko-Pallets” with a total score of 4.7, and in third place is PE “Skify” with a score of 4.65. Although LLC VUD “Paletten Express Service” ranked first, it did not

receive the maximum possible score due to incomplete renewal of supply and the inability to fully utilize its products in foreign economic activities. LLC “Niko-Pallets” has a limited quantity of supply and a low probability of entering the foreign economic market. PE “Skify” received the lowest score because it does not have a complete quantity of supply, lacks full renewal, and is unlikely to enter the European market.

The study of the competitiveness of three manufacturing enterprises producing packaging products indicates the complexity of entering markets beyond the domestic one, where one of the most important factors is the non-compliance of products with international requirements. In this context, the relationship between the quality of packaging products and international standardization becomes particularly significant, as standards form the regulatory framework and ensure compliance with global market requirements. For example, D. Zmitrovych and A. Kukharyuk, in their work, justify the role of standardization as a tool for increasing the competitiveness of manufacturing enterprises and expanding export potential [8]. Thus, international standardization establishes unified approaches to determining the parameters of safety, strength, and functionality of packaging products and demonstrates that insufficient implementation leads to a decrease in product quality and the competitiveness of manufacturing enterprises in this sector.

When studying the competitiveness of manufacturing enterprises and the quality of their products, it is necessary to analyze the packaging products market and its significance, as a comprehensive study of this market is a necessary prerequisite for developing an effective strategy for their development.

The packaging industry market is an important component of the commodity infrastructure, ensuring the circulation of goods and including wholesale and retail networks, logistics companies, warehousing, and commodity exchanges, as pallets are used in most supply chains – from production and sales to export. Pallet manufacturers are mainly small and medium-sized enterprises, numbering over 300, concentrated in the Kyiv, Zhytomyr, Lviv, Zakarpattia, Volyn, and Dnipro regions, which are engaged not only in production but also in repair and circulation.

Until 2020, the pallet market was characterized by steady growth, with Ukraine being an important supplier of raw materials and pallets to European countries. However, due to the war, the market contracted by 25–30%, and since 2023, there has been a relocation of manufacturing enterprises, rising wood prices, increased pallet exports, and a shortage of certified pallets, which requires the restoration and modernization of production. The competitive advantages of Ukrainian pallet manufacturers include low production costs, with a significant portion oriented toward European markets. However, the technological level remains uneven, as outdated equipment is used, limiting labor productivity and reducing product quality.

Thus, it can be concluded that the generalization of theoretical approaches and the results of the analysis of the competitiveness of manufacturing enterprises producing packaging products indicate a comprehensive interaction between product quality, the level of implementation of international standardization, innovative activity, and the ability to adapt to changes in the market environment. It has been proven that determining product competitiveness is a key factor in shaping the market positions of enterprises, building trust in the manufacturer, and expanding sales markets, particularly entering foreign markets. However, research has shown that increasing the competitiveness of packaging product enterprises is possible only through a comprehensive approach that combines product quality, international standardization, innovative development, and strategic market orientation, where the key directions are:

- ensuring the quality of raw materials (using certified raw materials, optimizing moisture and physicochemical properties, implementing modern drying and wood processing technologies, and using environmentally safe materials);

- modernization of production (installation of automated production lines with digital systems for controlling technical parameters and improving assembly and fastening technologies);

- implementation of a quality management system (certification of production according to international standards, continuous technical control of products, and statistical quality management);

- innovative development (use of reusable designs and implementation of environmentally friendly production technologies);

- improving employee qualifications (enhancing professional competence and encouraging responsibility for work results);

- improving operational characteristics (increasing resistance to mechanical and climatic influences and developing systems for repair and reuse of packaging).

Market research and the results of the competitiveness assessment of manufacturing enterprises in the packaging industry indicate the need for a comprehensive increase in the efficiency of their operations through the implementation of the above-mentioned priority development directions.

Conclusions

Thus, the competitiveness of Ukrainian manufacturers in the packaging industry is a determining factor for their stable operation under conditions of increasing internal and external competition, market instability, and transformational economic processes. The conducted research has shown

that the components of forming competitive advantages for enterprises include the quality and reliability of packaging, compliance with international standards, innovation in materials and technologies, efficient use of resources, as well as flexibility in logistics and production processes. Altogether, the implementation of these measures will contribute to strengthening the positions of domestic pallet manufacturers in the international market, expanding export opportunities, and ensuring the sustainable development of the packaging industry.

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КОНКУРЕНТОСПРОМОЖНІСТЬ ВИРОБНИКІВ ТАРНОЇ ПРОДУКЦІЇ

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В умовах глобалізації і зростання вимог до якості тарної продукції набуває стратегічного значення для забезпечення ефективного функціонування підприємств різних напрямків діяльності. У зв'язку з цим особливої актуальності набуває дослідження теоретичних засад конкурентоспроможності тарної продукції, визначення ключових параметрів її оцінювання та напрямків підвищення якості. Узагальнення теоретико-методологічних підходів до підвищення конкурентоспроможності підприємств тарної продукції передбачає систематизацію наукових поглядів, а також дослідження впливу конкурентоспроможності продукції на ефективність їх функціонування, їх економічну стійкість та перспективи розвитку. Запропоновано параметри, що формують конкурентоспроможність продукції тарно-пакувальної галузі, де економічні і технічні було взято за основу. Особливу увагу було приділено дослідженню основних технічних параметрів тарної продукції, коефіцієнт вагомості яких склав 0,7, а економічних – 0,3. Крім того, у роботі розроблено бальну шкалу оцінювання від 1 до 5-ти, задіяно трьох експертів, що дозволило визначити коефіцієнт конкурентоспроможності кожного, серед трьох відібраних. Адже рівень якості тарної продукції свідчить про конкурентоспроможність і можливість виходу на міжнародний ринок та здійснення зовнішньоекономічної діяльності. Запропоновано конкретні показники конкурентоспроможності підприємств тарно-пакувальної галузі та коефіцієнти вагомості для кожного, де найбільший коефіцієнт мають якість і вартість продукції по 0,3, а найменший – оновлення пропозиції і надання послуг з ремонту. Крім того в роботі здійснено оцінювання конкурентоспроможності трьох українських підприємств та визначено лідера. Приділено увагу дослідженню ринку піддонів в Україні. Розглянуто напрямки підвищенню якості тарної продукції, що забезпечить належне транспортування, вантажно-розвантажувальні роботи, зберігання і складування та усунє пошкодження і псування товарів. *Матеріали статті*

допоможуть зосередитись українському виробникові тарно-пакувальної галузі на сучасних ринкових вимогах та сформулювати практичні навички щодо підвищення конкурентних позицій на внутрішньому і зовнішньому ринках.

Keywords: competitiveness of packaging products, score evaluation, competitiveness parameters, enterprise competitiveness.

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In the context of globalization and increasing requirements for the quality of packaging products, ensuring competitiveness becomes strategically important for the effective functioning of enterprises across various fields. In this regard, the study of the theoretical foundations of packaging product competitiveness, the identification of key parameters for its assessment, and directions for quality improvement are gaining particular relevance. The generalization of theoretical and methodological approaches to enhancing the competitiveness of packaging product enterprises involves the systematization of scientific perspectives, as well as the study of the impact of product competitiveness on the effectiveness of their operations, their economic stability, and development prospects. Parameters that shape the competitiveness of products in the packaging industry are proposed, with economic and technical factors taken as the basis. Special attention is given to the study of the main technical parameters of packaging products, whose weighting coefficient is 0.7, while that of economic parameters is 0.3. Furthermore, a scoring scale from 1 to 5 was developed, and three experts were involved, which made it possible to determine the competitiveness coefficient for each of the three selected enterprises. The quality level of packaging products indicates competitiveness and the potential for entering the international market and engaging in foreign economic activity. Specific indicators of competitiveness for packaging industry enterprises and weighting coefficients for each are proposed, with the highest coefficients assigned to product quality and cost (0.3 each), and the lowest to product renewal and the provision of repair services. In addition, the study evaluates the competitiveness of three Ukrainian enterprises and identifies the leader. Attention is given to the study of the pallet market in Ukraine. Directions for improving the quality of packaging products are considered, which will ensure proper transportation, loading and unloading operations, storage and warehousing, and eliminate damage and spoilage of goods. The materials of the article will help Ukrainian manufacturers in the packaging industry focus on modern market requirements and develop practical skills to enhance their competitive positions in both domestic and foreign markets.

Keywords: competitiveness of packaging products, score evaluation, competitiveness parameters, enterprise competitiveness.

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