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## Article

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## PERSONNEL MARKETING IN THE SYSTEM OF AIRLINE ANTI-CRISIS MANAGEMENT

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**Abstract:** *The COVID-19 pandemic, and then the military aggression on the territory of Ukraine, had an extremely negative impact on the development of enterprises in all sectors of the state economy, personally affecting the air transport, which was forced to suspend its activities. The field of aviation services is traditionally characterized by the changing needs of customers, which causes a high degree of probability of dissatisfaction with the range and quality of aviation services provided by both domestic and international airlines. The dynamics of modern life and the business environment, the change in the ratio of work and free time increase the demand of the population for convenient and modern aviation services, putting increasingly high demands on the airlines that provide them to achieve competitive advantages. The main purpose of this study is to identify the place of personnel marketing in the airline's anti-crisis management system. Within the framework of this article, a study of the structural elements of the marketing complex of the enterprise in the field of service provision was carried out; the structural ratio of personnel categories in world civil aviation is determined; the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the level of employment in world aviation is analysed; the dynamics of changes in personnel costs in global aviation under the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic are determined; the dynamics of changes in operating income and expenses for social needs of the airline "Ukraine International Airlines" under the influence of a number of crisis phenomena in the world and state economy are analysed. The methodological methods of the conducted research were the following methods: general scientific methods of analysis and synthesis, logical and situational analysis and partial methods specific to economic sciences (subject-object approach, economic and statistical analysis, grouping, comparison and classification). According to the results of the research, the authors proposed an algorithm for the process of bringing the airline out of the crisis, which takes into account the prerequisites that affected the decline in the economic performance of aviation sector enterprises and focuses on the importance of introducing personnel marketing to the anti-crisis management system. The authors recommend applying the proposed model of using personnel marketing in the processes of anti-crisis management of an airline in order to include corporate culture in the system of anti-crisis management of an airline as an important tool that will contribute to the development of the intellectual capital of the company and the generation of new ideas. The results and recommendations of the study have practical value for Ukrainian airlines regarding the integration of personnel marketing into the anti-crisis management system.*

**Keywords:** personnel marketing, marketing technologies, anti-crisis management, airline, corporate culture, intellectual capital, development

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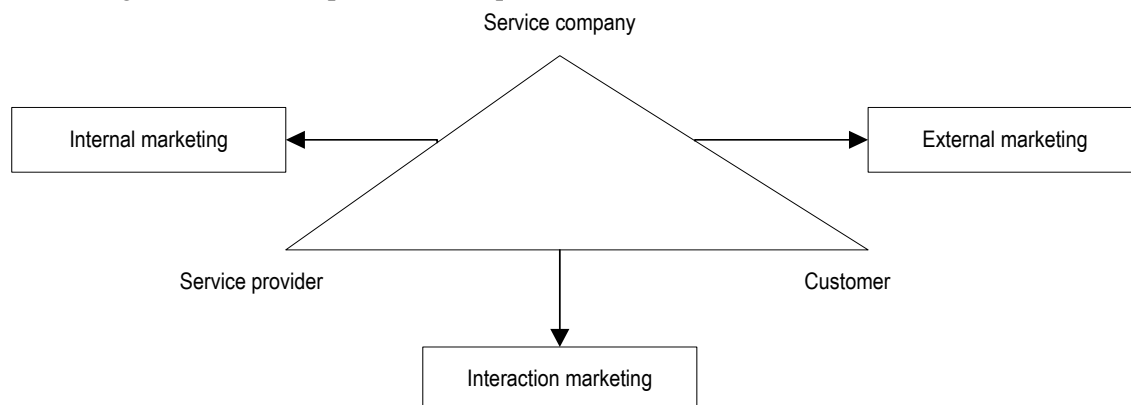
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**Introduction.** The issue of anti-crisis management in the aviation sector is currently receiving considerable attention because of transformational processes not only in the sector itself but also in the world economy. Transformations are taking place in response to the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. In the case of the Ukrainian aviation services market, the situation is also complicated by political and military conflicts taking place on the territory of the state and blocking the functioning of aviation sector enterprises. It is worth noting that reducing the anti-crisis management of an enterprise exclusively to arbitration management is somewhat erroneous for enterprises of any sector of the economy and airlines that operate in tandem with domestic and international airports. The above is under the influence of several macro- and mega-level factors that currently need flexible mechanisms for responding to crisis phenomena, which are not limited to developing approaches to avoid bankruptcy. The effectiveness of anti-crisis management of an airline is a complex phenomenon. It depends on the correct choice of strategy and tactics and the adequacy of the activity analysis of the external and internal environment. Thus, the analysis of the internal environment of the airline allows to identify hidden reserves for the implementation of the process of improving the airline activities, identifying and finding ways out of the crisis. At the same time, it should be noted that it is necessary not only to conduct an economic analysis of the activity of a specific airline but also to evaluate those essential elements of its potential that are reflected in its financial and strategic reporting. Understanding the importance of personnel marketing in the anti-crisis management of the airline is based on the need to identify and evaluate intangible resources and determine the value they create for the airline, which should be taken into account when developing anti-crisis measures. Effective personnel marketing allows for measuring intangible resources' values, determining the degree of their compliance with the airline's anti-crisis program. Suppose the needs and preferences of the staff are taken into account in the anti-crisis program of the airline, the probability of overcoming crisis phenomena in its activities increases. On the contrary, if the staff does not meet the parameters of the implementation of the anti-crisis program of the airline, even with significant investment in it, it will be extremely difficult to achieve success. Therefore, intangible resources directly impact airlines' activities, increasing the efficiency of internal processes. Therefore, when implementing anti-crisis management, it is necessary to provide a set of marketing measures in the field of bringing personnel characteristics in line with the airline's anti-crisis strategy.

**Literature review.** Some modern scientific sources noted that the marketing activity of any enterprise is directed, first of all, to the conquest of relevant markets and groups of consumers. They are complicated by several negative factors inherent in both individual sectors of the economy and the global economy in the turbulent environment as a whole (Carnevale and Hatak, 2020; Wong et al., 2020; World Health Organization; International Labour Organization; He and Harris, 2020). However, based on the understanding of the significant dependence of an airline activity on the contact of personnel with customers, increasing the efficiency of its economic activity requires allocating the process of interaction with customers into a special element of marketing activity. Recently, leading marketers have been inclined to divide the marketing complex into external marketing (marketing activities aimed at the external environment of the enterprise, for example, the development of new aviation services, the study of the aviation market and the activities of competitors, pricing, promotion of services) and internal marketing. The principles of organization, their formation, and their functioning are aimed at the process of staff interaction with clients and bringing staff characteristics into line with the needs of the operation of a specific enterprise (Ahmed et al., 2003; Ferdous et al., 2013). Thus, external marketing determines the principles of enterprise management concerning external customers (consumers of services). In contrast, the object of internal marketing (or personnel marketing) is internal customers - personnel, and internal marketing technologies are aimed at meeting the needs of internal customers. At the same time, some researchers are inclined to distinguish such a concept as interactive marketing (or interaction marketing) as «the ability of staff to serve customers» or as «the process of interaction between the consumer and the staff of the enterprise that provides services» (Conduit et al., 2014; Yang et al., 2015). The awareness of airline management of the special importance of personnel in creating its image and forming demand for its services is the basis of strategic planning for its development, especially when it comes to planning and implementing anti-crisis measures that require the search and use of the latest, flexible marketing technologies that can contribute to attracting to the cooperation of the «conscious consumer».

Despite the difference in the target purpose between external marketing, personnel marketing, and interactive marketing, these elements form a complete complex of marketing of an enterprise in the field of service provision (Fig. 1). Personnel marketing and external marketing are different elements of the company's marketing organization system, where personnel marketing is directed at the company's employees as service providers, and external marketing is directed at consumers of these services. In turn, interaction marketing

links the supplier and the consumer (Lee et al., 2015; Matanda and Ndubisi, 2013; Weber, 2015). It is quite often possible to identify the understanding of personnel marketing and interaction marketing when these components of the enterprise's marketing complex are combined into a single block within the limits of internal marketing, which, in our opinion, is not quite correct.



**Figure 1. Structural elements of the marketing complex of the enterprise in the field of service provision**

Sources: developed by the authors.

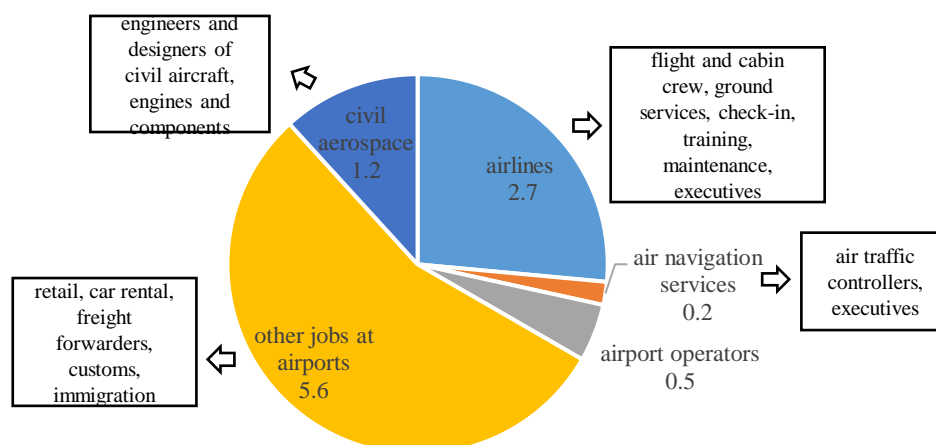
The approaches to defining and understanding the essence of internal marketing (personnel marketing), which are provided in the works of the classics and which, in fact, are oriented by leading modern researchers, are quite interesting and meaningful. Thus, experts of the American Marketing Association noted that «internal marketing is used to ensure a corporate culture that instils customer-focused values in all employees». (American Marketing Association). A classic approach to understanding the essence of internal marketing can be found in the works of P. Kotler, who considers it as «work on training and motivating company employees, aimed at improving the quality of customer service». At the same time, P. Kotler noted that «the concept of internal marketing is built so that employees at all levels of the organization implement business in practice and realize that their activities and the state of the business environment shape the client's consciousness. The purpose of internal marketing is to help employees provide services to customers that satisfy them» (Kotler, 2016). When evaluating the concept of internal marketing, S. Gronroos emphasizes that «employees of the company should be motivated in the best way to serve and perform work oriented towards customers consciously. The concept of internal marketing involves an active marketing approach and appropriate coordination of personnel actions» (Gronroos, 1990).

The review of literary sources made it possible to conclude that the meaningful characteristics of personnel marketing make it an important component of the concept of internal marketing of an enterprise in the field of service provision because by satisfying the needs of personnel, creating decent working conditions, ensuring motivation and customer orientation, it becomes possible to satisfy the needs of its external customers, which is extremely important under the conditions of the implementation of anti-crisis measures (Coombs and Holladay, 2002; Deverell, 2021). Successfully implementing the concept of external marketing in practice, the enterprise may not maximize its activity's efficiency if an important element of its potential is not used - the intellectual potential embedded in its personnel. Therefore, personnel marketing is an extremely effective tool in the system of anti-crisis management of the enterprise, which, due to the satisfaction of the needs of the personnel who communicates directly with the end consumers of services, increases the possibilities of effectively meeting the demand for specific services and guarantees the acceleration of overcoming crisis phenomena in the activity of the enterprise. The conclusions outlined above actualize the in-depth study of personnel marketing technologies in the enterprise anti-crisis management system and the determination of the possibilities of their application by Ukrainian airlines.

**Methodology and research methods.** The basis of the study of the given problem is the use of principles and methodological-logical approaches related to the application of general scientific methods of analysis and synthesis, logical and situational analysis, and partial methods inherent in economic sciences (subject-object approach, economic and statistical analysis, grouping, comparison, and classification). The techniques and methods mentioned above were used in various combinations at separate stages of the research, depending on the tasks set in it. Today, quite some methods and techniques are known and widely used in practice, which allow solving individual tasks of functioning successfully, increasing efficiency and anti-crisis management of enterprises of various sectors of the economy (Novikov and Novikova, 2014; Shtangret and Sylkin, 2018;

Aref'eva, 2011; Moretti et al., 2020). At the same time, in several cases, they note the success of attempts to develop and apply methods for solving certain classes of typical problems, including in the field of anti-crisis management (Bapuji et al., 2020; Duchek, 2014; Bundy et al., 2017; Schultz et al., 2012; Doern, 2016; Hong et al., 2012). However, most of the above methods, due to a significant number of formal prerequisites that ensure the correct application of mathematical tools, have a rather limited scope of their permissible application and often do not allow taking into account the qualitative characteristics inherent in personnel as an object and subject of anti-crisis management of the enterprise (Williams et al., 2017; Doern et al., 2019; Shrivastava, 1993; Boling, 1978). In addition, in several known problems of this type, the degree of adequacy of the formal description of the mutual influence of internal and external factors does not allow to take into account their correlation correctly. Thus, the issue of improving the management of facilities such as airlines cannot be investigated exclusively using specific mathematical and analytical tools without considering the logical and qualitative characteristics of their activity, especially in the context of research on personnel marketing. It reflects the effectiveness of using the intellectual component of their activity. The information base of the conducted study was served by scientific, in particular, sectoral publications, information and analytical materials of leading international aviation organizations, official websites of airlines, etc.

**Results.** The aviation industry includes 1,478 airlines and 3,780 airports, more than 33,000 aircraft, with 162 air navigation service providers (ATAG). Aviation brings direct benefits to the whole economy. It is believed that every job in aviation creates six jobs in other industries. Direct labor influence of aviation includes jobs in airlines and airports, aircraft producers, and air traffic companies. The airline's personnel system consists of specialists in sales, fares, freight transportation, aircraft maintenance, ground flight service, flight management, flight direction, financial, administrative, and other personnel (Fig. 2) (David, 2019). The synergistic effect of efficient work is achieved by ensuring flight safety, punctuality, and regularity and providing a service that meets international standards.



**Figure 2. Personnel in civil aviation, % for 10 million**

Sources: developed by the authors on the basis of (David, 2019).

The aviation industry adds value and benefits not only the consumers, the world economy, and national governments but also its investors. Labour is a part of direct influence on the whole national economy. That's why it was made comparative analyses of how the pandemic crisis influenced labour trends (Table 1). For the aviation industry, 2020 was the worst year on record (66% reduction in global Revenue Passenger Kilometers). Because of international movement restrictions, traffic resumption in 2021 has been slow-going. Such declining was repeated since the previous global fall down in 2018.

**Table 1. Labour data in aviation**

Key facts	2019	2020	October 2021
Aviation-supported jobs	87.7 million	41.7 million (-52.5%)	43.8 million (-50 %)
Direct aviation jobs	11 million; the productive coefficient was 4.3 according to jobs in other sectors of the economy	fall by 4.8 million (- 43%)	fall by 2.3 million (- 21 %)

Continued Table 1

Key facts	2019	2020	October 2021
<b>Others</b>	Low level of world trade by volume (1% or approx. 60 million tonnes) and a rather high level by value (35% but less than the previous period of \$6.5 trillion) Since 1950 airfares have reduced on 90% 58% of world traveling was made by air	It was made approx. 39 thousand return flights (more than 5 million citizens came back home at the beginning of the pandemic) It was made approx. 46 thousand special cargo flights (more than one million tons of medical equipment were transported by air)	50 % out of a job was expected to be support Most influenced Asia-Pacific and African regions (more than 50 %), then the Middle East, Latin America, and the Caribbean regions (from 43-47%), European and North American regions (less than 40 %)

Sources: developed by the authors on the basis of (International Airport Review, 2021; ATAG, 2021).

It's understandable that negative crisis dynamics in air transportation directly influenced the labour situation in aviation. Airlines have had to cut staff. Employment in airlines was reduced to more than two million in 2020, and the level was stable in 2021. It was forecast a greater fall in employment, but governmental relief measures recovered the situation. The expectation is to increase by 10.8% in 2022. Overall, labour cost is 18% lower than in 2019, and further decline isn't expected. So, unit labour cost increased by more than 45% and is expected to decline (about 11%) (Table 2) (IATA). In the pre-crisis period, the total number of employees in civil aviation was 1.45 million, among which 24.5% of pilots, 5.9% of air traffic controllers, 30.5% of maintenance technicians, and 38.9% of the cabin crew. The expectation was that civil aviation could require approximately twice each of them (David, 2019).

Table 2. Changes in labour costs under the COVID-19

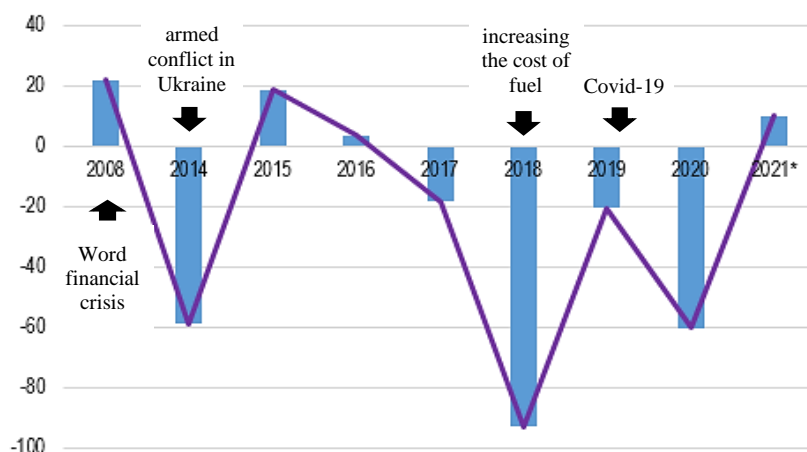
Airline Sector	2019	2020	2021F
<b>Staff costs, \$ billion</b>	189	155	156
<b>% of change</b>	3.5%	-18.1%	1.0%
<b>Employment, million</b>	2.9	2.5	2.5
<b>% of change</b>	0.3%	-15.6%	0%
<b>Unit personnel cost, \$/ATK</b>	0.12	0.18	0.16
<b>% of change</b>	0%	47%	-12%

Note: 2021F – forecast for 2021

Sources: official websites (IATA, 2021; ICAO, 2021; ATAG, 2021).

The national carrier of Ukraine is UIA (Ukraine International Airlines), which has been operating since 1992. This airline positions itself as the world's first low-cost network carrier (UIA), linking this positioning with the consequence of ensuring the availability of airline services for passengers by systematically reducing fares by removing the cost of additional services from the ticket price. The transition from the base carrier to the network carrier model should be linked to the impact of external factors on the Ukrainian market, including the global financial crisis of 2008, the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine in 2014, the occupation and annexation of Crimea, the devaluation of the national currency, which led to a sharp increase in costs in foreign currency and because of lower operating performance (Fig. 3). After the global crisis of 2008, the airline's ownership changed: exit foreign investors from the capital and expiration of the standard term of EBRD presence, although the carrier officially attributes such changing to strategy modification in Ukraine. However, the airline ended the year with a profit, despite the global air transportation crisis, which negatively affected the financial performance of many airlines worldwide, and the unprecedented rise in aviation fuel prices, as 2007 was the most successful year in its 15-year history. In May 2009, the airline became the leader in the Ukrainian passenger air transportation market. The number of passengers carried by UIA in 2009 exceeded 1 million, significantly higher than competitors. However, due to internal macroeconomic instability in Ukraine (2014), the airline managed to reduce staff, optimize the fleet, and discontinue the operation of the number of non-profit routes. Against the background of significant growth in passenger traffic and the number of flights in 2018, UIA suffered a loss of almost \$ 100 million. In 2017, its losses amounted to UAH 304 million, while in 2018, they increased to UAH 2.7 billion. Three main factors explained the company's results:

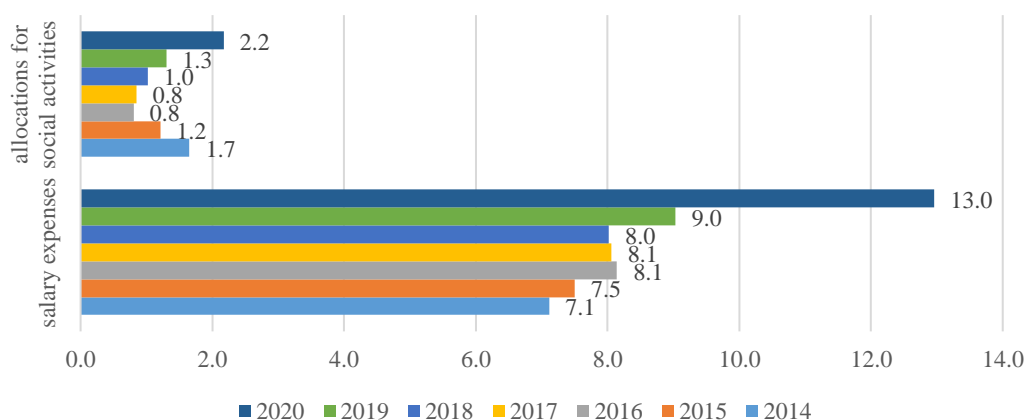
rising costs of aviation fuel, increased air consumption over closed airspace over the occupied Crimea and Russia, and disrupted delivery schedules for Boeing 777-200ER.



**Figure 3. Operating revenue of UIA, million \$**

Sources: developed by the authors on the basis of (Ukraine International Airlines, 2008-2021).

The COVID-19 crisis reduced operating income to \$ -60.2 million. Optimizing UIA's operating activities allowed it to demonstrate positive financial results in early 2021. It assumed the prevention of unreasonable costs, the total reduction in fixed costs of the company, complete rejection of unprofitable flights, restructuring of lease payments, and optimization of staff. As a result, the percentage of labour costs in 2020 increased, but in fact, they almost halved (2.4 billion UAH in 2019 and 1.3 billion UAH in 2020) (Fig. 4) (UIA).

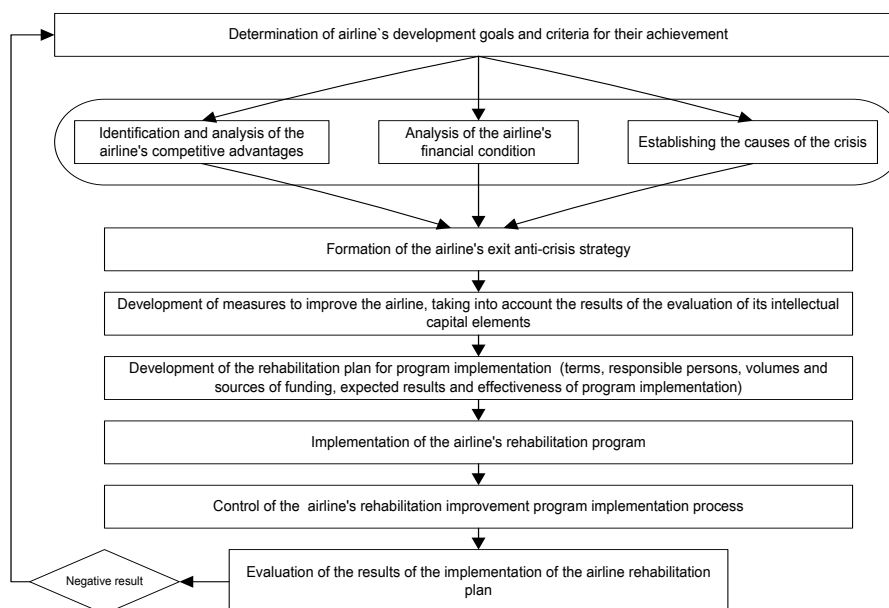


**Figure 4. Percentage of salary expenses and allocations for social activities in operating costs**

Sources: developed by the authors on the basis of (Ukraine International Airlines, 2014-2020).

In general, UIA has a policy of attracting highly qualified and competent professionals who can contribute to the overall success of the airline and has a training centre, which was established to provide training and retraining of aviation professionals under Ukrainian and international standards. Currently, the airline needs pilots, flight attendants, lead analysts, on board power managers, and chief engineers of computer systems.

Taking into account the prerequisites mentioned above that affected the decline in the economic performance of aviation sector enterprises, the study proposes to focus on anti-crisis management of the airline company, taking into account personnel marketing. As already emphasized above, today, the main goal of bringing the company out of the crisis is to restore its solvency, pay off payables, organize its effective activities after the crisis and increase its competitive advantages. In general, the process of removing the airline from the crisis state can be depicted in the following interconnected stages (Fig. 5).

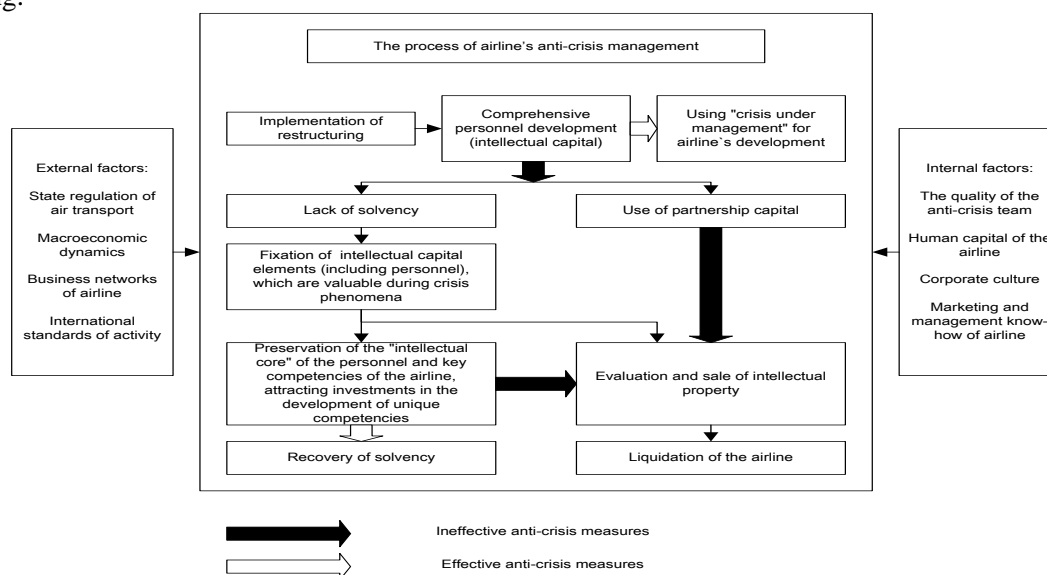


**Figure 5. Algorithm of the process of bringing the airline out of the crisis**

Sources: developed by the authors.

It is supposed that intellectual capital is a critical factor in the airline's internal environment, influencing the process of its anti-crisis management. The carrier of intellectual capital is the object of internal marketing - the staff. The quality of the anti-crisis team, which the airline's management can form, directly depends on the quality of the airline's intellectual capital. In practice, making anti-crisis decisions is an extremely complex task. It cannot be solved alone. Thus, the anti-crisis manager, usually appointed by the company's management, forms an anti-crisis team. The anti-crisis team will contribute to solving several issues that will arise in setting anti-crisis management tasks, assessment of the current state of the airline, and developing an anti-crisis strategy. At the same time, solving the problems of anti-crisis management requires an intensive dialogue between specialists of various profiles, the search for non-standard (unique) complex solutions to some problems in conditions of uncertainty and a shortage of several resources (first of all, the time allocated to the development of a specific set of measures).

Fig. 6 proposes a model for the use of personnel marketing in the processes of anti-crisis management of an airline, which takes into account internal and external factors of its activity. It is quite clear that the anti-crisis management of an airline is a complex process that depends on a number of factors, each of which is a separate object for research. Therefore, this study singled out only the key ones directly related to personnel marketing.



**Figure 6. Model of the personnel marketing usage in the processes of airline's anti-crisis management**

Sources: developed by the authors.

Quite often, the difficulties that arise in the anti-crisis management of an airline are related to the corporate culture that has been formed in the company and affects the team members' behaviour and quality of work. Effective personnel marketing contributes to the inclusion of corporate culture in the anti-crisis management system of the airline as an important tool that will contribute to the development of the company's intellectual capital and the generation of new ideas. Today, it is already known that the economic value of the knowledge possessed by the company's personnel is, if not greater than financial assets, then almost equal to them. Therefore, when forming the airline's anti-crisis strategy, it is extremely important to pay attention to this resource, which, due to the lack of other resources, can become decisive for the successful implementation of the strategy. Unfortunately, nowadays, there are still situations when, in the context of a crisis, airlines first of all cut staff by tens of percent, curtailing one or another direction of their activity, without consideration of the need for rapid recovery of this direction due to changes in the conditions of the external business environment.

**Conclusion.** Anti-crisis management is quite closely related to communication processes and marketing technologies, which is reflected in the airline's staff, its debtors, creditors, and partners. In order to intensify the promotion of anti-crisis management ideas at the level of a specific airline, the management should focus on its adaptation to the collective consciousness of the staff. When forming approaches to influence collective consciousness, it is necessary to consider such features as unpreparedness for the perception of crisis phenomena, insufficient understanding of the processes taking place in the company, exaggeration of their negative impact, etc. Thus, it is necessary to evaluate the situation both emotionally and rationally. The complexity of personnel marketing in the anti-crisis management system of the airline is determined by the lack of information since crisis phenomena destroy the usual information flows and lead to the loss of trust of the personnel in previously reliable sources of information. Building trust as a psychological state and element of personnel management, a method of communication with them is a necessary prerequisite for coordinating the actions of all subjects of the airline's anti-crisis management.

**Author Contributions:** conceptualization, O. P. and I. H.; methodology, I. M.; software, O. K.; validation, I. M. and O. P.; formal analysis, O. K.; investigation, I. H. and I. M.; resources, O. K.; data curation, O. P. and I. M.; writing-original draft preparation, O. P. and I. M.; writing-review and editing, I. H.; visualization, I. M.; supervision, O. P.; project administration, O. P.

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#### **Маркетинг персоналу в системі антикризового управління авіакомпанією**

Пандемія COVID-19, а потім і військова агресія на території України негативно вплинули на розвиток підприємств всіх секторів економіки держави, особливо авіаційний транспорт, що був змушений призупинити свою діяльність. Сфера авіаційних послуг традиційно характеризується мінливими потребами клієнтів, що обумовлює високий ступінь ймовірності незадоволення спектром та якістю авіаційних послуг, які надаються як вітчизняними, так і міжнародними авіакомпаніями. Динаміка сучасного життя та бізнес-середовища, зміна співвідношення робочого та вільного часу підвищують попит населення на зручні та сучасні авіаційні послуги. Перед авіакомпаніями постають все вищі вимоги щодо досягнення конкурентних переваг. Основною метою даного дослідження є виявлення місця маркетингу персоналу в системі антикризового менеджменту авіакомпанії. У рамках даної статті проведено дослідження структурних елементів комплексу маркетингу підприємства сфери надання послуг; визначено структурне співвідношення категорій персоналу у світовій цивільній авіації; проаналізовано вплив пандемії COVID-19 на рівень зайнятості у світовій авіації; визначено динаміку зміни витрати на персонал у світовій авіації під впливом пандемії COVID-19; проаналізовано динаміку змін операційного доходу та витрат на соціальні заходи авіакомпанії «Міжнародні авіалінії України» під впливом ряду кризових явищ у світовій та державній економіці. Методичним інструментарієм проведеного дослідження стали наступні методи: загальнонаукові методи аналізу та синтезу, логічного та ситуаційного аналізу та часткові методи, притаманні економічним наукам (суб'єктно-об'єктний підхід, економічний та статистичний аналіз, групування, порівняння та класифікація). За результатами проведеного дослідження, авторами запропоновано алгоритм процесу виведення авіакомпанії з кризи, який враховує передумови, що вплинули на зниження економічних показників діяльності підприємств авіаційного сектору та орієнтується на важливість впровадження маркетингу персоналу до системи антикризового менеджменту. Авторами рекомендовано застосовувати запропоновану модель маркетингу персоналу в процесах антикризового управління авіакомпанією задля включення корпоративної культури до системи антикризового управління авіакомпанією як важливого інструменту, що сприятиме розвитку інтелектуального капіталу компанії та генерації нових ідей. Результати та рекомендації дослідження мають практичну цінність для українських авіакомпаній щодо інтеграції маркетингу персоналу в систему антикризового менеджменту.

**Ключові слова:** маркетинг персоналу, маркетингові технології, антикризове управління, авіакомпанія, корпоративна культура, інтелектуальний капітал, розвиток