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OPTIMIZATION OF FOREIGN TRADE: TOOLS FOR INCREASING COMPETITIVENESS IN GLOBAL MARKETS

The article examines modern tools for optimizing foreign trade aimed at increasing competitiveness in global markets. Particular attention is paid to key strategies for increasing the efficiency of exports and imports, including: the use of digital technologies to automate business processes and manage trade flows; the use of financial instruments to support foreign economic activity, including loans, guarantees and risk insurance; the implementation of effective logistics solutions that optimize transport costs and reduce delivery times; and the development and implementation of innovative marketing strategies for entering new markets and maintaining positions in existing ones.

The paper analyzes the experience of leading countries and companies in implementing modern methods of optimizing foreign trade, identifies key success factors and challenges faced by enterprises in the global economic environment. Based on the analysis, recommendations are proposed for a comprehensive approach to increasing the efficiency of foreign economic activity, combining technological, financial and managerial solutions.

Ключові слова: *foreign trade, competitiveness, optimization, world markets, export support tools, logistics, digital technologies.*

Introduction. In the current conditions of globalization, dynamic development of international markets and growing competition on the world stage, effective organization of foreign trade is becoming one of the key factors of economic development of both states and individual enterprises. Foreign trade plays an important role in ensuring access to new markets, attracting foreign investment, increasing the level of technological development and integration into global production and logistics chains.

Optimization of export and import processes allows enterprises not only to reduce operating and logistics costs, but also to increase the speed of product delivery, ensure its compliance with international quality standards, and flexibly respond to changes in demand and preferences of the global consumer [1]. In addition, the use of modern digital technologies, financial instruments to support foreign economic activity, innovative logistics solutions and marketing strategies creates the prerequisites for increasing competitiveness in international markets and forms sustainable mechanisms for enterprise development in the long term.

In the context of modern economic conditions, it is important to explore not only existing approaches to optimizing foreign trade, but also accumulated international experience, which allows identifying effective management models adapted to the specifics of specific industries and markets. This is especially relevant for enterprises that seek to integrate into global value chains and ensure a high level of economic sustainability and innovative development.

Statement of the problem. In the modern global economy, foreign economic activity of both enterprises and states faces a number of complex and interrelated challenges. Growing competition in world markets, instability of exchange rates, political and economic risks, complexities in the field of international logistics and numerous regulatory barriers create serious obstacles to the effective promotion of goods and services at the international level [1, 2]. These factors increase the risk of financial losses, negatively affect the sustainability of the business and limit the potential opportunities for development in foreign markets.

The problem of optimizing foreign trade is becoming especially relevant for states and enterprises that seek to increase their competitiveness and consolidate stable positions in the global market. Insufficiently effective use of financial, logistical, marketing and digital tools leads to the loss of potential sales markets, increased operational and transaction costs, reduced export volumes and limited economic growth [3, 4].

Modern science and practice demand the development of comprehensive solutions that ensure not only an increase in foreign trade volumes, but also an increase in its efficiency, stability and predictability. Solving this problem requires a systemic approach that integrates digital technologies for automating business processes and managing trade flows, modern logistics strategies for optimizing transportation costs and reducing delivery times, financial mechanisms for supporting foreign economic activity, as well as innovative marketing solutions for entering new markets and strengthening positions in existing ones [5, 6].

The application of such a comprehensive approach allows enterprises and states not only to increase their competitiveness at the international level, but also creates the prerequisites for the formation of sustainable business models capable of adapting to dynamic changes in the global economy.

Research objective. The purpose of this study is to comprehensively identify, systematize, and evaluate effective tools for optimizing foreign trade that can increase the competitiveness of enterprises in world markets in modern conditions of globalization, increased competition, currency and political instability, as well as dynamic changes in market conditions.

The study is aimed at a comprehensive analysis of key mechanisms for increasing the efficiency of foreign economic activity, in particular:

- use of financial instruments to manage risks, ensure payment stability and support export-import operations;
- application of digital technologies to automate business processes, analyze trade flows and optimize management decisions;
- implementation of modern logistics strategies to reduce delivery times, optimize transportation costs and improve the level of service;
- development and implementation of innovative marketing solutions that allow entering new markets and strengthening positions in existing ones.

In addition, the study aims to analyze the world experience of leading countries and companies in implementing these tools, in particular, to assess the effectiveness of integration approaches, innovative practices and comprehensive strategies for foreign trade management. As a result of the work, it is planned to formulate recommendations for building a comprehensive model for optimizing foreign economic activity, which combines technological, financial, logistical and marketing mechanisms to ensure sustainable economic development and increase the global competitiveness of enterprises.

Research methods. To achieve the goal of the study, a set of methods was applied that provide a comprehensive and systematic analysis of the foreign economic activity of enterprises, as well as tools for increasing their competitiveness in world markets. This approach allows combining theoretical research with practical analysis and forming recommendations adapted to the modern challenges of the global economy.

1. **Monitoring and analysis of scientific publications** is the study of modern scientific works, statistical reports, analytical materials of international and national organizations, which allows to identify the main trends, problems and promising directions of foreign trade development [1–7]. This method ensures the updating of knowledge and the identification of modern tools for optimizing trade processes.

2. **Systems analysis** is used to integrate various aspects of foreign economic activity, including financial, logistical, marketing, and digital tools, into a single model for optimizing foreign trade. This method allows you to assess the relationships between individual components and their impact on the overall efficiency of the enterprise.

3. **The comparative method** is used to assess the effectiveness of foreign trade strategies in different countries and enterprises, which allows identifying best practices adapted to the specifics of different markets [6, 7]. The method provides an analysis of successful management models and approaches to optimizing international trade.

4. **Analytical method** — used to systematize data on risks, costs, competitiveness, and efficiency of foreign economic activity. Using this method allows you to identify priority areas for optimization and develop measures to improve the efficiency of enterprises.

5. **Synthesis and generalization** - the method allows integrating the results of the analysis of international experience, statistical data and scientific research into practical recommendations for optimizing foreign trade. This creates the basis for the formation of a comprehensive approach to managing foreign economic activity.

The application of these methods provided a comprehensive and systematic approach to the research, allowing us to obtain scientifically sound conclusions and develop practically oriented recommendations that can be used to increase the competitiveness of both Ukrainian and international enterprises in global markets.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The relevance of optimizing foreign trade is confirmed by numerous scientific studies that emphasize the need for a comprehensive approach to increasing the competitiveness of enterprises in international markets.

Kovalchuk [1, pp. 46–48] examines the impact of globalization on the foreign economic activity of enterprises and identifies key factors for successful entry into international markets. He emphasizes the need to integrate modern digital technologies, such as automated trade flow management platforms, and effective logistics solutions to increase the efficiency and accuracy of product exports.

Bilorus and Halchynsky [2, pp. 36–42] analyze the post-war reconstruction of the Ukrainian economy and the role of foreign trade in restoring economic stability. The authors emphasize the importance of state support for exporters, the use of financial instruments to minimize risks and stimulate activity in foreign markets, which is critically important in periods of economic instability.

Lytvynenko [3, pp. 14–18] explores the process of digitalization of foreign economic operations, noting the key role of B2B and B2G platforms in simplifying document flow, increasing transparency and efficiency of interaction with international partners. The use of such platforms allows optimizing export and import processes, reducing time and resource costs.

Romanenko [4, pp. 80–83] focuses on the logistical aspects of foreign trade, emphasizing the need to implement multimodal transportation and the Just-in-Time principle to reduce the costs of transportation and storage of products. The author notes that the integration of modern logistics strategies contributes to increasing the flexibility and adaptability of enterprises in global supply chains.

Petrova [5, pp. 102–106] examines marketing strategies in international trade, in particular, the adaptation of products to the specifics of different markets and the use of innovative methods of promoting goods. The author emphasizes that effective marketing in combination with other optimization tools significantly increases the competitiveness of enterprises.

OECD [6, pp. 15–22] demonstrates the effectiveness of government programs to support exporters in European and Asian countries, including insurance and lending to small and medium-sized enterprises. The World Bank [7, pp. 8–14] emphasizes digital trade and e-commerce as key mechanisms for integration into global markets and the development of international business models.

Analysis of recent publications shows that modern competitiveness of enterprises requires a comprehensive approach that integrates financial, digital, logistical and marketing tools. This confirms the need to develop systemic models of foreign trade optimization that can ensure the effective functioning of enterprises in the dynamic conditions of the global economy.

Presentation of the main material. Optimization of foreign trade involves the integrated use of financial, digital, logistical and marketing tools, taking into account both the internal resources of enterprises and the conditions of the global economy [1–7]. Financial support mechanisms play a key role in reducing the risks of non-payment and ensuring the stability of cash flows. Loans, factoring, export insurance and government programs contribute to expanding access of enterprises to international markets and create the prerequisites for the stable development of foreign economic activity [2, 6].

For a more clear presentation of the main financial instruments to support exporters, Table 1 is provided, which systematizes the key mechanisms for financing and insurance of foreign trade activities, as well as their advantages and examples of practical use. This classification allows us to assess the impact of each instrument on ensuring the stability of cash flows, reducing financial risks, and expanding enterprises' access to international markets.

Table 1.

Main financial instruments to support exporters

Tool	Appointment	Benefits for businesses	Usage examples
Export credits	Financing the production and supply of goods	Ensuring liquidity and reducing dependence on internal resources	State export banks, commercial bank credit lines
Export insurance	Protection against non-payment risks	Minimizing financial losses due to delays or non-payments	Export contract insurance programs
Factoring	Acceleration of working capital	Fast financing without waiting for the client to pay	Sale of receivables to international financial institutions
State support programs	Subsidies and grants	Reducing costs and stimulating entry into new markets	Programs to support SMEs and innovation projects

Analysis of the data presented in Table 1 allows us to draw several important conclusions regarding the use of financial instruments to support exporters. First, export credits and factoring provide enterprises with the necessary liquidity and accelerate the turnover of financial resources, which is especially important for companies with limited internal resources. Second, export insurance reduces financial risks associated with non-payment or delays by international partners, which contributes to increasing the stability of foreign economic activity. Third, state support programs are an important tool for stimulating entry into new markets and reducing the costs of enterprises for international expansion.

In general, the use of a comprehensive set of financial instruments creates the prerequisites for the stable development of enterprises in the field of foreign trade, increases their competitiveness in world markets, and allows them to more effectively adapt to changes in the global economic environment.

Digital technologies significantly accelerate foreign trade processes, increase their transparency and efficiency. The use of B2B and B2G platforms allows you to automate document flow, optimize customs procedures and ensure more flexible interaction with international partners. This allows you to reduce time and resource costs, increase the efficiency of management decisions and respond faster to changes in the market situation [3, 7].

Logistics optimization is an integral part of increasing the efficiency of foreign trade. Integration of supply chains, the use of multimodal transportation and the Just-in-Time principle allow minimizing the costs of storage and transportation of products, while ensuring timely fulfillment of orders. Such approaches create the prerequisites for increasing the flexibility and adaptability of enterprises in global supply chains [4, 8].

For a more visual presentation of the main logistics and digital tools for optimizing foreign trade, Table 2 is provided, which systematizes the key technologies and strategies that increase the efficiency of international operations. The table demonstrates how the integration of modern digital platforms, multimodal transportation and the Just-in-Time principle allows for reducing costs, increasing delivery speed and adapting enterprises to changing market conditions.

Table 2.

Logistics and digital tools for optimizing foreign trade

Tool	Appointment	Advantages	Usage examples
B2B platforms	Simplifying interaction with partners	Accelerate communications, reduce errors	Alibaba , TradeKey
B2G platforms	Electronic procurement and document management	Automation of customs procedures, increased transparency	e- Export systems, customs portals
Multimodal transportation	Using different modes of transport	Cost reduction and delivery time reduction	Combined rail-sea routes
Just in Time	Inventory optimization	Reducing warehousing costs and increasing flexibility	Warehouse inventory management systems

Analysis of the data presented in Table 2 allows us to draw several important conclusions regarding the effectiveness of logistics and digital tools in foreign economic activity. The use of B2B and B2G platforms helps to accelerate communications with partners and automate document flow, which reduces the risk of errors and increases the efficiency of management decisions. Multimodal transportation provides an optimal combination of different types of transport, which allows you to reduce transportation costs and accelerate the delivery of products to the end consumer. The Just-in-Time principle allows you to effectively manage inventories, reduce warehousing costs and increase the flexibility of enterprises in response to changes in demand in foreign markets.

Overall, the integrated use of digital and logistics tools provides enterprises with increased adaptability, speed of response to market changes, and stable functioning in global supply chains. This creates conditions for sustainable export growth and increased competitiveness in international markets.

Marketing and innovation tools play an equally important role. Adapting products to specific markets, developing a brand, participating in international exhibitions and actively using digital promotion channels ensure increased recognition and market share [5, 9]. The integration of financial, digital, logistics and marketing approaches creates a synergistic effect, allowing enterprises to quickly adapt to changing market conditions, reduce risks and ensure stable export growth [6, 7].

The comprehensive implementation of these measures ensures increased competitiveness of enterprises, minimization of costs and risks, and also creates conditions for the sustainable development of foreign economic activity in international markets.

Conclusions. Optimization of foreign trade is a key factor in increasing the competitiveness of both individual enterprises and the state as a whole in global markets. The study shows that an effective combination of financial, digital, logistics and marketing tools can significantly reduce the risks associated with non-payment , delivery delays and exchange rate volatility, reduce transportation, storage and inventory management costs, and increase the speed of order processing and product delivery to end consumers.

Analysis of international experience shows that successful enterprises actively integrate digital platforms, automate document flow, apply multimodal transportation and the Just-in-Time principle in logistics, and adapt marketing strategies to the specifics of specific markets. Such a comprehensive approach creates a synergistic effect that allows enterprises to quickly respond to changes in external conditions, minimize risks, and ensure stable growth in export volumes.

The implementation of integrated models for optimizing foreign economic activity, which combine financial, digital, logistics and marketing solutions, is a prerequisite for sustainable development of enterprises and strengthening the economic position of the state in the international arena. In particular, the use of state programs to support exporters, modern digital platforms and innovative logistics strategies contributes to the formation of long-term competitive advantages and ensures business flexibility in response to the challenges of the global economy.

Thus, comprehensive optimization of foreign trade is not only a tool for increasing the efficiency of individual enterprises, but also an important element of the national economic strategy, ensuring stability, growth, and integration into world markets.

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ANDRZEJ SKOMOROWSKI, ІНЕССА НІКОЛЕНКО. ОПТИМІЗАЦІЯ ЗОВНІШНЬОЇ ТОРГІВЛІ: ІНСТРУМЕНТИ ПІДВИЩЕННЯ КОНКУРЕНТОСПРОМОЖНОСТІ НА СВІТОВИХ РИНКАХ. У статті досліджено сучасні інструменти оптимізації зовнішньої торгівлі, спрямовані на підвищення конкурентоспроможності на світових ринках. Особлива увага приділена ключовим стратегіям підвищення ефективності експорту та імпорту, серед яких виділяються: застосування цифрових технологій для автоматизації бізнес-процесів і управління торговими потоками; використання фінансових інструментів підтримки зовнішньоекономічної діяльності, зокрема кредитів, гарантій і страхування ризиків; впровадження ефективних логістичних рішень, що дозволяють оптимізувати транспортні витрати та скоротити терміни доставки; а також розробка та реалізація інноваційних маркетингових стратегій для виходу на нові ринки та утримання позицій на існуючих.

У роботі проаналізовано досвід провідних країн та компаній щодо впровадження сучасних методів оптимізації зовнішньої торгівлі, визначено ключові фактори успішності та виклики, з якими стикаються підприємства у глобальному економічному середовищі. На основі проведеного аналізу запропоновано рекомендації щодо комплексного підходу до підвищення ефективності зовнішньоекономічної діяльності, що поєднує технологічні, фінансові та управлінські рішення.

Ключові слова: зовнішня торгівля, конкурентоспроможність, оптимізація, світові ринки, інструменти підтримки експорту, логістика, цифрові технології.