

UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA
SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS

MASTER'S THESIS

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**THE DEVELOPMENT OF MARKETING STRATEGY FOR A
SELECTED SPORT BOOK ON THE CROATIAN MARKET**

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AI- Artificial Intelligence

B2B – Business to Business

CAGR – Compound Annual Growth Rate

CFF – Croatian Football Federation

FIFA – International Association Football Federation

ROI – Return on Investment

SPMP – Self Publishing Market Process

UEFA – Union of European Football Associations

INTRODUCTION

Due to their recent achievements, the Croatian Football Federation (hereafter: CFF) became the best standing sport federation in Croatia, and it is frequently mentioned in the discussions of football enthusiasts across the globe. CFF used an opportunity and decided to invest time and money in sports education, so in 2022 they published the book "Croatian School of Football", which contains a synthesis knowledge for the system, organization, and development of young football players from Croatian football professionals. The main purpose of this master thesis is to help in creating the marketing strategy for published book, that will be used as source for real marketing strategy creation by CFF.

This master thesis has multiple objectives, with its primary focus on the creation of an effective marketing strategy for the book "Croatian School of Football". Following objectives of the thesis are:

- to present the basics of marketing and marketing strategy along with the importance of its application in the field of book publishing,
- analyzing the internal environment of CFF and the book (the publisher, the product, the editors and associates)
- analyzing the external environment of CFF and the book (popularity of football, coaching educations and Croatian football and players),
- analyzing potential competition of the CFF and their book on the current book marketplace,
- making a short summary of the strategic analysis of the CFF and the book using the SWOT approach,
- proposing the goals, objectives, and target market for the book strategy,
- proposing marketing strategy activities and how to implement and evaluate it.

The thesis was done using both primary and secondary sources. First, a brief literature review was conducted through secondary sources that were publicly available online and in libraries. Moreover, the same method was used for most of the external analysis of the CFF and the book, which tackles outside influences on the strategy creation such as football, Croatian players, and coaching popularity. The primary sources were mainly based on informal and unstructured interviews with book editors. Methodologically, the thesis is based on traditional marketing strategy elements and concepts that are mixed up with effective book marketing trends.

The work was done through full cooperation with the CFF, editors of the book, Petar Krpan and Ivan Krakan, and the mentor, full professor Maja Zalaznik. Thesis will be used by CFF as material for creating a real marketing strategy for the book, with the start of the implementation in January 2024.

1 LITERATURE REVIEW

Marketing promotion is a group of activities that are used to communicate and inform customers about the product, service features and different types of offers with a goal to create awareness, drive sales, and increase demand (mba SKOOL, 2021). In order for marketing activities to be effective and goals to be fulfilled at the highest level, it is important to follow the strategy throughout the entire process. Consequently, the business and the team that performs the tasks will be more productive, more focused, and ultimately more profitable (Chirgwin, 2016). This master thesis is dedicated to the creation of a marketing strategy for selected sports book on the Croatian market. Therefore, before the strategic analysis and creation of the marketing strategy, this section will present fundamental concepts and terms of the thesis, such as marketing, promotion, marketing strategy, the importance of book marketing and its marketplace, and finally, the presentation of already published and written academic and scientific research in the same or similar field of research.

1.1 Marketing and promotion

American Marketing Association (2017) defines marketing as “the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large”. Marketing became the function that deals with customers more than any other business function. Creating customer value and satisfaction are at the very heart of modern marketing thinking and practice. More precisely, the main goal of marketing is to attract new customers by consequently promising superior value, and at the same time keeping current customers by delivering satisfaction. Nowadays, marketing has become one of the vital components in the strategies of many nonprofit organizations, such as schools, hospitals, museums, churches, and even police departments (Kotler & Wong, 2005).

Many uninformed people think that marketing and advertising are the same, but it is important to distinguish the difference between those two terms because they cannot be equalized. Advertising is still important, but marketing is so much more – it is about conversation and not shouting out messages. Marketing is focusing on building customer love through engagement and relationships. The principles are set on connecting to an emotion, giving customers a reason that organizations care about them (Kotler & Wong, 2005). One of the greatest and worldwide examples of successful marketing is McDonalds. “McDonald's Corporation, the 1.2 American fast-food hamburger retailer, is a master global marketer. With over 18,000 outlets in more than 90 countries and more than \$23 billion in annual worldwide sales, McDonald's opens a new restaurant every three hours somewhere in the world. Credit for this performance belongs to a strong marketing orientation: McDonald's knows how to serve people and adapt to changing consumer wants” (Kotler & Wong, 2005).

Marketing as a term also cannot be equated with promotion but wouldn't be fully effective without it. In addition, both terms serve different purposes - marketing is in charge of increasing the awareness of a product and bringing it to the potential customers, while promotions are "the final step of marketing". They are responsible for turning the visitors into buyers. In other words, marketing and promotion can be compared with "awareness and conversion" (Gaj, 2022). There are seven aims of marketing promotion (mba SKOOL, 2021):

- Introducing a new product
- Educating customers about the usage of a product
- Increasing awareness of the product
- Differentiation from competitors
- Achieving increase in product recall
- Building brand image and value
- Encouraging people to buy in bulk (especially in off season to level the demand)

In general, business owners are often focused on how to reduce costs and maximize profit, while forgetting that marketing nowadays drives increased sales that generate business growth. According to the Hubbard Chicago (2021), worldwide companies can attribute 44% of their overall revenue in 2021 to their marketers even if the marketing budget is the first one on the line to get cut during economic crisis. Many unexperienced business owners take a short-term approach to their business and eventually get burned. Consequently, business owners must be aware of the role of marketing strategy and its impact on all aspects of the business no matter the industry. As the definition of marketing says, marketing introduces business to the public, helps in establishing the brand reputation and provides engagement that brings long term customer relationships. If marketing is done well, it has a direct effect on sales, which is crucial to the health of every type of business (Hubbard Chicago, 2021).

Usually when it comes to the final steps of marketing, there are 6 different promotion types that can influence on generating sales in any industry or business (Gaj, 2022):

1. Personal selling implies "one-on-one" communication with customers. It can be expensive because of the time and resources needed, but at the end it tends to be the most profitable out of all six promotion types.
2. Advertising refers to targeted messages that boost brand awareness among new and current, already existing customers.
3. Direct marketing differs from advertising because it is dedicated to marketing, reaching out to the customers that are already familiar with the product or service primarily through email, SMS, and social media.
4. Public relations are mostly used to build a constructive brand image.
5. Lobbying is one of the methods that drives sales by influencing public opinion.

6. Merchandising is a method of influencing the customer's behavior and increasing of sales through different kinds of presentation of the store or the products.
7. Sales promotions are used to stimulate demand through various methods, such as discounts, free shipping, gifts, cashbac, etc.

Marketing campaigns have an enormous impact on all generations that are living in the 21st century. Organizations place their business on everyday communication with people through all available types of media: mobile applications, radios, televisions, banners, etc. Therefore, they influence people's life decisions, both in a bad and a good way. As technology advances, so do marketing campaigns, ideas and tools that organizations use to be competitive on the market and maximize their sales. According to DeVries (2023) this are 10 trends and prediction for 2023:

1. Managing digital expectations: organizations need to think about all digital aspects when thinking about customer experience.
2. Playing the authority long game: creating an authority in area of expertise is a great way to establish credibility and position of the brand, which takes time and it's not a "get rich quick" scheme.
3. Fear of artificial intelligence (hereafter: AI): this is one of the biggest challenges for AI in "Business to Business" (hereafter: B2B) world and it is also connected with the fear of public's perception of AI in B2C.
4. AI will become much more accurate in 2023 which will help to improve trust: open sourcing of many AI models has made data collection and training both faster and more accurate.
5. A shift in spending for both consumers and companies: conscious consumers will change, or at least be more careful about their purchasing patterns in 2023. Their focus will be on choices that maximize convenience, utility, and impact. Consequently, marketing experts will need to carefully adjust their methods to meet consumers where they are accordingly.
6. Accelerating physical/digital connectivity: after Covid-19 people craved for enjoyment in their long-missed physical experiences. In 2023, physical experiences of brands will remain important, but it is also important to highlight that those businesses that prioritize making these experience moments feel continuous and intentional, will be more successful.
7. Social commerce is on the rise: social commerce was rising in 2022 and will continue the same in 2023 by brands *and* consumers, as it creates a smoother and more direct experience for all users.
8. The best marketing strategy in 2023 will be one with integrated video and written content: websites are still working on having enough text information but adding video to showcase products/services will be one of the main tools for expanding reach to a wider audience.

9. Time to re-examine the selling process: often, organizations are faced with a situation where they only need to look at the service versus staffing and selling design and staffing to support their customers and increase profits.
10. Prioritizing retention over new lead acquisition: this one has been important for some time and remains. Customers that feel organizations understanding and optimization of tech will stay longer and refer more often.

Nowadays businesses are trying hard to get the right formula for grabbing consumers' attention because of the high level of competition, everyday new products, advertisements, etc. There are a few famous examples that really succeeded in 2023. Figure 1 shows the collaboration between Heinz and Absolut Vodka. They launched a limited edition "Tomato Vodka Pasta Sauce" and successfully hit their target audience. For some people it may seem odd, but it was a huge success for both companies because they succeeded to use the power of consumer interest to create a product that has already been famous (Astre, 2023).

Figure 1: Newest marketing campaign in collaboration between Heinz and Absolut



Source: Absolut (n.d.).

For some people it may seem odd, but it was a huge success for both companies because they succeeded in using the power of consumer interest to create a product that has already been famous. Besides making a profit, they also expanded their audience (Astre, 2023).

One of the striking marketing campaigns this year was from Food delivery company "UberEats". In the United Kingdom, they dedicated one month to "Ramadan", more known as a time of the holy fasting, gratitude, and community in Muslim culture. During "Ramadan" Muslims don't eat while do sun is up, from the moment that sun disappears, they can eat. They made a terrific move focusing on for Ramadan campaign. Each billboard

presented a popular dish from the Muslim culture along with a countdown to sunset. Figure 2 shows one of the billboards in the underground in London (Astre, 2023).

Figure 2: UberEats “Ramadan” marketing campaign in United Kingdom



Source: The Drum (2023).

The billboards were updated daily so they were showing the exact time of sundown. In addition, the brand showed respect for other cultures, pointed out the importance of equality, religions and was a real example for other brands and their marketing strategies in future (Astre, 2023). It may look complicated, but everything starts with knowing the target audience, creating a brilliant marketing strategy, and then transferring it to reality.

In addition to excellent marketing campaigns that exude creativity and competence, one of the trends that has been going on for a long time is social and environmental responsibility. Marketing is the one responsible for communicating with the public, so it often operates as the “public face”. In recent years the number and variety of public issues has increased. One of the reasons for that is the growing perception that marketing organizations are not just sellers, but they also have responsibility to be more socially responsible, more precisely, be more responsible for their actions and more responsive in addressing and respecting social and environmental concerns (Rahnama & Beiki, 2013). Being socially responsible means an organization shows concern for the people and environment while doing their everyday business tasks and goals. It is a fact that ethics and environmental movements will have even stricter demands on organizations in the future – mostly referring to problems like destruction of rain forests, global warming, endangered species, and others. The truth is, organizations have been facing this already for a while, but in the future those standards of environmental responsibility in organizations marketing and manufacturing activities are going to be much stricter and higher (Kotler & Wong, 2005).

1.2 Book marketing

The book marketplace is becoming bigger and more diverse every year. As a result, after months and months of writing, no matter how good the book is, it needs to stand out and bring the new value to its customers. Book marketing has become a crucial aspect of promoting and selling a book to the target audience. It refers to the set of strategies and activities undertaken by authors, publishers, and marketers to promote and advertise a book to its target audience. The primary goal of book marketing is to raise awareness about the book, generate interest among potential readers, and ultimately drive book sales. Moreover, it encompasses a wide range of tactics, both traditional and digital, aimed at maximizing the visibility and impact of the book. These strategies may include designing an eye-catching book cover, obtaining positive book reviews, utilizing social media and online advertising, organizing book launch events and signings, collaborating with influencers or other authors, and participating in literary festivals or book fairs (Hasmark Publishing International, 2023).

Effective book marketing involves understanding the target audience, identifying unique selling points of the book, and tailoring marketing efforts to reach and engage with the intended readers. In a competitive publishing landscape, a well-executed book marketing campaign can significantly boost a book's chances of success and enable it to stand out in a crowded market. It involves various strategies and techniques aimed at raising awareness, generating interest, and consequently increasing book sales. Whether writers wish to promote the book by themselves or want to hire a service company, book marketing is an essential tool that secures a good position in the market. Some of the most important benefits why authors should use book marketing are (Gnome book writing, 2022):

- a) Book marketing increases sales: the truth is that one of the initial reasons why most authors sell books is to gain profit. Unfortunately there are still authors that think that book marketing is an extra expense and not a long-term investment. They rely on cheap and ineffective methods to promote their books locally and internationally. This is understandable way of thinking for new authors that are limited with budget, but nowadays this approach should be considered as an investment. Yes, book marketing can be expensive, but it can increase profit together with readership in the future.
- b) Book marketing creates brand recognition: all the authors should consider themselves as a brand. They should not just advertise their book, but they need to increase their personal promotion to connect with their audience. Book marketing ensures that customers become aware of the author, just as much as they know about the book. Another advantage is that it allows readers to search the book by simply entering authors name on Google. Therefore, book marketing allows readers to learn more about authors experience and history, while creating brand recognition.
- c) Book marketing separates authors and their books from the “pack”: the total number of new book titles published annually is around 4 million (Talbot, 2022). This statistical information is one of the crucial reasons why nowadays writers cannot survive without book marketing if they want to maintain the recognition of their name and

book. Effective book marketing creates good PRs, blogs, and articles that ensure that the book content reaches its target market post-release. Also, it is not just the book that needs to stand out, there are also the authors that need to separate themselves from other famous authors in the industry.

- d) Book marketing increases Return on Investment (hereafter: ROI): as previously mentioned, one of the most important reasons for book promotion are a long-term book sale, but book marketing has become more than just selling books.
- e) There are other long-term benefits like expert visibility and lead generation: the visibility for a book becomes equal to the visibility for the author, which builds expertise and generates the whole new world of opportunities.

One of the important success factors besides profit and sales, that authors and their marketing agencies should be aware of, are other benchmarks that are used to measure book marketing success are (Foster, 2022):

- Amazon category rankings and bestseller status
- Amazon and Goodreads reviews and ratings
- Net Galley engagement
- Industry reviews from Publishers Weekly, Foreword, Kirkus, and others
- Awards like the IBPA Benjamin Franklin Awards, Axiom Business Book Awards, Porchlight Business Book Awards, and others

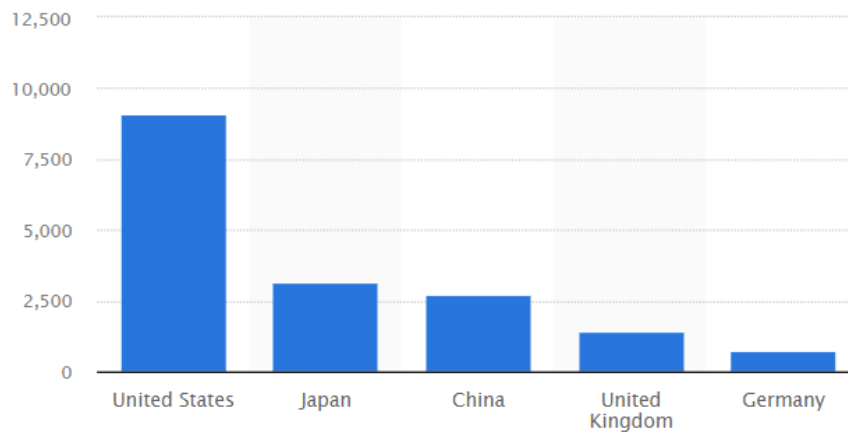
Similar to book marketing, book promotion refers to the specific activities and strategies implemented to raise awareness, generate interest, and increase the visibility and sales of a book. It is an integral part of the broader book marketing process and focuses on creating excitement and engagement around the book to attract potential readers and encourage them to make a purchase. By incorporating effective book marketing strategies, authors can increase their chances of success, connect with readers, and navigate the competitive publishing environment.

1.3 Book marketplace

The books and publishing industry are going through some serious changes. Currently, Google's estimates are that there are around 129,864,880 published books in the world at this moment. Print newspapers and magazines are already for some time recording decreased circulation figures and fewer subscriptions, while on the other hand physical books have easier time going through rising digital age. Although printed books are still the most accepted and favorable option for consumers, e-books and audiobooks are now the ones that are gathering more and more fans, and both are predicted to see a promising Compound Annual Growth Rate (hereafter: CAGR). According to Statista (2022), audiobooks are the ones which are the fastest growing segment of the publishing industry.

The industry of print books cannot get away from the fact that digital is the future. Table 1 shows that United States records most of the digital publishing revenue worldwide. It can also be seen that other markets such as Japan, China, United Kingdom, and Germany are far behind. Digital publishing implies online magazines, newspapers, magazines, and books, and according to the numbers from the Figure 3 it is predicted that e-book revenue in the United States could approach to eight billion dollars in the next few years.

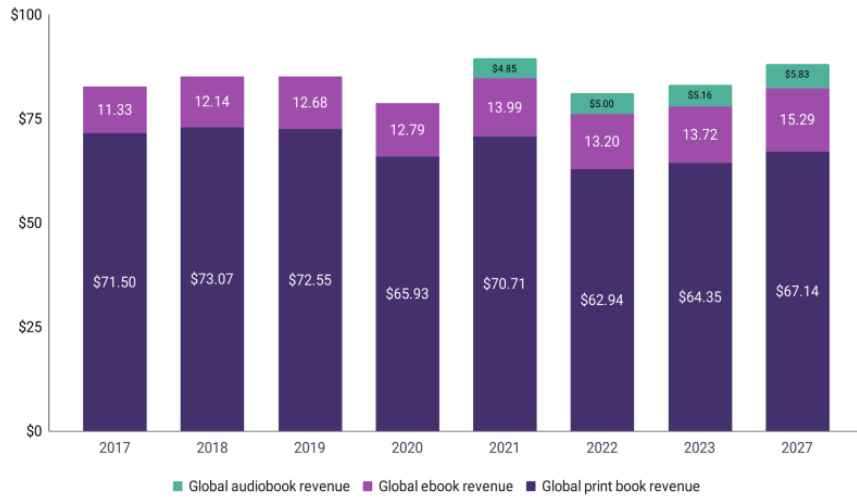
Figure 3: Digital publishing revenue in top 5 countries (in million \$)



Source: Statista (2022).

Global book sales statistics distinguishes that the trade books are the market's biggest segment. Trade books are the ones that the most people will think of under the terms of books and publishing. They are being stocked at "brick-and-mortar" retail bookstores and they also cover the best-sellers of online booksellers, and the volumes found in public libraries (Peterson, 2020). This segment of books covers more than 60% of global revenue. Figure 4 shows global book sales by format and its predictions.

Figure 4: Global book sales by format (in billion \$)

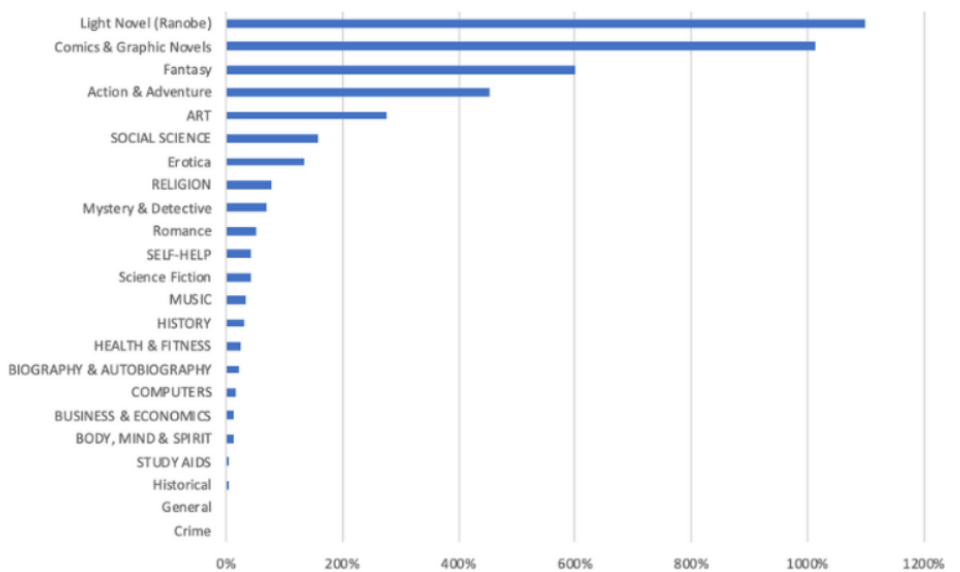


Source: Talbot (2022).

Print books still dominate the market with 77% of the share but because of the growing digital era, are expected to stagnate, while audiobooks and eBooks will grow by 27% over the next 5 years.

Figure 5 shows bestselling book categories in 2021 (compared to 2022) based on sales value. The most popular categories are Fantasy, Romance, Erotica, Business, Comics, Self-help, Psychology, and Thrillers. New growth opportunities are ahead of Light Novels, Comics, Fantasy, Action & Adventure, and Art.

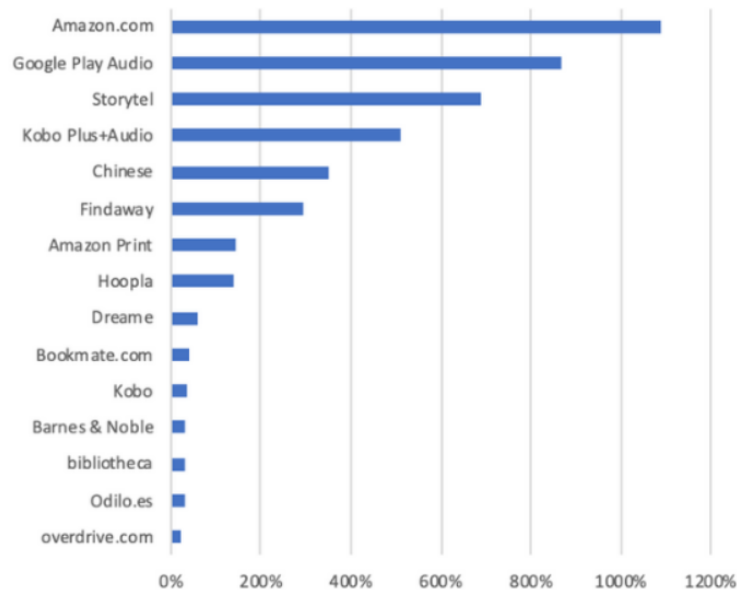
Figure 5: Bestselling book categories in 2021 (compared to 2022)



Source: Jentetics (2021).

Figure 5 confirms that traditionally print-heavy genres like Comics and Art are starting to increasingly digitize their content together with more book types and titles (Jentetics, 2021). It is also important to highlight through which channels those books are sold, which can be seen in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Bestselling stores growth in 2021



Source: Jentetics (2021).

According to current trends it is understandable that digital book sales perform great in all markets. But, according to (Jentetics, 2021) the best are the retail stores which hiked by 164% in 2021. More precisely, major retailer Amazon grew tremendously, while more publishers start selling their books on Amazon via PublishDrive (Jentetics, 2021).

1.4 Marketing strategy

Book marketplace is a constantly changing environment, but one thing remains the same – a strong, intentional, and consistent marketing plan is imperative to connect with the readers and reaching the full potential of publishing a book (Foster, 2022). To make marketing plans as successful as possible, businesses need to invest in building a marketing strategy before implementing any activities.

Chandler (1962) sees a strategy as “the determination of the basic long-term goals and objectives of an enterprise and the adoption of courses of action and the allocation of resources necessary to carry out the goals”. By its definition, “a marketing strategy is a long-term plan for achieving a company’s goals by understanding the needs of customers and creating a distinct and sustainable competitive advantage” (Optimizely, n.d.). It directs

businesses in everything - from customers detection to decisions about what channels will be used to reach those customers. Furthermore, it helps in defining where the business stands in the marketplace, products for production, strategic partners, types of advertising and promotion.

It is also important to differentiate marketing plan and marketing strategy because they are not the same (Optimizely, n.d.). The marketing plan contains concrete actions and marketing tactics that need to be undertaken to complete the marketing campaign. On the other hand, marketing strategy highlights the “big picture” of marketing effort, for example business’s target customers. More precisely, strategy explains what the marketing objectives are, while the plan explains how those objectives are going to be achieved (Coursera, 2023).

Marketing strategy according to Kotler and Armstrong (1999) is the marketing logic by which organizations strive to achieve their set marketing objectives. Strategies are focused on market segments on which the organization will focus. These segments differ in their needs and wants, responses to marketing and profitability. Organizations need to put their efforts into those market segments that serve the best from competitive point of view (Kotler & Armstrong, 1999). To make the marketing strategy effective and complete, it must contain basic elements that every strategy has no matter the industry, product type or business. There are many different elements listed, but according to Kotler (2001) following ones are typically present in any marketing strategy:

- a) Marketing outcome: end results company want to achieve.
- b) SWOT analysis or any other type of appropriate analysis (PEST, Competitive analysis, etc.): internal and external analysis of an organization or business to determine its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
- c) Target consumers: ideal consumer/customer that organization or business wants to reach. These segments strongly differ in their needs and wants, profitability and also responses to marketing. The company should direct its effort into those segments that can best serve from a competitive point of view. Moreover, organizations should develop a marketing strategy for each targeted segment (Kotler, 2001).
- d) Budget: money that is available for marketing efforts.
- e) Marketing mix: thorough analysis of product, price, place, and promotion, often called 4P and key components in successful marketing. Marketing mix is “the set of marketing tools that the firm uses to pursue its marketing objectives in the target market”. Using the multitude of marketing variables or mix into four separated categories makes it easier to formulate a marketing strategy (Kotler, 2001). The marketing mix became the company's tactical tool kit for establishing strong positioning in their target markets.
- f) Marketing tactics: actions that must be taken to accomplish marketing objectives.

- g) Content schedule: existing document which contains when and where content will be posted.
- h) Marketing timeline: represents chronological plan (including end date) of marketing strategy.
- i) Accountability and measurement: how success will look alike and how it will be recorded.

In addition to better understanding of basic marketing strategy elements, it is important to introduce basic steps of marketing strategy. Marketing strategy begins with documenting marketing plan. It is important to highlight that this step requires research and communication. If businesses have written plans with the most important information, implementation of their strategy becomes much easier, as the plan will be used as a roadmap for traveling to their desired destination, more specifically the objectives that are set up. Secondly, businesses need to understand their target audience and the market. This step requires customer research, market trends, competition research, pricing, distribution, promotion, packaging, positioning, etc. This is one of the most important steps in marketing strategy because it directs marketing efforts in creating marketing strategy successfully (CoSchedule, 2022).

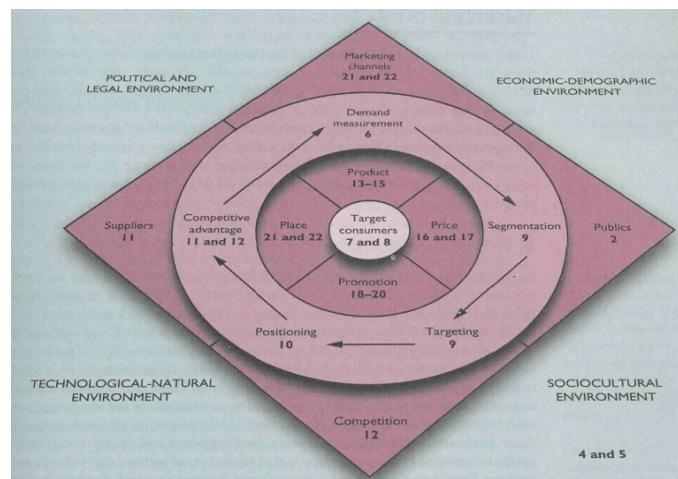
Moreover, useful thing is to identify “marketing persona” that will cover who, what, when, where, and why of the business target audience and broad demographic data like gender, job function, difficulties, etc. Furthermore, defining unique value proposition and key differentiators is crucial. This step is responsible for translating marketing strategy into action. More precisely, marketing must influence brand identity, product research and development, unique positioning, and benefits statements. Strategy cannot go without setting marketing goals and objectives. After detailed analysis, businesses can set SMART (smart, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely) goals. Along with that, marketing approaches and media to reach target consumers must be identified. They are crucial because they focus on stakeholders and practitioners by documenting marketing funnel stages, while selecting marketing tactics that will have the greatest potential in achieving goals and objectives. Moreover, this step includes defining all the channels that will be used by the organization to execute the plan (CoSchedule, 2022).

Eventually comes the step of executing and publishing marketing activities. Marketing planning, analysis, targeting, and segmentation become beneficial when an organization actualizes it. Businesses also have a responsibility to identify when marketing campaigns and plans will be launched and how all contributors will cooperate with their resources to translate vision into reality. What makes businesses and their strategies even more efficient is measurement and analysis of results. Marketing experts know if impact and results are not measured, all the effort goes “down the drain”. Successful businesses take effort and time to measure how their activities influence outlined objectives in the marketing strategy. This

step can also lead to tests and iterations that may help to be even more influential in achieving marketing goals (CoSchedule, 2022).

Figure 7 shows the preview of marketing strategy process and forces that are influencing on creation of it. Kotler and Wong (2005) have put the target consumers in the center of the marketing strategy. Organizations identify the total market, divide it into smaller segments, select the most promising segments and focus on serving them. It designs a marketing mix using mechanisms under its control: product, price, place, and promotion. Organizations engage in marketing analysis, planning, implementation, and control to find the best marketing mix and finally, to act. Organizations use these activities so they can adapt to the rapidly changing marketing environment.

Figure 7: Influences and forces on creation of marketing strategy



Source: Kotler & Wong (2005).

According to Kotler and Wong (2005), to succeed in today's competitive marketplace, organizations must be customer centered in creating their marketing strategies, which means that they need to win customers from competitors by delivering greater value. However, before they can satisfy their consumers, organizations must understand their needs and wants. So, careful analysis of consumers is a must of every marketing strategy creation process.

Main task of marketers in any organization is to position their product from competing brands and give them the greatest strategic advantage in the chosen target markets. One of the famous worldwide known examples are: Ford says, "Everything we do is driven by you", Renault builds cars that "take your breath away", Mitsubishi's are "designed to be driven". BMW is "the ultimate driving machine". Rolls-Royce cars are "Strictly for the wealthy arrived individual". Such simple marketing statements can be a strong backbone of a marketing strategy (Kotler & Wong, 2005).

1.5 Review of existing academic and scientific researches

When it comes to book publishing, marketing is one of the most crucial aspects. Book publishers are professionals who cooperate with authors and oversee production, sales, and marketing of the books. Process can also be done by independent authors, who oversee those procedures by themselves, and marketing agencies who can be hired for the purposes of proper introduction of the book to the market. The field of book marketing is dedicated to creating and developing ideas that potential customers will find appealing. It also implies hiring authors to create books based on set concepts, and ensuring profit is gained by promoting and distributing the book products to target consumers. Moreover, marketing in book publishing is described as a complex endeavor, because books are competing with other media for the spending power of consumers, especially when the competing products are heavily advertised and each day the number of published books is just getting higher. There is a scarcity of studies and academic researches that explore the impact of the marketing on book publishing, promotion and sales, but nevertheless some of them could be found in Nigerian academic area (Afolabi & Zolkepli, 2023).

Study made by Ifeduba (2018) shows that authors and consumers were found to be more digital-ready than libraries, schools and bookshops. Furthermore, he explored promotion practices of Nigerian publishers in the e-commerce market environment and the results showed that the market context plays an important role in the adoption of innovation, especially in emerging economies where there are varying levels of risks, uncertainties, and infrastructural inadequacies. Moreover, the study highlighted the need for adoption of social media innovations, which have become necessary for the survival and sustainable growth of book publishers in digital age. In addition, results from measurement-focused studies show that digital-driven marketing impacts positively on the performance of organizations - usage of social media to develop strategic marketing actions in a systematic manner is central to their performance (Afolabi & Zolkepli, 2023). While the traditional advertising and promotion techniques popularly used in business are unfortunately prohibitive to small book publishers who do not have the luxury to afford large marketing and budgeting, the need to explore innovative techniques for marketing and promotion in creating book marketing strategy became imperative. As previously mentioned in the subsection, social media platforms gained increasing spread and huge importance in modern society, but along with that, some other factors that Afolabi and Zolkepli (2023) highlight, need to be under special consideration while creating the book strategy: “the emerging nature of the economy of developing countries, the specific context of the publishing market in the economy and other environmental factors that impact social media efforts, are one of them”.

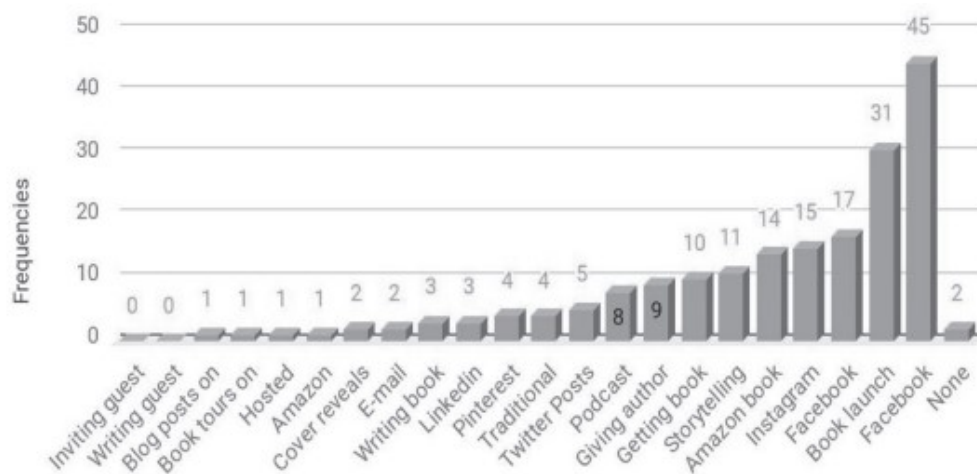
There has been a study in 2020 published in *Journal of Marketing Vistas* that is focused on the prospective marketing strategies for self-published authors in a vast and ever-growing book industry globally. Modern book marketplace is not fulfilled just with traditional book publishing authors, there is significant number of self-published authors through different online platforms. Moreover, there is a difference between these two categories because

independent authors perform the marketing activities independently, sometimes without big budgets, so they have to find their ways. A lot can be learned and adapted to nowadays creation of book marketing strategies, no matter the independence category.

The Self-Publishing Marketing Process (hereafter: SPMP) helps to distinguish the various marketing strategies and promotional measures which can be capitalized by independent authors and can be used as a general directing database for creating book marketing strategies for online platforms. Some of the most important findings and suggestions of the research are (Sheelam & Mahesh, 2020):

- Online marketing is far more efficient than offline marketing.
- From the marketing strategies derived through experiential research, one of the most effective marketing strategies is Facebook Group and it is followed by the book launch event. On number three, there is Facebook page. Figure 8 shows the list of most effective marketing strategies for self-published authors. It highlights the fact that social networks and platforms have become one of the main tools for book promotion, regardless of whether marketing activities are carried out by professional agencies, businesses, or independent authors,

Figure 8: Most effective marketing strategies for self - published authors



Source: Sheelam & Mahesh (2020).

- Of all the marketing strategies, social media marketing is giving a huge importance and will give even more in the future.
- 83,1% of book authors from the research prefer Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing platform.

Research pointed out that online marketing has several classifications that need to be respected:

- On-site marketing: here the authors should promote the books and create an identity for themselves on their website using the various marketing strategies.

- Off-site marketing - here the authors should promote the books and create an identity or image of the brand or themselves on other websites and blogs using the various marketing strategies.
- Social media marketing - here the authors should promote on social media platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest and more.
- Traditional marketing – according to the research, only 2.1% effectiveness has been given to traditional marketing. That refers to newspapers, magazines, and similar.

Nowadays, having a marketing strategy is essential to the success of any type of business, not just in book publishing (Optimizely, n.d.). In 2022, there was a study that was performed by CoSchedule. They surveyed 3,599 marketers and bloggers with a goal to identify the most successful marketing practices. The results showed that marketers who documented their marketing strategy were 331% more likely to report success than those who didn't. In addition to those results, even more fascinating findings showed that marketers who were the most organized were found to be 674% more likely to report success.

If conducted academic research and already existing theory literature are carefully taken in consideration, it can be concluded that book marketing strategy based on a thorough analysis of environment, while also following trends and results is a key to promotional success. These are just a few examples of significant academic research papers in the book marketing strategy field. The field continues to evolve, with new research adding to our knowledge and understanding of marketing principles, consumer behavior, brand management, market analysis, and strategic decision-making in the dynamic sport and publishing environment. Finally, in the next sections, this master thesis will propose successful marketing strategy for a selected sports book on the Croatian market.

2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Before the first step in marketing strategy creation, the analysis, a brief literature review was conducted as the first part of the work. It thoroughly deals with the concept of marketing and promotion in order to present their importance in today's business world. Through the analysis of secondary online data, some of the current marketing trends and well-known examples are presented to gain knowledge about methods that competitive marketing leaders are using nowadays.

Review gives an insight into the importance of book marketing and why every 21st century book publisher should use available marketing tools. Section also includes part dedicated to the presentation of the current book marketplace, which provided an insight into popular trends – what are popular genres, through which channels books are usually sold, what format of books people tend to choose, etc. Without a doubt, audio and online books are the future of the book world.

The section also describes the basics of the marketing strategy, its fundamental parts and what is essential in order for marketing strategy to be reflected as successful. A minor obstacle was the lack of available data in the area of conducted academic researches, but acquired data presented that book marketing strategy based on a thorough analysis of environment, while also following trends and results, is a key to promotional success.

After elaborated literature review and a thorough insight into the available data and theory, the basis for creating and understanding the importance of successful marketing strategy was created.

The first part of the strategy is dedicated to internal and external analysis of the book “Croatian School of Football” and CFF, which was done through a combination of secondary and primary sources. Additionally, SWOT analysis was done to make the gathered data even more clear and comprehensive.

In the fifth and sixth section, key elements for the marketing strategy were defined – goals, objectives, and the target market. In these sections, there has been a great support and cooperation from the CFF employees. Target market section was focused on careful description of all target segments of the CFF, with the purpose for understanding each one of them thoroughly.

Finally, after conducted analysis, it was time for the marketing strategy creation. The strategy has been carried out through the well-known "4P", or marketing mix – product, promotion, price and place decisions. Based on the trends on the market, objectives, target segments and the experience, the greatest focus of the strategy was placed on the promotion. An insight into the financial situation of the CFF showed that promotional and distributional decisions don't have to be budget adapted, which made strategy creation much simpler and diverting.

The thesis is rounded off with suggestions for measuring success and implementation, as well as the conclusion and CFF's plans for the new edition of the book in the next 5 years. The work was created with the exceptional cooperation of the CFF, especially the editors of the book, Petar Krpan and Ivan Krakan. I hope this work will find its place at the real book market because it will also be used in the creation of the book's actual marketing strategy by CFF, which will be implemented from January 2024.

3 DATA AND ANALYSIS

The formulation of a strategy is an organizational process that starts with the identification of possible opportunities and threats within a company, or in this case, book's external environment, and the evaluation of strengths and weaknesses within its internal environment. After a careful analysis of these environments, the organization can continue with the creation of marketing strategy for its book. Environmental analysis and data gathering are starting points for marketing strategy creation and its further steps. This section's purpose is

to identify and analyze strategic factors that may determine the present and future success of the book strategy and its promotional activities (Gandellini & Pezzi, 2012).

3.1 Internal environment

Internal environment will be devoted to description of the publisher of the chosen sport book from Croatian market, in this case the CFF and the book “Croatian School of Football”, with its core values, and the writers.

3.1.1 About the CFF (publisher of the book)

At the beginning of the 20th century, when the first football clubs were founded in Croatia, football Croatian leaders wanted to establish a national football federation, but the political circumstances and ongoing war didn't allow it. After the first public football game was played in the capital city of Croatia, Zagreb, football leaders developed an even bigger desire to establish a football federation. The oldest and most prominent football players in Croatia took the job in their hands and decided to develop and improve football, so eventually Croatian Football Federation, publisher of the chosen sport book “Croatian School of Football”, was founded in 1912. Till the independence and establishment of democratic Republic of Croatia, CFF participated in a joint football history within the former Yugoslavia, but after 1992, Croatian football also became independent and the CFF started to work on further development of the most popular sport in the country. They have been a member of the “International Association Football Federation” (hereafter: FIFA) since 1941, while membership was confirmed in 1992, after Croatia gained their independence. Moreover, full membership at “Union of European Football Associations” (hereafter: UEFA), was activated in 1993 (CFF, 2023a).

The first official international Croatian match was played in October 1990 between Croatia and USA at Maksimir Stadium in Zagreb. From then on until now Croatia has managed to achieve almost impossible things. Croatian national team has qualified for 12 out of 14 major tournaments, missing the 2000 UEFA EURO and the 2010 FIFA World Cup. Up until 2018, Croatia’s biggest international success was FIFA World Cup in France, where they managed to achieve the first great result in Croatian football history by winning the bronze medal. At the same tournament, Davor Šuker, best Croatian striker, was the top goal scorer with six goals and therefore has won the Golden Boot award. Following success happened at the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia, where the generation that was led by the head coach Zlatko Dalić, managed to surpass the 1998 generation by making their way into the finals, where they unfortunately lost against France 4 to 2. After an amazing performance at the tournament, captain Luka Modrić was awarded with the Golden Ball for the best player at the World Cup. Just four years later, national team managed to surprise the world one more time by winning the bronze medal at the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar. Team shocked the world by winning against tournament favorites Brazil in the quarterfinals, marking the match

as one of biggest victories in the history of Croatian football. Bronze medal was won one more time by winning against Morocco, while Luka Modrić was awarded with the Bronze Ball for the third best player at the World Cup.

Since its foundation, CFF followed the development of its best players such as Šuker, Boban, Prosinečki, Bilić and others, who used their opportunity and left a mark in one of the best European clubs such as AC Milan, Real Madrid, Barcelona, etc. The current captain of the men's national team, Luka Modrić, has won five Champions League titles with the famous club Real Madrid, while Mandžukić scored twice in the finals (for Bayern and Juventus). It is also important to highlight that current national team members like Gvardiol, Brozović, Kovačić and others, play in top European Clubs like Manchester City and Inter. The names of former captains such as Srna, Rakitić, Pršo, Kovač, Olić remain among the best Croatian ambassadors in the world, while therefore, they remain confirmation of the quality efforts that CFF provides (CFF, 2023a).

CFF was led by former president Davor Šuker from 2012 till 2021. After almost a decade as a president, CFF General Assembly elected Marjan Kustić as the new president of the CFF in 2021. Under his leadership, the Croatian Football Federation has had multiple noted successes both on and off the pitch. The Croatian men's senior national team won the bronze medal at the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar and qualified for the UEFA Nations League Final For in 2022. Moreover, CFF's excellent results made it possible for the Federation to invest additional funding into football development and to start a project of building a national football camp in Zagreb, more precisely, Velika Gorica. In addition, investments into football infrastructure across the country are among the most notable CFF's investment projects, while the signing of a record-breaking broadcasting rights contract helped CFF in securing additional funding for all Croatian clubs (CFF, 2023b)

In general, football associations are financed through sponsors, state funds and by head football organizations, FIFA and UEFA, which depends on associations achievements on world, European and UEFA Nations League competitions. CFF is more than financially stable federation, due to recent successes of the men's Croatian national football team at major competitions. In 2018, CFF had profit of HRK €8,5 million due to silver medal from Russia, which was historical financial success for the federation (tportal.hr, 2018). Nevertheless, in 2022, they managed to surpass 2018 with overall profit of €13,1 million. CFF announced that the funds will be used for the periods without major competition successes and for helping the clubs and county associations through financial donations (CFF, 2022c). In addition, mostly thanks to the successes of Croatian national team, CFF has some major sponsors like Nike, Hyundai, Croatia Airlines, Joop, SuperSport, etc. Consequently, CFF is currently more than capable of allocating the necessary resources for a successful marketing strategy.

3.1.2 About the book

Selected sports book “Croatian School of Football” has been published and officially presented by CFF in September 2022 (see Figure 9), but it has not been released in sales yet. The book was edited by technical director for development of CFF, Petar Krpan, and head of performance of CFF, Ivan Krakan.

Figure 9: Promotion of the book "Croatian School of Football" in Zagreb (September 2022) with Luka Modrić and Joško Gvardiol



Source: Sopta (2022).

The book is printed in A4 dimensions, with hard covers and consists of over 400 pages. It is originally written in Croatian, but besides domestic language, book has also been translated and published in English.

The book was created as a result of many years of experience and work in football with a wide range of professions. Primary motive for writing this kind of book, both from editors and CFF, was the need for unified and typified professional reading as a model example how football schools' function in Croatia, more precisely, the need for unification and systematization of theoretical and practical knowledge in the field of football at all levels. The idea to create the book comes not only from the mentioned, but also from the need to show pride that the CFF has on Croatian football through history, for example, one of the triggers was winning the silver medal in Russia in 2018 – the whole world was wondering how such a small country can achieve such great results and have worldclass players. Better explained, Croatia is a small country, with a population of 3,888,529 (data from 2021), nevertheless it has great football achievements and football legends. All players, except one (Ivan Rakitić), that won medals at the world championships (France -1998, Russia - 2018 and Qatar 2022), went through the Croatian school of football. So, that includes “big names” like Davor Šuker, Zvonimir Boban, Luka Modrić, Joško Gvardiol, Mateo Kovačić, Marcelo Brozović, etc. Therefore, in addition to providing a football synthesis, book provides an

insight into the "secret" for creating football successes, football nation and world class players (Krpan, 2022).

As the time passed, the content of the book was getting wider. Instead of basic model example intended for Croatian clubs, it was supplemented with chapters that will, besides football profession, interest much wider population, like other federations, football education facilities, other worldwide coaches, etc. Along with editors, different associates from four biggest Croatian clubs also contributed to the progress of the book – GNK Dinamo, HNK Hajduk, NK Osijek, HNK Rijeka and for medical part, doctors Dragan Primorac, Tomislav Madžar, Tomislav Vlahović and head of UEFA's medical department, Zoran Bahtijarević (Krpan, 2022).

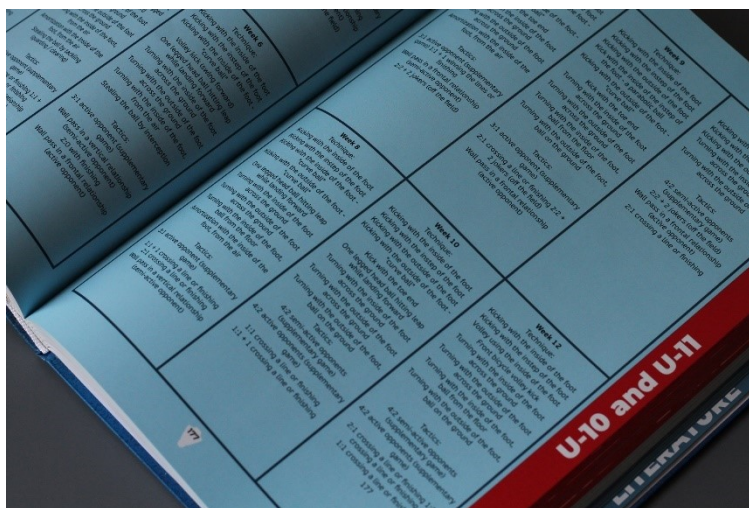
Book is divided into seven parts, and together they make a book of 411 pages. The parts of the book are (Krpan, 2022):

1. Forewords: starts with forewords from knowledgeable people from CFF and the ones who participated in creation of it. Besides forewords from editors of the book, Petar Krpan and Ivan Krakan, there is foreword made by the president of CFF, Marijan Kustić. It is important to mention that there is also one from head coach of senior men national team, Zlatko Dalić, followed by ex-president, Davor Šuker, captain and the winner of the Golden Boot, Luka Modrić, chief of football UEFA, Zvonimir Boban and technical director of the men's and U21 national team, Stipe Pletikosa. All of them went through the Croatian school of football through their football carriers. Nowadays they are great ambassadors of Croatia, as well as the part of the history of Croatian football.
2. Introduction: this section is dedicated to description of CFF's history, achievements, organizational structure, regional divisions, and development pyramid. In this part, editors also included introduction to the Croatian school of football with its goals, characteristics along with operational and specific objectives.
3. Football formations: section describes tactical analysis, systems in the football game and formations in modern football, followed by pictures of every football formation that men national team has ever played on big competitions (European and World championships).
4. Grassroots: chapter that is dedicated to description of football that is played by the masses at the level where the driving force is participation and love for the game. Section is dedicated to description of children's football for ages 4 to 12 years old, football schools, amateur football, veteran football and football for all (minorities, people with disabilities, migrants...). In addition, it provides grassroots mission, vision, growth, education, "Fair play" social program, maintenance, objectives, and organizational grassroots structure.

5. The structure of the Croatian school of football development programs: fifth section describes football school development program requirements, which is followed by description of organization of development of young players in Croatia through categories (from kindergartens, schools, and streets to CFF national camps and creation of a national team). In this chapter, the whole selection game and process is expressed in exact numbers, for example, number of players per selection, per team, number of training sessions per week, etc. This section is rich with football content and basics for understanding how the fundamentals of the football school function. Moreover, section also describes (Krpan, 2022):
 - sensitive phases of growth and development,
 - fundamentals of football training methodology,
 - basics of planning and programming,
 - basics of strength and conditioning supported by explanation of structure and function of energy systems,
 - basics of techniques and tactics and
 - fundamentals of notational analysis.

6. Training by age categories: this section is one of the most important ones because it provides basic and global guidelines along with tactical, technical, strength and conditional requirements for each age category in football. Each age category section has three examples of micro cycles and 52 weeks of operational program (see example on Figure 10).

Figure 10: Example of detailed football mikro cycle in the book “Croatian School of Football”



Source: Sopta (2023).

This section takes up the most space in the book and makes it extremely valuable for all football clubs and coaches. As mentioned, section is divided by age categories, more precisely, by age categories subsections:

- a) U8 and U9 category,
 - b) U10 and U11 category,
 - c) U12 and U13 category,
 - d) U14 and U15 category,
 - e) U16 and U17 category and
 - f) U18 and U19 category.
7. Goalkeeper technique of the Croatian School of Football: separated section only dedicated to the goalkeepers. Section covers the field of goalkeeper movement, techniques, stances, training methodology including special description of training and techniques by age and level of development.
 8. Medical: chapter specially dedicated to the description of organization of medical examinations of U6 to U19 football players. The chapter covers anthropometric measurements, clinical examinations, echocardiographic examination, diet, supplements, doping and assessment of athletic ability.
 9. Individual work program: separated instructions to coaches that want to dedicate their work more to individual football working programs. The chapter includes physical training, psychological preparation, monitoring, and lectures and education for parents.
 10. Basic terms and literature: for better understanding and possibility of using the book by a wider population, at the end there is a section dedicated to the explanation of the basic football terms and the literature that were used in the creation of the book.

3.1.3 About the editors and associates of the book

The book Croatian School of Football School is the first book „of that kind“ published by the CFF. Apart from rich content, names of the editors (see Figure 11) and associates who participated in the creation of the book, should not be overlooked. Most of them have already contributed to the development of Croatian football, its recognition, due to that, their words, name and opinion, carry weight itself.

Figure 11: Editors of the book (Petar Krpan & Ivan Krakán) "Croatian School of Football" at the promotion of the book in September 2022 in Zagreb



Source: Sopta (2022).

The first editor, Petar Krpan (left on the Figure 11) is currently on the position of technical director for development in CFF. Besides his functions in federation, he is member of UEFA Commission for Development and Professional assistance and UEFA technical coach. In addition to his exceptional contribution to the development and direction of football in the federation and UEFA, he primarily became known as a professional football player. He was part of the generation of the Croatian national team, often called „Vatreni“, that won the first bronze medal ever at the World Cup in France in 1998. He marked his football career by playing for Portuguese football club Sporting and also by winning Croatian leagues and Cups as one of the best strikes while playing for the Croatian clubs like Osijek, Hajduk and Rijeka. After his football career, he decided to stay in football and got the highest possible level of coaching license, UEFA PRO, which opened the door for him to work in the CFF. He started as the regional coach in the Football center of Osijek and continued as assistant coach of Croatian national team U16, U17 and U19. After, he also became a head coach for the same national age categories. Numerous successes of younger national team categories led him to today's position of technical director for development of CFF, where he is since 2019. His success and ambition wasn't missed by the head European football organization, UEFA, therefore he is a frequent member of their meetings and commissions related to the development of European football in younger age categories (Krpan, 2022).

The other editor, Ivan Krakán (right on the Figure 11) has also an enviable career behind him. He is currently working as a head of performance of CFF and he is assistant professor at the Faculty of Kinesiology at University of Zagreb. He graduated on the same faculty in 2011 and has UEFA A licence. Professor Krakán is a docent in basic kinesiology transformations and conditioning preparation for athletes and behind him there is more than 30 scientific and professional paper written. He has numerous institutional functions, like being a member of: the expert commission of the CFF, the expert committee of the Zagreb

Football Federation, the National Sports Committee, the Croatian Physical Conditioning Association. Also, he is president of Student Union of the Faculty of Kinesiology and Vice-president of the Student Union of the University of Zagreb. Besides his institutional functions, he has rich professional experience in sport. He actively played football in few Croatian clubs, but more important is his conditioning coach career. He was strength and conditioning coach of senior national team on the World Cup in Brazil in 2016 and he worked as strength and conditioning coach in the younger national teams (U17, U19, U21). Besides contribution to the CFF, he worked as an external consultant for famous Croatian club, GNK Dinamo Zagreb. Nowadays, besides being a head of performance in CFF, he is assistant professor at the Faculty of Kinesiology and a lecturer at the CFF Football Academy for education of new coaches (Krpan, 2022).

In addition to the editors, it is important to briefly introduce the associates who also contributed to the creation of the book. They are grouped by the four most recognizable football clubs in Croatia:

- a) GNK Dinamo Zagreb: well-known ex-professional football players and nowadays football coaches Damir Krznar and Željko Kopačić, contributed with their materials, coaching experience, and football careers. They both played in famous Croatian clubs and were head coaches and directors of development in the famous Croatian champion. Today, Damir Krznar is head coach of Slovenian club NK Maribor and Željko Kopačić is head coach of Bulgarian club Botev Plovdiv.
- b) Hajduk: from famous Dalmatian club, ex-professional player, coach and manager Boro Primorac gave his contribution to the book development. He was assistant coach to Arsene Wenger in FC Arsenal for more than two decades, but since 2019 he has been a sports director of HNK Hajduk. By his side, there is Andro Fistončić, who has finished masters in sports management in Cologne along with UEFA football licenses. After finishing faculty, he became youth academy coach in Cologne. His later career led him to becoming assistant to sports director at HNK Hajduk (Boro Primorac). Later he was sports director in NK Radomlje, but today he is director of development in NK Istria.
- c) Osijek: Miroslav Žitnjak, one of the associates that comes from the famous club on the east of Croatia. He is a former professional football player and coach. Besides being a head coach in younger categories in NK Osijek, he has also been a head coach of the senior team in the same club. Since 2012 he has been on a position of a director for development in NK Osijek.
- d) Rijeka: Edo Flego and Fausto Budicin both have recognizable careers as ex-professional players of Croatian and Slovenian first and second league teams. After their retirement, they both turned to football coaching and were directors for development in Rijeka, but only in different years. Budicin was also a head coach of Istria and Rijeka in the period from 2020 to 2022.

e) Doctors: as mentioned in the section before, the book has detailed section about organization of medical examination for football players aged 6 to 19. The section was made by well-known expertise doctors in the world of football, which brings even more value to the book:

- First of them is Croatian Doctor Dragan Primorac. Apart from an enviable career in scientific medical branches he is a member of the Council of the Croatian Olympic Committee and Health Commission of the European Olympic Committees, and vice president of the Croatian Taekwondo Association. Also, he has been a Minister of Science, Education and Sports of the Republic of Croatia from 2003 to 2009.
- It is also important to mention Doctor Tomislav Madžar, who he has been part of professional staff of the Croatian national handball and football teams. He is a certified doping controller at the Croatian Institute for Toxicology and Anti-Doping. Moreover, he is also a member of numerous professional and humanitarian organizations: the Health Commission of the Croatian Handball Association and the Croatian Medical Chamber, the Croatian Society for Sports Medicine, the Health Commission of CFF, the Health Commission of the International Handball Federation, and the Health Commission of Croatian Olympic Committee. Doctor Madžar participates in the work of the CFF medical service and is also the doctor of the Croatian national football team.
- Last associate is Doctor Zoran Bahtijarević, who has an enviable career in the field of medicine and sports. Since 1992, he has been involved in the work of the CFF. He has been a doctor to the younger national teams, but from 2002 to 2022 he has been a doctor of national men's football team of Croatia and participated in winning a silver medal in Russia in 2018. He left CFF to be Chief Medical Officer in UEFA, but still is a member of the Health Commission of the Croatian Olympic Committee.

3.2 External environment

This section will be devoted to the analysis and introduction to the external environment of CFF and the book itself. More precisely, subchapter will introduce current market conditions, from the aspect of popularity of football in today's generations, the growth and popularity of Croatian football and Croatian football players in the world. Moreover, detailed analysis will provide information about CFF's competition, more specifically, data about similar or same books on the market that have been published individually or by other football associations.

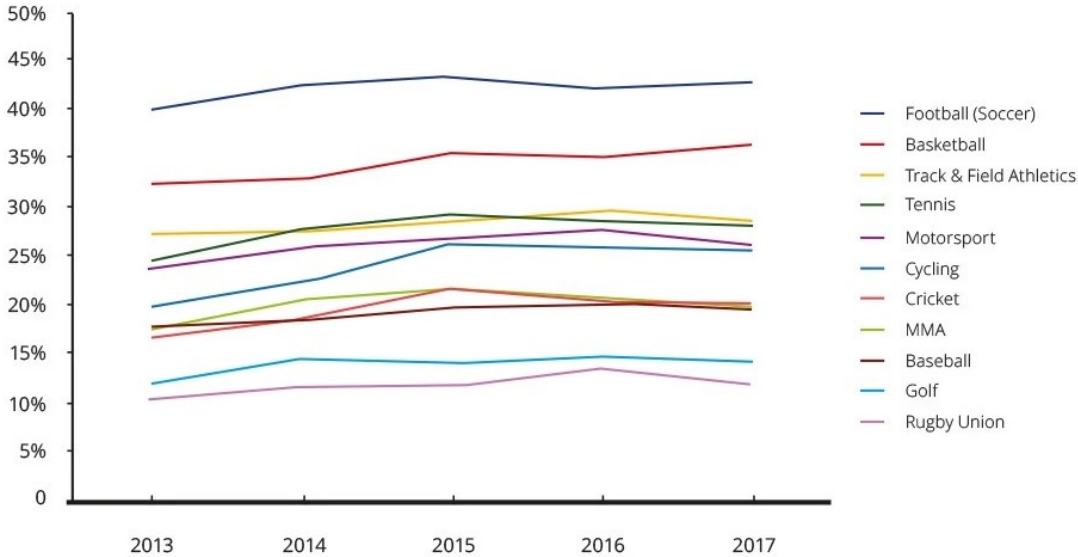
3.2.1 Popularity of football

In 2000, Nelson Mandela said: "Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. It speaks to youth in a language they understand. Sport can create hope where there was only despair." Nowadays,

sport has become a way of getting people relaxed, understood, and valued. It doesn't matter if it is football, basketball, or soccer, it brings value to people and their mental health. It fosters social interaction among families, friends, neighbors with the same interest in sport and escape from everyday life and stress. Eventually people become part of sports fan shop, which is a complex social phenomenon that involves more than just love for team or sport (The Werton Daily Times, 2023).

Nevertheless, one sport always stands out, and that's football, or in North America, soccer. Nielsen SportsDNA did research in 2018 that presents football as a massive global appeal with fan interest. Figure 12 shows percentage of "interested" or "very interested" people in major sports. Survey has been done on 18 urban markets: Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Poland, Russia, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and America.

Figure 12: Interest of people in different type of sport



Nielsen (2018).

The result showed that more than 40% of people 16 or older from researched population centers around the world consider themselves interested or very interested in following football more than any other sport. Moreover, research also showed that football is the most popular sport in United Arab Emirates, where more than 80% of the country's population are football fans. They are followed by Thailand, Chile, and Portugal. Besides top countries, football is tremendously followed in Europe, with over 131 million fans in the big five European markets: Spain, Italy, Germany, U.K., and France (Nielsen, 2018). Research also provided data that confirms that football is a sport that transcends gender, because football is the most popular sport among women globally. 70% of women from the research find men's FIFA World Cup "very appealing" and 58% "appealing" (Nielsen, 2018).

3.2.2 Popularity of coaching education

Besides bringing people together, the world of football gradually has more and more interest in education, professional development, and the completion of licenses. UEFA considers that coaches and coach educators have a vital role in nowadays players and game development. Every year there is an increasing number of men and women who are interested in going to the UEFA Coaching Conventions, which set out the legal framework, and UEFA coaching programs, which aim to develop coaching and coach education through diversity of projects and events. UEFA endorses licenses at A, B, Pro, Elite Youth A, Goalkeeping A and Futsal B levels. These licenses are issued by member associations and federations whose courses meet the minimum criteria and standards set out by UEFA. Without licenses, there is no possibility for people to work at football coaching positions. On which position and level they are going to coach, depends on the license they have. UEFA secondary data from 2020 presents that there are more than 200,000 coaches that possess UEFA-endorsed football coaching licenses (UEFA, 2021).

Head of Croatian Football Academy, Boris Kubla, pointed out that every year the interest in applying for coaching licenses is greater. Table 1 shows approximate number of all involved in coaching education in Croatian Football Academy from 2020 to 2022.

Table 1: Number of applied students in Croatian Football Academy from 2020 to 2022

Year	Approx. number of applications
2020	600
2021 (Covid-19)	500
2022	800

Source: Own work

This year, applications are still ongoing, so information about the number of applied students in 2023 is currently unavailable. The numbers are approximate, and the growing tendency of the inclusion of female participants in the overall education is at the level from 1% to 5% of the total enrollment and varies.

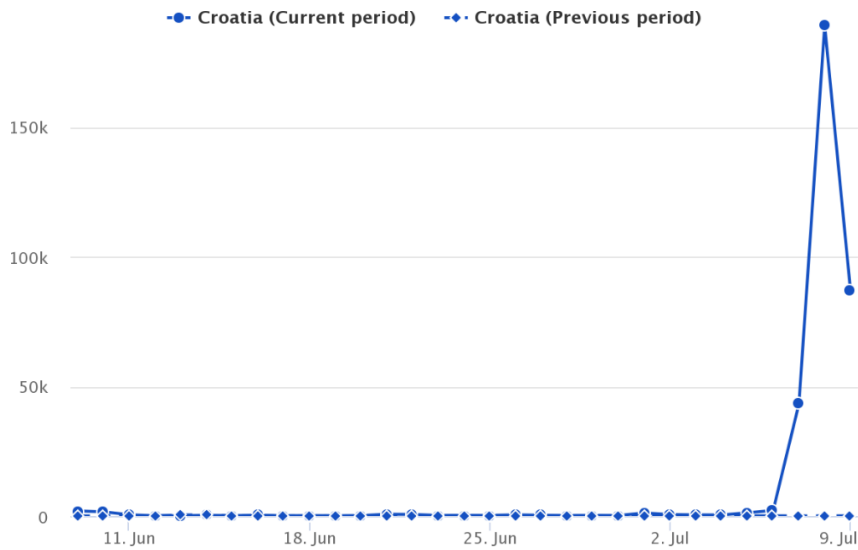
3.2.3 Popularity of Croatian football and players

“Croatia has been making a mark in the world of football in recent years, with its national team consistently reaching the latter stages of major tournaments and producing top-class players who are household names” (Esposito, 2023).

The biggest jump for Croatia happened in 2018 at the FIFA World Cup in Russia, when the small country with almost 4 million people won the silver medal among 32 football superpowers. That sport event introduced the world with who the Croatians are and where Croatia is on the world map. Consequently, the World Cup raised awareness about the

country's existence and broke the first barrier of every marketing campaign, which is brand recognizability (Glavinić, 2018). To be more specific, after Croatia kicked out Denmark, they moved on to face off with national team of Russia. That game changed everything - Croatia went from having approximately 100 daily mentions to more than 150,000 mentions after the match (Glavinić, 2018). Figure 13 shows sudden media interest started with Croatia winning against Russia.

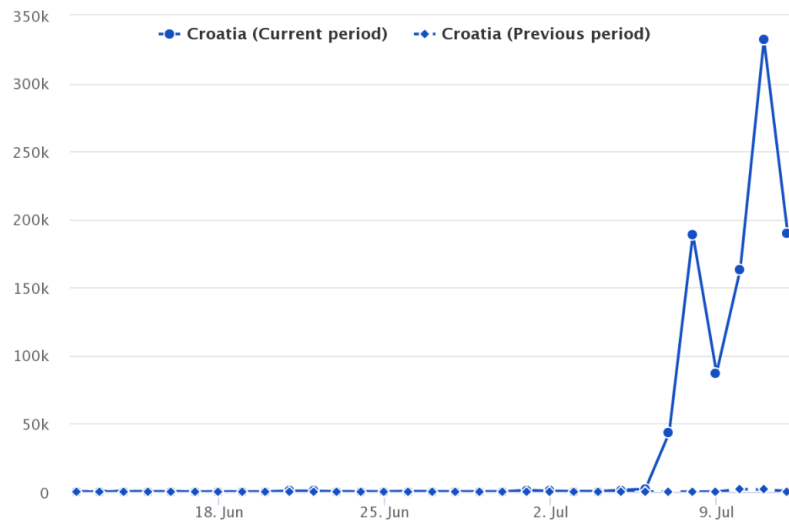
Figure 13: Media interest for Croatian national football team against match with Russia at World Cup 2018



Source: Glavinić (2018).

The semi-final game against England raised even more dust. Croatia moved on to the finals, which resulted in mentions in more than 300,000 worldwide articles (Glavinić, 2018). Figure 14 shows media interest for Croatia after winning against Russia and then the spike after winning against England.

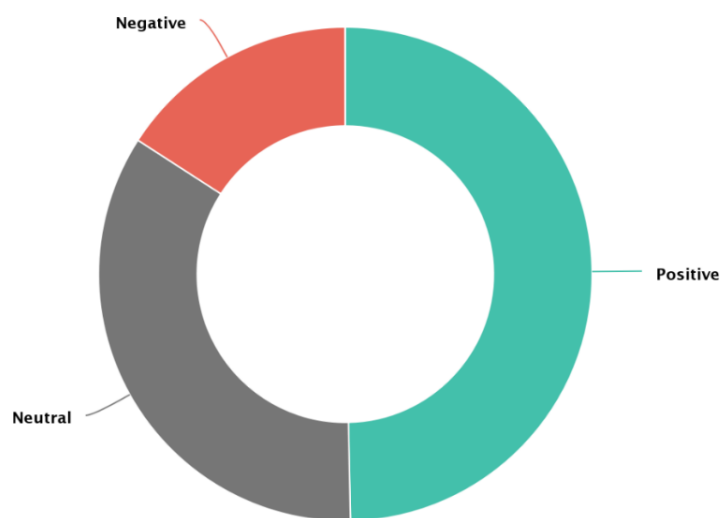
Figure 14: Media interest for Croatian national football team after winning against England at World Cup 2018



Source: Glavinić (2018).

More than 3,4 billion people watched at least one minute of World Cup finals in Russia with more than 400,000 articles mentioning Croatia. Furthermore, over the entire competition there was more than a million articles mentioning, which is more online exposure than through Croatia’s entire history. Figure 15 shows attitude of articles mentioning Croatia during World Cup in Russia 2018.

Figure 15: Attitude of articles mentioning Croatia during Worl Cup in Russia 2018



Source: Glavinić (2018).

Out of those million, total of 50% were positive and had sentiment words towards Croatia, another 35% were neutral and only 15% were negative, which is assumed to be from the opponents or those they defeated (Glavinić, 2018).

Additionally, there has been more than 1,5 million tweets, which made it the second most popular topic after the World Cup final. Besides mentions, streams, and articles, in the period when Croatia was going through quarter and semifinals, there has been a historical rise in the interest for the term “Croatia” and “Visit Croatia”. Croatian National Tourist Board reported increased visits to their website by 250% during the World Cup. Moreover, there was a total number of 60 billion impressions on global websites for the term “Croatia” during the mentioned period. One of the reasons that led to such reactions from the public are that Croatia was the underdog in majority of matches. They played a total of 90 minutes of extra time, which is something that has never been seen before. The whole country became the “darling” of the social media because they became known for its determination, bravery, and courage. The same year, right after his performance on the World Cup in Russia, Luka Modrić stopped the Cristiano Ronaldo and Mesi era and won “Ballon d'Or”. He marked the whole history of Croatia and Croatian football (Glavinić, 2018).

For those that thought Croatian national team was lucky, were proved wrong in Qatar 2022. What brought the public to their feet and contributed, once again, to the huge media attention, was Croatia's victory against the tournament favorites - Brazil. Croatia won and qualified in the World Cup semi-finals second time in a row. Argentina stopped them on their way to the final, but Croatia defeated Morocco and took home the bronze medal (Eurosport, 2022). Luka Modrić got the Bronze Ball Award, but the biggest surprise at the World Cup was the Croatian defender Joško Gvardiol (see Figure 16), who after a great performance through the whole tournament, signed with Manchester City in August 2023. FIFA even called him “defender on everybody’s lips.”

Figure 16: Section from the book that shows famous Joško Gvardiol and his appearance at the World Cup in Qatar 2022



Source: Sopta (2023).

Croatian national football team consists of such a worldclass and talented players who emerge from the Croatian School of Football every world or European championship (FIFA, 2022). What Krpan (2022) highlights is that the most important thing is the selection system and approach to development of the players, which is also described in the book. It is important to guide and direct them from the earliest days, so that one day, like Gvardiol, Sosa, Stanišić, Sučić, contribute to the senior Croatian national football team and together with them, win medals and create history at European and World championships.

One of the things that hardly any football federation implements are camps in the diaspora. Due to the war in Croatia in the 90s, many Croats emigrated to various oversea and European countries. Consequently, Croatian football societies have been formed in Australia, USA, Germany, Canada, Switzerland, etc. CFF regularly holds football camps in cooperation with football societies in mentioned countries to monitor talented children with (potential) Croatian citizenship. In addition, thanks to the cooperation with Croatian football societies abroad, CFF will be part of United Soccer Coaches Convention in Anaheim, California in January 2024. It is a convention dedicated to soccer coaches and administrators of all levels, filled with rich content lectures and field coaching demonstrations to the latest gear and technology available. CFF will have its own special corner where they will have an opportunity to present the book "Croatian School of Football" to all interested coaches (United Soccer Coaches Convention, 2023).

3.3 Strategic marketing implications from internal and external analysis

Internal analysis of CFF showed that CFF is a successful football association, which has achieved great success since its foundation. Enviably successes contributed to the contracts with major sponsors and (current) financial stability. The analysis also showed that CFF has organized and developed youth development system with a number of successful, well-known players in almost every generation, which was one of the fundamental reasons for writing the book "Croatian School of Football". Book has been written by major football and medical experts with the goal to have it "all in one place". Moreover, the book has rich, but easily understandable content devoted to the football development system with a lot of pictures and graphs, which make it far more interesting to the wider public.

External analysis presented that CFF doesn't have any major competition due to the reason that books with the same or similar content are rare on the book market, along with the reason that there has been a period gap in publishing educational sport books like "Croatian School of Football". Although printed books are still more popular, interest in audio books and e-books is growing significantly. The analysis of the popularity of football confirmed the assumption that football is the most popular sport in the world. Also, the men's Croatian football national team has been one of the "hot" topics at the recent World Cups, which contributed to the promotion of the country and CFF. Consequently, there has been an

increase in interest in the system and organization of development of young players from other football associations. Furthermore, analysis of the popularity of coaching education showed that every year, there is more interested students in Europe and Croatia, both male and female.

4 COMPETITION ANALYSIS

Competition analysis is of utmost importance, especially in terms of the high-speed changing market. It is important to know who our rivals are and how they do business with the same or similar products. Analysis enables us to understand what our business can do better and what we need to avoid to be more successful. If the competition analysis is done right, marketing strategy will open an opportunity to win larger market shares than our rivals (Di Fazio, 2021).

As the world went digital and all information is easily reachable to people on their phones, it was assumed that interest in books would disappear, but Grand New Research analysis (2020) presented that global book market has never been bigger - in 2021 its worth was valued at \$138.35 billion. Consumers are increasingly spending due to constant innovations in the format which boosts reading experience. Pew Research Center (2012) highlighted that most people read books to enjoy the process of learning, gaining knowledge, discovering information, or escaping reality. Some of the important features of book marketplace are:

- The majority of publishing houses cater directly to schools, colleges, universities, and research institutes that cover technical, medical, and professional education (Pew Research Center, 2012).
- Google estimates that currently there are around 129,864,880 published books on the book marketplace (Curcic, 2023).
- Printed books are still the top choice for consumers, but e-books and audiobooks are the ones that are becoming more and more popular. Moreover, Statista (2022) predicts that both types have promising CAGR, which means that sales of these books will be even higher in the future. The same research highlights audiobooks as the ones with the fastest growing segment of the publishing industry.
- More than 60% of global revenue are the trade books – books that are being stocked at “brick-and-mortar” retail bookstores and they also cover the best-sellers of online booksellers (Curcic, 2023).
- The top three popular genres are Fantasy, Romance, and Erotica, and new growth opportunities are ahead of Light Novels, Comics and Fantasy (Curcic, 2023).
- According to (Jentetics, 2021) the bestselling channels are retail stores which hiked by 164% in 2021. The most popular is major retailer Amazon, which grew tremendously.

Educational-sport books are not exactly among the most popular categories and bestsellers. The fact is that these books have a specific audience, and it is rare that such books will be

bought for curiosity, entertainment or escape from reality. More often, customers buy biographies of famous athletes to read about their lives, experiences, struggles on the way, so they can identify, motivate themselves or learn.

The book "Croatian School of Football" has an educational and sports content, therefore it is necessary to analyze whether there are similar, or the same books of other football associations or federations already published and presented to the public. Analysis showed that currently there are no similar or same types of published books on the book market by other federations or associations. The only similar book that can relate to "Croatian School of Football" was also published by CFF in 2017, and it is called "Development curriculum". The difference is that this one is constructed more as a professional documentation rather than an educational-sport book itself. Also, what Krpan singles out is that in the period from 2018 to 2023, other football associations such as Turkey, Japan, Korea, Netherlands, Hungary, and America, were looking for educational lectures from CFF on how to be better in organization of their football development systems.

The top 10 best-selling books related to youth football development on Amazon are not directly related to the same topic as the book "Croatian School of Football". Most of them are related to only one aspect of football development, coaching, tactics or to one specific problem in football. In addition, most of the books were published in the period from 2005 to 2015, so there is a period gap in publishing when it comes to the educational sport books related to football development.

5 SWOT ANALYSIS

Considering the internal and external analysis of the book "Croatian School of Football" and its publisher CFF in previous sections, factors with the significant impact are summarized in a SWOT analysis (see Table 2). SWOT analysis is the summary of the conducted analysis of internal and external environment and examines books strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats from the aspect of the books present and future impact on marketing performance and sales (Čater, 2022).

Table 2: SWOT analysis

Internal analysis	Strengths	Weaknesses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive financial performance • Success of men's national football team on European and World Cup competitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently no marketing strategy to guide promotion of the book on domestic and foreign market • Dimensions of the book

(table continues)

(continued)

Table 3: SWOT analysis

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficient system of youth football development • Connection and intercorrelation of CFF employees, book editors and associates with leading football organizations, UEFA and FIFA • Expertise and rich coaching and football career of editors and associates of the book • Domestic and world popularity of editors and associates of the book • High level expertise and involvement in sports medicine of doctors responsible for the medical context of the book • Dimensions of the book (A4 paper) • Simplicity and clarity of the book • The visual richness of the book with photographs and graphics • Book is available in English language • The book contains all the necessary knowledge for football development of youngsters • Forewords of the book by the top football players and coaches of Croatian football nowadays and historically • A wide range of sponsors of the CFF 	
External analysis	<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Football as the most popular sport in the world • CFF and Croatian men's football national team worldwide popularity • Positive media attention • Croatian football associations and clubs in other countries, so called diaspora • Participation at United Soccer Coaches Convention in America, Los Angeles 	<p style="text-align: center;">Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependence of CFF's financial stability on successes on competitions • Narrow market of the book potential customers • Omission of e-book and audiobook existence • Mutual copying and book borrowing

(table continues)

(continued)

Table 4: SWOT analysis

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interest of other football federation in development system of CFF• Constant growth of interest in football coaching educations in UEFA and Croatian coaching Academy• A poor market for the same or similar books• Presence and pictures of popular football players at the book promotion	
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Source: Own work.

6 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

To successfully create and implement the marketing strategy for book “Croatian School of Football”, it is necessary to carefully define goals and objectives. In a nutshell, defined goal is a broad aim toward which efforts of the strategy will be directed, but because of their open-nature and not being specific, it is important to define objectives, which are not properly defined until they respect the rule of SMART - specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time defined (Marion Marketing, 2023). Table 3 represents carefully defined and structured goal and objectives for the strategy.

Table 5: Goals and objectives of proposed marketing strategy for book "Croatian School of Football"

Goal	Setting up the book and the CFF as the bearers of quality in the field of development of young teams in Croatia and world of football, and the ground for education and specialization of all coaches.
Objectives	Objective 1: All football federations and associations in the world should have the book “Croatian School of Football” till 2027.
	Objective 2: All amateur and professional Croatian clubs should have the book and use it as a ground for work in their school of football till 2026.
	Objective 3: CFF should sell 2000 books on a domestic and 5000 books on international market till 2026.

Source: Own work.

7 TARGET MARKETS

In marketing, the term market refers to „the group of consumers or organizations that are interested in the product, have the resources to purchase the product and are permitted by law and other regulations to acquire the product” (NetMBA, n.d.). The book is produced for a specific market, so target marketing needs to be done. Target marketing is a process of identification of the most profitable market segments, where businesses can decide on focusing on developing products or services to satisfy each selected segment in targeted market. Such a target marketing strategy significantly differs from mass marketing, where businesses decide to produce one product to all consumers or from product differentiation, where businesses offer variety of products to a large market (Camilleri, 2018).

In previous sections analysis of data (internal and external environment), SWOT analysis and setting up the goals and objectives for the purpose of marketing strategy has been done. Therefore, according to the analysis, the target market on which strategy will be focused are “Football development institutions”.

Football development institutions are the ones responsible for the growth of football at all levels. In order for the marketing strategy to meet the customer's needs, it is necessary to carefully segment the selected target market. Market segmentation is the process of identifying segments of the targeted market and dividing them into sub-groups according to common needs, interests, similar lifestyles, etc. By dividing the market into segments, CFF will have better understanding of the customers’ needs and wants because of the ability of “tailoring” marketing activities more accurately and responsibly (Camilleri, 2018).

Segmentation of the target market has been done through product-related segmentation, or better explained, through dividing the target market into homogeneous groups based on their relationship to the product (Camilleri, 2018). Segments of the marketing strategy for the book “Croatian School of Football” are:

- a) Football clubs with developed football schools: Croatian Football clubs have a need for systematized and easy to follow system for their schools of football. Moreover, CFF wants that all Croatian clubs operate in the same or at least a similar way, so that all the clubs together participate in creation of new and talented players for the selections of the Croatian national team. Also, many European amateur football clubs have a need to poses the book in order to make their football schools more successful and effective, i.e., to organize it according to the Croatian model that showed amazing result on the recent world and European cups.
- b) Institutions for the education of football coaches: All football associations and federations accepted from FIFA and UEFA have their own institutions for the education of young and new coaches, including CFF’s, so called “Croatian Football academy”. All lectures and exams for Croatian students' licenses take place there. As the book contains

a synthesis of various football fields needed to pass the exams and become professional coaches, it is ideal material for practical and theoretical education in such institutions. Since the book has been translated into English, it can also be used as educational material in other educational football institutions.

- c) Football federations and associations: no federation or association has ever published an educational sports book like this, so this targeted segment is an ideal opportunity. Every federation should have at least one book that contains everything related to youth football development. Therefore, many federations are interested in the CFF's way of work, more precisely, "how does the Croatian national football team achieve such amazing results on major competitions?". As the organization of federation and the development system of young players is carefully described in the book, other federations and associations will certainly want to have it to discover the "secret" of Croatian football.

The CFF wants to establish itself as a leader and bearer of quality in the field of development of football. More precisely, with the book, CFF wants to set the foundations of football in Croatia, and international. As the book is not intended only for football clubs, but also for football educational institutions and federations, with good marketing strategy and carefully selected target market, CFF can become globally recognizable not only for its achievements, but also for its quality, knowledge, and professionalism.

8 MARKETING STRATEGY

This section is dedicated to the creation and formulation of marketing strategy for CFF's book "Croatian School of Football" through principle of the marketing mix 4P – product, price, promotion, and place decisions. Strategy is formulated as the results of the analysis of internal and external analysis, SWOT analysis, goals and objectives and targeted market. This strategy is more than just promotion and advertising of the book, it is about connecting the book with the segments on the targeted market. Since CFF doesn't have marketing strategy for the book yet, this thesis will help federation in directing marketing-related activities and in achieving their main goal, which is "setting up the book and the CFF as the bearers of quality in the field of development of young teams in Croatia and world of football, and the ground for education and specialization of all coaches".

This book represents the first publication of this kind of sports-educational book for the federation, consequently, a diversification strategy is appropriate. That kind of strategy involves taking new products, in this case book "Croatian School of Football", into new markets, in this case "football development institutions". Strategy demands most patience and waiting for a ROI because it is the riskiest one – there are no existing products and market, everything has been done from the "scratch" (Stewart, n.d.).

8.1 Marketing mix

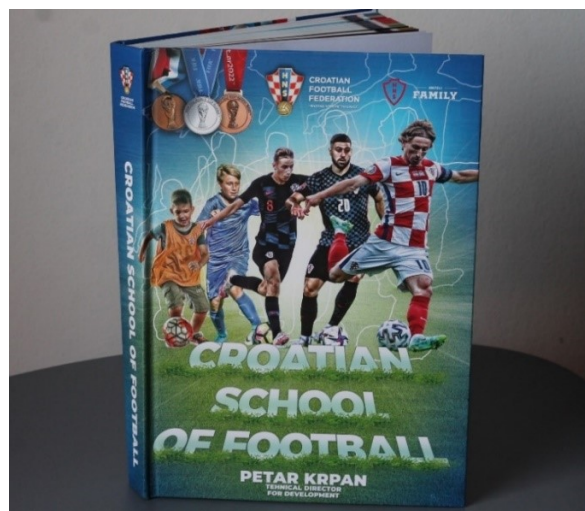
How the book “Croatian School of Football” will reach the targeted market will be explained in this subsection through “marketing mix” approach. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2006) “marketing mix is the set of controllable variables that the firm can use to influence the buyer’s response”. In this case specifically, controllable variables of the CFF are 4P’s - product, price, place, and promotion. The main objective of this approach is to build up the combination of 4Ps, which will create the highest level of customer satisfaction, give a competitive advantage and at the same time meet CFF’s goals and objectives. Success of the marketing strategy will depend on the appropriate proportion of product, price, place (distribution) and promotional efforts and of course, available resources (Nuseir & Madanat, 2015).

8.1.1 Product decisions

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2006) products are goods or services that are launched in the market to be consumed or to be used by customers to satisfy their needs and demands. In this marketing strategy, product is the book “Croatian School of Football” that has been published by CFF in 2022.

A lot of effort was put into the physical appearance of the book. The book has over 400 pages and it has dimensions of A4 paper. It has hard covers and over them hard paper, which is identical to the book covers, so that the original covers remain undamaged during delivery or storage. The cover (see Figure 17) shows the development of the players through the age categories, which eventually as a result of quality work in the football schools, lead to the players like young Joško Gvardiol, most expensive defender in 2023 and the captain of the Croatian football men’s national team, Luka Modrić, winner of Ballon d’Or in 2018.

Figure 17: Front cover of the book "Croatian School of Football"



Source: Sopta (2023).

The cover is dominated by the green color that represents growth, renewal, and health. In addition to the fact that all three medals won at the world championships are on the cover and the back of the book (see Figure 18), they are permeated throughout the book, as a constant reminder of quality work and success.

Figure 18: Cover at the back of the book "Croatian School of Football"



Source: Sopta (2023).

Apart from the physical appearance of the product, it is even more important to distinguish the core values of the book, which represent the key factor in targeting the chosen market. Core values of the book “Croatian School of Football” are:

- Book provides a synthesis of all necessary knowledge for the organization or an upgrade of an effective and efficient development in football schools for all amateur clubs in Croatia and beyond.
- Book has a high quality and reliable content due to the professionals that were involved in creation of the book. The book was made by editors and associates that have a rich football knowledge from the time when they were professional football players, to the present, when they are on different highly professional football positions worldwide, like head coaches, directors of football schools, technical directors, etc. Associates are also sporting medical professionals with involvement in different high institutions and organizations of sport medicine.
- Book “Croatian School of Football” provides the “secret” of Croatian Football. Since the book has been written based on the previous work and knowledge of CFF, there is content that provides information on how the CFF is organized and how they carry out their selections and monitoring of talents, until the chosen ones manage to come to the senior level.

- Book contains football theory and sets of elements which are necessary for education and passing exams on football academies for young coaches.
- Book is understandable, practical, and visual, since it is filled with many pictures and graphics (see Figure 19).

Figure 19: Graphics, pictures, and visual materials of the book "Croatian School of Football"



Source: Sopta (2023).

8.1.2 Price decisions

Price is one of the factors that has a significant impact on customers buying decisions - it is the value that is charged against the service or product provided to a customer (Kotler & Armstrong, 2006). Customer decisions depend on many factors, of which the most important ones are buying power, cost of product and cost of product delivery (Nuseir & Madanat, 2015). CFF has not yet put the book up for sale, but it is official that it should begin in January 2024, once the final marketing strategy is in place. The competitive market is not very rich in the same or similar books, but an analysis of the prices of sports and sports educational books on Amazon shows that the prices usually vary from €50 to €150, depending on the length and content of the book. In the analysis, it was mentioned that in 2017 the CFF published the book "Development curriculum", which was constructed more as a professional documentation rather than an educational-sport book. For the comparison purposes, the price of the book was and still is €57,52 on Amazon.

Considering the value of the book, the target market and production costs, CFF stated that the price of the book will be around €90 without delivery costs. The price of the book will be the same on the domestic and international market.

8.1.3 Promotional decisions

In general, promotion is advertisement of a product that organizations are selling to its targeted customers and this process is also known as “communication with customers using various means of advertising”. Promotion should strive to reduce the communication gap between CFF and the target market (Lovelock & Wright, 2003). The main task of the promotion decision in this strategy is to successfully reach the football educational institutions using all the materials and resources that CFF has available. There are few ways of promotion that will be used in the marketing strategy of the book “Croatian School of Football” (see Table 4).

Table 6: Summary of promotional tactics of the book "Croatian School of Football"

Type of promotion	Channels	Costs	Materials	Outcome(s)	Targeted segment
Social media	Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn.	Cost free or paid advertisements.	Video, photo, reel, and story.	Followers would be introduced to the book, its content and how to buy it. Getting to followers that would like to buy a book just because they are football fan of the men’s Croatian national football team. Communication with football educational institutions.	Football clubs with developed football schools, Football federations and associations, Institutions for the education of football coaches
Newsletters	E-mail.	Cost-free.	Emails in Croatian and English.	Communication with all Croatian and foreign amateur and professional clubs in Croatia, head football organizations (FIFA and UEFA) and other football federations and associations.	Football clubs with developed football schools, Football federations and associations

(table continues)

(continued)

Table 7: Summary of promotional tactics of the book "Croatian School of Football"

Mass media	Sport radio channel, web portals and television.	Partly cost free and partly paid advertisements (depending on the demands from the media).	Words (radio) or text, pictures, and links (web portals or television).	Presentation of the existence of the book and how to purchase it to wider Croatian population.	Anyone besides targeted segment that could be interested in buying the book (football fans).
Live presentations	Lecture halls, classrooms, conference rooms, zoom conference call.	Depending on whether the football institution invites the CFF (then it is cost free) or the CFF goes to them (then the CFF solves the travel and accommodation costs).	Live or online brief presentation of the book (approx. 15 minutes).	Presentation of domestic and English version of the book to different countries, football associations and influential people in the world of football. New business opportunities connected to the book, CFF and brand awareness.	Football federations and associations, Institutions for the education of football coaches
Sport Fairs	Depending on the type of sports fair (indoor vs. outdoor)	Travel, fees, and accommodation costs.	Oral presentation, informational flyers including QR code to the purchase web site of the book, and demonstration copy of the book.	Providing people with a presentation of the book and all additional information live at different sport-connected locations.	Depends on the type of sport fair – it can be for each targeted segment, but separately.

Source: Own work.

The last column »targeted segment« describes which promotional activities are used to reach each specific segment. As the target market is narrow and specific, certain promotional

activities simultaneously reach two or more segments, but they are not considered equal. In the following part of the section, each promotional method from table 4 is explained more detailed.

a) Social media

Nowadays, social media has become a powerful business tool for reaching and engaging with the businesses targeted audience. Since we are living in the “Digital century” it is crucial to include social media marketing into marketing strategy. (Mohan, 2023).

In the last 5 years CFF has gathered loads of loyal followers and fans, for example, federation has 731,000 followers on Instagram, 628,000 followers on Facebook and 3,141 followers on LinkedIn. Through social media, specifically Facebook and Instagram, with a few general posts, followers would be introduced to the book, its content and how to buy it. Greater emphasis would be placed on the posts of photos of famous football players of the Croatian national football team with the book, e.g., Luka Modrić, Joško Gvardiol, Mateo Kovačić, etc. Also, in addition to the photos, interesting video content, so-called "reel", that has become popular since 2020, would also be published. Posts would also be translated into English because there are many foreign fans among the social media followers of the CFF. To intrigue the followers, it is important to include some interesting parts of the books in the posts or video content, because it may trigger targeted market into the final buying decision.

CFF hasn't shown much activity on LinkedIn so far, but with the start of book sales, those things should change. Only a few posts should be published on LinkedIn with general information related to the book, such as what the book is about, who participated in its creation, what content can be found in it and how to buy it. On LinkedIn, "relaxed" content should be avoided, and more focus should be on B2B communication, for example with other football associations and federations and coaching educations. On the other hand, Instagram and Facebook should be focused on communication with amateur football clubs.

b) Newsletters

The newsletter is one of the most cost-effective tools for building relationships and maintaining regular contact with target markets. Through newsletters, businesses provide important news, updated or any other important information to their clients, customers, or business partners (MIDAS PR Group, 2020).

CFF is constantly in communication with all Croatian and foreign amateur and professional clubs in Croatia, head football organizations (FIFA and UEFA), other football federations and associations. Therefore, CFF has a rich email database of the target audience. It is important to prepare several B2B emails in Croatian and English. The first email would inform the target audience about the publication of the book, its general information and how to purchase it. The second email would provide a more detailed insight into the content of the book, and the third would have a detailed description of books core values, several photos

of famous Croatian football players with the book, a link through which the book can be purchased, etc. It would be most detailed and intriguing because it should trigger for purchase everyone that didn't buy a book after first two emails. The period between emails should be at least 3 weeks, so that the CFF can see the effect of every sent email. Depending on the results, CFF may include more newsletters in future book sales.

In addition to the new newsletter trends, it is important to include some "old" ones as well. It is necessary to include well-known sports radio channels and web portals to briefly present the book and how to purchase it.

c) Presentations of the book in different football institutions

For the book to be successfully presented to all desired targeted segments, it is necessary to include the oral presentation of the book. The Croatian Football Academy is part of the CFF, which is responsible for the education of young coaches. The idea is that at the beginning of each license, or "academic year", a representative person from the CFF takes 15 minutes and holds a short presentation of the book, it would be appropriate that that person is one of the editors. For the purposes of this type of promotion, it is necessary to have a prepared presentation that will contain all the basic information about the book "Croatian School of Football". For example, what is the book about, who participated in the book, why it is important for young coaches to have it and how to buy it.

Through its employees, CFF is connected to different departments of head football organizations (FIFA and UEFA). Presentation of the book can also be translated into English and in cooperation with organizations, the book can be presented in different departments through employees of the association or Croatian representatives in FIFA and UEFA. It is an opportunity to present the English version of the book to different countries, football associations and influential people in the world of football at the same time.

In the section of the external analysis of this master thesis, Croatian football diaspora has been mentioned. It is important to include it in the promotion part because each diaspora has established football centers for youth development - Germany (the largest percentage of people with Croatian citizenship), America, Canada, Australia, etc. CFF will also visit these centers for the purpose of the oral presentation of the book to all members of each football center. There are many coaches and young football players who can't wait for the arrival and tour of CFF employees. What these centers also strive for is to be as similar as possible to football work and the CFF organization, which the book will enable them to be.

Also, in the last five years, CFF has had requests for presentations and education regarding football development in other football associations and federations. Therefore, if a request to present the book live in other football institutions (clubs, associations, organizations, etc.) appears, the CFF would also use it to promote the book and the federation itself.

d) Sport fairs

Sports fairs around the world are a great opportunity to promote any type of sports book. It is important to choose the ones that match the target audience, because visiting too many fairs is not a cost-effective way to go. There are different football sport fairs, so depending on the theme of the fair, all three segments can be targeted separately. In this case, CFF already has one application for a sports fair in America. More precisely, CFF will be part of the United Soccer Coaches Convention in Anaheim, California in January 2024. It is a convention dedicated to soccer coaches and administrators of all levels, filled with rich content lectures and field coaching demonstrations to the latest gear and technology available United Soccer Coaches Convention, 2023). So, in this case, the sport fair will be perfect opportunity to present the book to the targeted segment – institutions for the education of football coaches.

e) Discounts

Regardless of the previous methods of promotion, it should be noted that CFF plans to offer a discount on the total amount to anyone who decides to order a larger quantity of books. Discounts would vary on quantity that has been ordered by the football institution, but based on the analysis conducted, if the order is over 500 books, the customer will be provided with a 10% discount on the total amount.

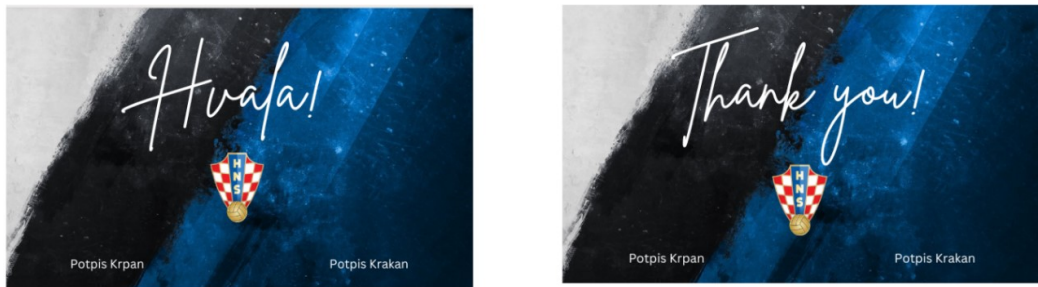
8.1.4 Place decisions

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2006), place or distribution decisions are the ones related to the availability of a product to a customer (Kotler & Armstrong, 2006). In the case of this marketing strategy, CFF has currently decided that the book “Croatian School of Football” will be sold exclusively online. Offers are also coming in from various bookstores, but the option of selling the book through that channel is still under consideration.

There will be a special section “Book Croatian School of Football” on the official web page of CFF, where the interested customers can read all the information connected the book and purchasing procedure. The production and distribution of the book will be placed in Osijek, city on the east of Croatia.

The main proposal for the book is to be packed in an "ecologically conscious" way, i.e., in book-sized paper boxes with a black and white CFF logo on the front and black and white medals on the back of the box. Inside the book, there would be a “thank you” card in Croatian and English (see Figure 20).

Figure 20: Example of "thank you" card included in the bought book package



Source: Own work.

In addition to the “thank you” card, there would be a pager as a gift to every customer (see Figure 21). Customers will be able to use it for different kinds of purposes, but mainly for marking the important things in the book or where did they stop with the reading. Therefore, a lot of people like to use it as a memory on specific situation or decision in their lives.

Figure 21: Example of a two-sided pager that will be included in a bought book package



Source: Own work.

8.2 Implementation and evaluation

CFF plans to start with the implementation of the marketing strategy and sale of the book in January 2024. The strategy of the thesis is mostly implemented through a combination of oral presentations, promotional materials and through online marketing tools (email

marketing, social media, etc.) by the marketing team of CFF and editors of the book. CFF wants to ensure that over a period of time the book is also promotionally spread by the "word of mouth" method, i.e., that satisfied customers feedback spread positive opinion in their environment.

One of the fundamental sources for determining whether a marketing strategy is successful or not is its evaluation. As the main goal of the book is not financial, but “setting up the book and the CFF as the bearers of quality in the field of development of young teams in Croatia and world of football, and the ground for education and specialization of all coaches”, it is important to distinguish evaluation method that is not based only on number of sold books, so the recommended methods are:

a) “Fill and buy” approach

As the book will (currently) be sold exclusively on the web, it is important to know who is buying the book. Therefore, it is necessary to include a short question in the process of buying a book online. Before the customers get to the step of choosing a payment method, they will have an additional step called "Reason/s for purchasing the book", and will be able to choose one or more from the following options:

- private purposes,
- educational purposes (coaching license),
- for the needs of gaining knowledge for the football school development in an amateur club,
- for the needs of gaining knowledge for the football school development in an amateur club, in a professional club,
- we are a football association/federation, and we want to find out more about the organization and work of the Croatian Football Federation
- we are from FIFA, UEFA or other similar football organization, and we want to purchase it for internal use.

In this way, CFF will know how successful promotional activities are for certain targeted segments and whether they should improve their promotional activities. In addition, they will have an insight into the purposes for which the book is used the most and the least.

b) A “post-purchase survey” approach

This approach enables organizations to present their customers with a small set of questions on their email after purchase of the product. The period can be right after the purchase, or after the period organizations individually choose (one week, two weeks, one month, etc.). Since CFF wants to know feedback related to the customer satisfaction of the content of the book, surveys would be sent on customers emails after one month from the purchase (Memon, n.d.). As today's customers don't like to spend their time filling up long surveys, this one would consist only out of two questions:

1. The book met my expectations (yes/no).
 - If the answer is no, please write what you didn't like about the book.
 - If the answer is yes, please write what did you like the most about the book.

2. I mostly use the book for:
 - educational purposes (yes/no).
 - the purpose of development of the football school in an amateur/professional club (yes/no).
 - the general organization upgrade in the football institution I am working in.

As the editors of the book are already planning to expand the book and have a second edition, it is important to know the feedback of the customers. In addition to their goal of further expanding the book with the database of video material and new educational chapters, it is extremely important to know what else can be improved for the book to meet the customer's expectations. Due to the reasons mentioned, it is important to implement these two methods in the process of the evaluation of the marketing strategy.

CONCLUSION

The main goal of this master thesis was to develop a successful marketing strategy for the sports book on Croatian market, "Croatian School of Football", that will potentially find its place on a real competitive market. The book was created by many high-level football experts and associates as a result of many years of experience and work in football, with a need for unified and typified professional reading as a model example on how football schools' function in Croatia.

The goal to which this strategy aims is "setting up the book and the CFF as the bearers of quality in the field of development of young teams in Croatia and world of football, and the ground for education and specialization of all coaches". In order for the strategy to achieve the set goal, there has been an emphasis on promotional marketing efforts that connect with each targeted customer segment in targeted market - football development institutions. Moreover, through the detailed external and internal environmental analysis and SWOT analysis, it was shown that the book and the CFF have a minimal number of weaknesses and threats, which increases the chances of successful implementation of proposed marketing strategy.

The analysis section showed that CFF never had a better reputation, but also a financial situation, which made the creation of a book marketing strategy simpler and open to different marketing and promotional options. Numerous interviews and analysis of secondary data helped me to make a marketing strategy that will have its grounds in taking an opportunity of the current popularity of the CFF. In recent years, the Croatian men's football national team delighted the world of football and influenced positively not only the CFF, but also the

promotion of the whole of country. One of the tactics was to connect the book's marketing strategy with these successes and admirers of Croatian football around the world.

Proposed promotional activities are cost-effective and they reach a large customer database in a successful and efficient way. Also, the packaging of the book and additional content ensure that every customer gets a feeling of satisfaction when opening the book for the first time. Additionally, master thesis includes proposals for the implementation and evaluation of the book due to the extreme importance of successful collection of customer's feedback. CFF doesn't plan to stop here - they plan to expand the book with new chapters, knowledge and even video materials.

I would also like to highlight that through the whole procedure of the creation of this master thesis, there has been a high level of professional and successful cooperation with CFF and my mentor full professor Dr. Maja Zalaznik, which contributed to high quality marketing strategy proposal. I am really looking forward to seeing how CFF will implement my ideas and research into reality.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Povzetek (Summary in Slovene language)

Magistrsko delo se osredotoča na razvoj marketinške strategije knjige "Hrvaška nogometna šola," ki jo je leta 2022 izdala Hrvaška nogometna zveza (HNZ). HNZ je pridobila pomembno prepoznavnost z uspehi na mednarodnih nogometnih tekmovanjih, kar postavlja vprašanje, kako je majhna država, kot je Hrvaška, dosegla tako vidne rezultate v nogometu. Knjiga vsebuje znanje o sistemu, organizaciji in razvoju mladih nogometašev s strani hrvaških nogometnih strokovnjakov. Da bi knjiga dosegla svoj ciljni trg in postala splošno priljubljena v svetu nogometa, je potrebna uspešna marketinška strategija knjige, kar je osrednji namen te magistrske naloge.

Cilj, ki ga strategija zasleduje, je kako "uporabiti knjigo in postaviti HNZ kot nosilca kakovosti na področju razvoja mladih ekip v Hrvaški in svetu nogometa ter kot osnovno podlago za izobraževanje in specializacijo vseh trenerjev." Da bi strategija dosegla zastavljeni cilj, je poudarek na promocijskih marketinških prizadevanjih, ki se povezujejo s vsakim ciljnim segmentom strank na ciljnem trgu - ustanovami za razvoj nogometa. Podrobna analiza zunanjega in notranjega okolja ter analiza SWOT je pokazala minimalne pomanjkljivosti in nevarnosti knjige ter HNZ, kar povečuje možnosti za uspešno izvedbo predlagane marketinške strategije.

Predlagane promocijske dejavnosti so stroškovno učinkovite in dosežejo veliko bazo strank prek družbenih omrežij, biltenov, domačih in mednarodnih predstavitev itd. Prav tako izgled in dodatna vsebina knjige zagotavlja, da se vsaka stranka počuti zadovoljno, ko prvič odpre knjigo. Poleg tega magistrsko delo vključuje predloge za izvedbo evalvacije knjige za uspešno zbiranje povratnih informacij, kar je izrednega pomena.

Delo je bilo opravljeno v strokovnem sodelovanju z urednikoma knjige, Petrom Krpanom in Ivanom Krakonom, ter mentorico, red. prof. Majo Zalaznik. Naloga bo uporabljena s strani HNZ kot gradivo za ustvarjanje resnične marketinške strategije za knjigo, s pričetkom izvajanja januarja 2024.

