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dr hab. Katarzyna Bilińska-Reformat, prof. UE w Katowicach^{A B C D E F}

University of Economics in Katowice

ORCID 0000-0002-2484-9629

**BUSINESS MODEL AS THE SUCCESS FACTOR
IN THE ERA OF CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC**

**MODEL BIZNESU JAKO CZYNNIK SUKCESU
W ERZE GLOBALNEJ PANDEMII**

Abstract: The current pandemic situation creates many challenges for different entities form different sectors. In proposed paper it is assumed that the business model plays curtail role as the success factor especially in the era of global pandemic. Therefore, the aforementioned area (business model as the success factor of the company) constitutes the subject of the paper. In the paper, the following goals of descriptive and cognitive character are assumed:

- identification of the characteristics of the business models that are most successful in the era of pandemic,

- indication of marketing practices applied by innovative company G2A in the sphere of developing successful business models.

The following research methods are applied for the purpose of implementation of assumed goals: critical analysis of the literature of the subject and the case study method that shows the best business practices associated with development of business models. In the study successful company G2A is objects of research. Analyses included in the paper concern the period between march and September 2020 that was the period of global pandemic explosion (time range). Presented results of conducted analyses concern international environment (spatial range).

Keywords: business model, success factor, coronavirus pandemic, G2A

Streszczenie: Sytuacja panującej pandemii koronawirusa stawia przed funkcjonującymi w różnych sektorach gospodarki przedsiębiorstwami szereg wyzwań. W niniejszym artykule założono, że przyjęty do realizacji model biznesowy jest kluczowym czynnikiem sukcesu pozwalającym na sprawne funkcjonowanie na rynku. Ten obszar badawczy (dotyczący modeli biznesu) jest przedmiotem rozważań zawartych w artykule. Przyjęto w nim do realizacji cele o charakterze opisowym i poznawczym:

- identyfikacja składowych modeli biznesu wpływających na ich konkurencyjność rynkową,
- wskazanie najlepszych praktyk w zakresie stosowanych modeli biznesu, które pozwalają na bardzo dobre funkcjonowanie w dobie korona wirusa – posłużono się przykładem firmy G2A.

Aby osiągnąć zamierzone cele, w artykule zastosowano następujące metody badawcze: metodę krytycznej analizy literatury przedmiotu zarówno krajowej, jak i zagranicznej oraz metodę studium przypadku, wskazującą najlepsze praktyki biznesowe w zakresie tworzenia i wykorzystywania modeli biznesowych pozwalających na odnoszenie sukcesu rynkowego w dobie koronawirusa. W artykule opisano i przeanalizowano składowe modeli biznesu przedsiębiorstwa G2A (zakres podmiotowy). Zakresem przedmiotowym jest konkretny model biznesu przedsiębiorstwa G2A. Badania dotyczą okresu od marca 2020 do września 2020, czyli okresu lockdownu i dotyczą środowiska międzynarodowego.

Słowa kluczowe: modele biznesowe, czynniki sukcesu, pandemia korona wirusa, G2A

Introduction

Market environment of the company consists of entities and forces that have impact on its ability to succeed by developing and maintaining its transaction capabilities and relationships with customers in the segments it serves.

According to Ph. Kotler, the environment of companies is divided into micro and macro-environment. The micro-environment consists of such economic entities as: competitors, buyers, suppliers, intermediaries and the “public” understood as a group that has a present or potential influence on the company or is personally

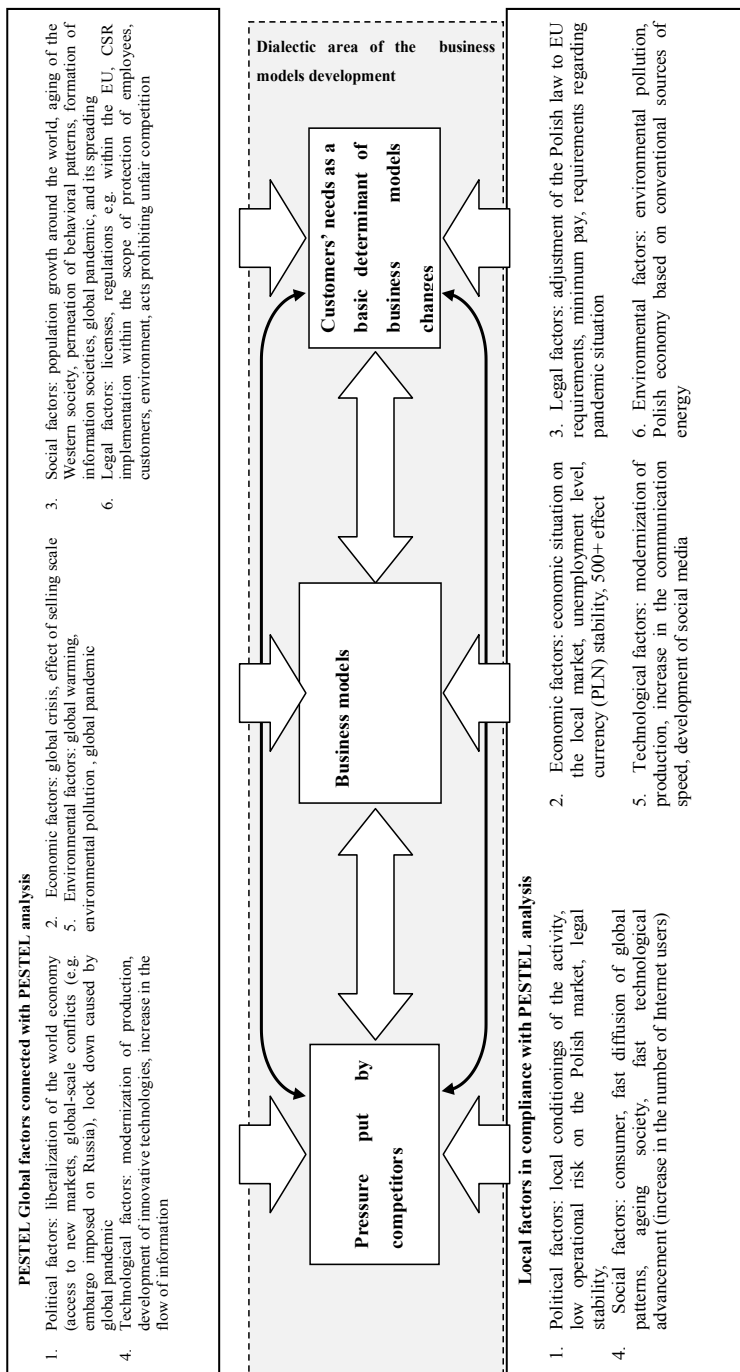
interested in the possibilities of achieving its goals¹. The macro-environment consists of significant social forces and trends, changes in the demographic structure of the sector and the economy, economic, natural, technological, political, legal, and cultural determinants, while creating a system of opportunities and threats for all companies operating in the sector and economy. Turbulence, manifested in the occurrence of unpredictable changes, is an immanent feature of the company environment. Undoubtedly, the occurrence of a global pandemic is the change that poses enormous challenge for world economies. Enterprises are looking for the possibility of efficient functioning on the market. The use of an appropriate business model in practice is one of the important success determinants. When analysing the factors affecting the adoption of a specific business model, the PESTEL analysis can be used. The figure 1 shows the business environment determined by the pandemic situation. The stage of rebuilding of various economic areas may last for several weeks, in one case, and in the other it may be a long-term process taking even several months².

Figure 1 shows that there is a whole set of environmental factors influencing the adopted business models. Factors associated with the development of new technologies and the related requirements of new consumers play an extremely important role. Their characteristics in time is presented in the table below.

¹ Ph. Kotler, K.L. Keller: *Marketing Management*, Pearson Prentice Hall 2006.

² https://raportcsr.pl/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/raport_csr_45-edycja.pdf.

Figure 1. PESTEL Analysis for business models functioning in the pandemic era
 Rysunek 1. Analiza PESTEL dla modeli biznesowych funkcjonujących w dobie pandemii



Source: own study.

Table 1. Characteristics of contemporary customers

Tabela 1. Charakterystyka współczesnych klientów

	Customers as passive audience			Customers as active players
	Inducing initially defined groups of buyer	Transactions with individual customers	Long-term relationships with individual customers	Customers as co-creators of values
Time range	1970s and early 1980s	Late 1980s and early 1990s	1990s	Since 2000
Customer's position	Customers are perceived as passive buyers with initially determined purchasing structure			Customers are a part of strong network, co-create and bring out the value of business. They are co-workers, co-authors, and co-competitors. Easier communication makes companies struggle for customers on social media
Managers' convictions	Customer is a statistical mean of the group initially determined by the company	Customer is an individual entity or a statistical entity in a transaction	Customer is a person, and the goal is to establish trust and relationships	Customer is not an individuality, but also a part of social and cultural environment
Relationships company – customer and offer development	Traditional market research and surveys; products and services are created without feedback	Shift from sale to helping customers through services and customer service programs; identification of problems allows for changing the offer on the basis of feedback	Reaching customers through observation of users, identifying solutions by leading users, changing offer through thorough offer redevelopment,	Customers co-participate in development of personal experiences. (location in commercial centres that provide experiences). Companies and leading customers jointly perform the role in education, shaping expectations and co-creation of market approval for products and services

	Customers as passive audience			Customers as active players
	Inducing initially defined groups of buyer	Transactions with individual customers	Long-term relationships with individual customers	Customers as co-creators of values
Goal and flow of communication	Gaining access to initially determined target groups, unidirectional communication	Marketing based on databases. Bi-directional communication	Relationship marketing: bi-directional communication and access to customers	Active dialogue with customers for the purpose of meeting their demands and to create word-of-mouth marketing. Multiple access and communication
Areas of increased marketing activity of chain	Price-related instruments	Development marketing-mix instruments	Application of instruments of relationship marketing	Development of new alternative channels of sale e.g. online, increased formation of own labels, search for alternative methods of communication with customers, diversification of assortment offer, creation of own selling formats, employing celebrities in promotional campaigns

Source: own case study on the basis of Prahalad, C.K. Ramasvamy, *Przyszłość konkurencji [Future of Competition]*, PWE, Warszawa 2005.

Referring to the situation of the global pandemic, it should be added that enterprises are in different situations. Half of Polish enterprises are already feeling a direct threat. Almost all of them suffer huge losses and many will not survive without help. There are also such industries for which the coronavirus is a great opportunity for development. Business models allow them to do so. The telecommunications and the digital economy industries have reasons to be satisfied. High-speed connections are becoming systems necessary for normal functioning. E-commerce companies and couriers, especially such as Inpost, who use contactless parcel delivery machines, have particularly good results. The pandemic situation is also an opportunity for internet content providers. Producers of computer games, such as CD Project with the flagship product *Wiedźmin* [The Witcher], are also successful. VOD services offering movies and TV series record massive popularity. They were already popular before, and now

they have a chance to strengthen their position and dominate traditional television³. Also, companies with traditional business models have higher turnover; they are producers and sellers of goods that are purchased in quantities larger than usually.

Companies providing entertainment, e.g. Netflix, HBO GO, Ipla, Player and others have also benefited from giving a huge offer selection. Taking advantage of the boom, even a quite weird Katoflix service with an offer of Catholic films and programs appeared in Poland.

The largest VOD services in Europe record double-digit increases in the number of users, on average by approximately 20%, but in some countries (Germany, Spain, Austria) they are even exceeding 40%. It is estimated that today about 70% of web traffic is generated by watching movies. There is a fear that the Internet may not be able to manage it. That is why telecommunication operators called on broadcasters to stop making high-definition films available during the epidemic.

2. Business model and its elements as the source of competitive advantage

The Business Model is a comprehensive concept of business activity that takes into consideration its competitiveness in a particular sphere, including the establishment of competitive advantage resulting from selection of resources and the configuration of the value formation chain⁴. It's important to underline that, Business Model presents the principles of company functioning.

The creation of appropriate circumstances for final buyers to buy products is the main task of enterprises.

The components of a Business Model are diversified – they are applied in various degrees and in varied ways depending on the subject of the business activity and the method of formation of competitive advantage by a commercial enterprise. Diversity of components and their mutual relationships result in the existence of various business models. Especially in the era of pandemic it's important to find the proper components of competitive business models.

Conceptualisation of the Business Model consists of following elements:

- the way of selling products⁵,
- diverse activities that need to be executed to design, manage, and motivate the consumer experience (activities)⁶.

³ <https://www.polityka.pl/tygodnikpolityka/rynek/1949714,1,jedni-straca-inni-sie-wzbogaca-kto-zarobi-na-pandemii.read>.

⁴ R. Yin, *Case study research: Design and methods* (1st ed.), CA: Sage Publishing, Beverly Hills 1984.

⁵ D. Grewal, M. Levy, V. Kumar, *Customer Experience Management in Retailing: An Organizing Framework*, "Journal of Retailing" 2009, Vol. 85(1), pp. 1-14.

⁶ A. Paananen, M. Seppanen, *Reviewing customer value literature. Comparing and contrasting customer values perspectives*, "Intangible Capital" 2013, Vol. 9 (3), pp. 708-729.

- the governance of entities that perform these activities, the roles they play and the incentives that motivate them (governance).

Fundamental elements of business models are also identified with customer value proposition, profit formula, key resources and key processes that is closely connected with RCOV (Recourses and Competencies, Organisation Value Proposition) business model⁷.

Business models are most often not static. Changes in business models take place, among others, as a result of the implementation of innovations concerning their specific elements or the model as a whole.

The innovations in business models are system – wide changes⁸. The change may originate in just one element of the business models; it also triggers changes in other parts of the system⁹.

Innovative changes in the sphere of business models may have an evolutionary or radical nature. Evolutionary changes most often concern a modification of existing solutions in the sphere of individual functions (stock management, relationship establishment). Radical changes can, in turn, lead to a reconstruction of existing ways in which business activity is conducted.

Innovations in business models of enterprises are most often limited to evolutionary changes and are most often associated with the implementation of solutions in the sphere of:

- ways of selling (resources and key components),
- assortment and service offer (expanded by new product categories),
- forms of cooperation with other entities,
- development of electronic trade (multichannel nature),
- communication with customers,
- positioning of the corporate brand.

Changes can be introduced not in the individual components of business models in different sectors but may also concern fundamental business models.

The scope, character, and pace of implementation of innovative changes in business models of companies are affected by internal determinants associated with the potential of enterprises and external determinants resulting from the environment of the enterprises (including macro-economic, social-demographic-cultural, technical, and technological as well as sector determinants). Factors associated with economy globalisation and trade internationalisation, social changes, competitors' behaviours, and the development of information technologies should be recognised

⁷ A. Osterwalder, Y. Pigneur, Ch.L. Tucci, *Clarifying business models: origins, present, and future of the concept*, "Communications of the Association for Information Systems" 2005, Vol. 16, pp. 1-25.

⁸ X. Lecocq, B. Demil, V. Warnier, *Le business model, un outil d'analyse strategique*, "L'Expansion Management Review" 2006, Vol. 123, pp. 50-59.

⁹ C. Nielsen, M. Lund, *Moving towards maturity in business model definitions*, C. Nielsen, M. Lund (eds.) *The Basics of Business Models*, Ventus Publishing, 2014.

as the most important factors determining innovations in business models within different trades. Business models can be the source of competitive advantage for entities and can support them in the era of pandemic. As the case the Author chose the G2A company functioning on gaming market¹⁰.

2. Compleitive Business Model on the example of G2A company – case study

2.1. Methodology

The following research methods are applied for the purpose of implementation of assumed goals: critical analysis of the literature of the subject and the case study method that shows the best business practices associated with development of business models. The methods applied to achieve the goals of the paper.

In the study successful company G2A is objects of research. Analyses included in the paper concern the period between march and September 2020 that was the period of global pandemic explosion (time range). Presented results of conducted analyses concern international environment (spatial range). A case study is a research method involving an up-close, in-depth, and detailed examination of a particular case. For example, a case study in business might study a particular firm's strategy. Generally, a case can be nearly any unit of analysis, including individuals, organizations, events, or actions.

Case study research can mean single and multiple case studies, can include quantitative evidence, relies on multiple sources of evidence, and benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions. Case studies may involve both qualitative and quantitative research methods¹¹. In these paper multiple case study method was used.

The application of case study method is justified in management sciences because it allows studying quantitative phenomena.

2.2. Characteristics of G2A company and findings

The G2A company was founded in 2010 in Rzeszów. It was established by Bartosz Skwarczek and Dawid Rożek. It is mainly addressed to less affluent clients, and it was run by six computer games enthusiasts. In order to reach its target group, the

¹⁰ J. Feagin, A. Orum, G. Sjoberg, *A case for case study*, Chapel Hill, NC, University of North Carolina Press 1991, pp. 1-300.

¹¹ D.C. Invernizzi, G. Locatelli, N. Brookes, A. Davis, *Qualitative comparative analysis as a method for project studies: The case of energy infrastructure*, "Renewable and Sustainable Energy Review" 1.11.2020, 133: 110314.

owners made attempts to negotiate with the largest producers of computer games. They met with them during events such as Gamescom in Cologne or E3 in Los Angeles. However, the young Polish company did not find interference among the largest publishers. After over a year of unsuccessful negotiations, they decided to change their idea for business. They decided to create a free platform for selling computer games¹². During the first few years, hardly anyone believed in their potential. When they changed the business model from an e-commerce store to a marketplace, they gained 150,000 sellers and over 10 million buyers in over 2 years¹³.

Today, the G2A.COM team consists of over 580 people representing 30 nationalities. New employees are being recruited, and in the near future the company plans to hire more talented employees so that their number will reach one thousand. Its founders have a clearly defined goal – to make G2A the first, globally recognizable Polish brand. The founders of G2A have no complexes. They have decided to become a global brand from Poland and are continuously striving to do so. Within a few years, they developed a company that employed several people at the beginning, now a team of several hundred enthusiasts, and they are constantly increasing employment. G2A.COM has offices in several countries around the world, with headquarters in Hong Kong, but it is in Rzeszów where its heart is beating. It cooperates with such tycoons as Google, Facebook, Twitter, or Pay Pal, although they emphasize that millions of players for whom their dream marketplace was created are the real creators of G2A¹⁴.

Their idea for the platform was the result of observing trends in the computer games market¹⁵. Producers began to move away from selling games in boxes with carriers in the form of CDs, and instead, they moved the burden of sales to the internet. Customers purchase an electronic key which they can then activate through the producer's or distributor's website, or other platform, such as Steam or CD Project GOG. This is now the most popular way of buying access to games by gamers around the world. They started to co-create this channel by developing a platform through which different parties can trade activation keys for games and applications and equipping it in over 200 payment methods that cover almost all countries of the world¹⁶.

Instead of selling games by itself, G2A has become a place where any code holder can put it for sale. The idea resembles popular auction sites where anyone can be a seller, and the buyer can choose the cheapest among many similar offers. However,

¹² <https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/G2A> [accessed: 26.09.2020].

¹³ https://www.biznesistyl.pl/biznes/biznes-na-co-dzien/4483_.html [accessed: 26.09.2020].

¹⁴ https://www.biznesistyl.pl/biznes/biznes-na-co-dzien/4483_.html [accessed: 26.09.2020].

¹⁵ A. Dewalska-Opitek, K. Bilińska-Reformat, *Transport management online games as the example of knowledge sharing among drivers*, [in:] J. Mikulski (ed.), *Research and the Future of Telematics*, Springer Cham, 2020, p. 219.

¹⁶ <https://www.ican.pl/a/zachowalismy-energie-start-upu-w-duzej-firmie/D10Kntp71M> [accessed: 26.09.2020].

games and various types of digital add-ons are traded here. The idea quickly gained great popularity. Nowadays the G2A marketplace is used by 260,000 sellers and 12 million buyers.

It is easy to guess who the latter are, but who are the sellers? This category includes both players who resell missed gifts for example, as well as the game developers and publishers¹⁷. Online key trading still resembles the Wild West. There are over a quarter of a million sellers in the G2A market alone, and this is not the only place like that.

This is associated with many problems, because not all of them always act ethically, or even legally. In recent years, the media have reported on several scandals related to the sales market of keys. We can mention the situation when the producer of *Sniper Elite 3: Afrika* removed their game from the libraries of more than seven thousand players. Studio Rebellion explained then that the codes had been stolen and sold by intermediaries¹⁸.

G2A tempts players to purchase the digital version of games at attractive prices. Good opinions about sellers and affordable prices make users willing to use this method of purchasing games. Original payment system called G2A Pay it is not only convenient but also free. Well, almost free. The website owners have prepared a response explaining why they make users pay for not using the platform. G2A explains that the fee is charged with the intention of covering the costs related to the maintenance of servers and the rest of the IT infrastructure. The company believes it does not make sense to keep accounts that are not used anyway. Therefore, users are asked to log in at least once every 180 days. G2A charges the first € 1 after 180 days of inactivity. If the user is not logged in, then another 1 Euro disappears from their virtual wallet every month. The fee is charged only to users who have any funds accumulated in the G2A wallet. Fortunately, the company does not charge the credit cards of users or PayPal accounts this way. If someone does not use their account and there are no funds on it, it will be deactivated¹⁹.

In addition to the sales platform, the entire G2A ecosystem also includes: G2A Pay (a solution for clients from around the world, giving access – in one place – to over 100 payment methods offered by payment service providers from different countries and allowing you to use the favourite one), G2A Shield (100% guarantee of internet transaction security for sellers and buyers), G2A E-sport (supporting the development of this field, the company occupies a leading position in this indus-

¹⁷ https://www.komputerswiat.pl/gamezilla/aktualnosci/w-szesc-lat-od-pomyslu-do-siedmiusetosobowej-korporacji-z-wizyta-w-g2a/p0td3t8?utm_source=pl.wikipedia.org_viasg_komputerswiat&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=leo_automatic&srcc=ucs&utm_v=2 [accessed: 26.09.2020].

¹⁸ https://www.komputerswiat.pl/gamezilla/aktualnosci/w-szesc-lat-od-pomyslu-do-siedmiusetosobowej-korporacji-z-wizyta-w-g2a/p0td3t8?utm_source=pl.wikipedia.org_viasg_komputerswiat&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=leo_automatic&srcc=ucs&utm_v=2 [accessed: 26.09.2020].

¹⁹ <https://www.speedtest.pl/wiadomosci/gry/g2a-nieuzywanie-konta/> [accessed: 26.09.2020].

try), G2A Land is an application created in virtual reality technology (G2A is one of the world's leading companies creating virtual reality), G2A 3D + (3D printing, a platform that allows to print e.g. game characters), G2A TV (TV platform created by players and for gamers), G2A Direct (for developers and publishers), Goldmine (bonus system for G2A users), G2A Giftcards (online shopping gift cards)²⁰.

G2A.COM has started cooperation with Microsoft and uses artificial intelligence mechanisms based on the Microsoft Azure cloud technology to increase the efficiency and security of its sales platform. G2A.COM systems process terabytes of data per. Thanks to the Azure cloud, this rapidly growing global marketplace for selling games can improve shopping, customer service and ensure the highest level of security. The company's innovative AI solutions will allow to further develop the recommendation system, adapt the services to the needs of users and at the same time minimize the risk of potential abuse²¹.

In recent years, few people in Poland knew that marketplace which is used by millions of users around the world, was created in Rzeszów. Its founders focused first on a specific job, not on promotion in the media. Many Polish branches of global companies learn about the existence of G2A from ... their parent companies from abroad. However, the company in no way distances itself from the country and city in which its heart is beating. It is aware of corporate social responsibility, if only due to the fact that we employ many people. They decided that it was time to show their activity. They want to tell people that with them people can fulfil their dreams of working with the most advanced technologies and conquer practically the whole world in business. Employees contact such with entities such as Google and Facebook every day. Furthermore, there are such Internet personalities as PewDiePie, a Swedish YouTuber, watched by 45 million people. In addition, dozens of their employees travel around the world almost every day²².

Although G2A has actually no competitor in Poland, as it is the only company of this type, its founders still have to keep their finger on the pulse. Its' headquarter is located in Hong Kong. G2A founders often have to answer the question of why it is there. What seems strange to an amateur, is a natural and logical move for those informed in this industry.

Hong Kong is considered a gateway to the Asian business market and such countries as China, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan. There are three reasons. Firstly, China is the largest computer game market in the world. Secondly, it is one of three financial centres of the world, together with New York and London. Besides, the law applicable there is based on Anglo-Saxon roots, which makes it more stable and predict-

²⁰ <https://www.g2a.co/pl/prezes-g2a-bartosz-skwarczek-nagrodzony-przez-forbes/> [accessed: 26.09.2020].

²¹ <https://news.microsoft.com/pl-pl/2018/02/12/g2a-com-rozwiija-nowoczesne-systemy-rekomendacji-ochrony-przed-oszustwami-w-oparciu-o-microsoft-azure/> [accessed: 26.09.2020].

²² https://www.biznesstyl.pl/biznes/biznes-na-co-dzien/4483_.html [accessed: 26.09.2020].

able than many European legal systems. And thirdly, in the World Bank's rankings, Hong Kong is one of the leaders among the friendliest places to do business. It is important that one can do good business in the European Union from Poland and doing good business in the USA from Poland is also possible. However, in Asia it is practically impossible if a given company does not have a company registered there. In India it is even illegal, which is why G2A has a foothold there too. Just like in China, where having an office is necessary for fair business conduct.

Hong Kong also has one of the largest stock exchanges in the world. This is especially important for G2A, which is seriously considering a stock exchange debut as one of the next steps. Bartosz Skwarczek met the vice president of the stock exchange, who convinced him of the advantages of the company's presence on their stock exchange. Apart from the Asian one, the London and New York stock exchanges are also being considered. One thing is certain: the Warsaw Stock Exchange is out of the question, as it does not offer world opportunities. As the company's founders announce, a possible stock exchange debut is a prospect of the coming years. However, before this happens, G2A plans to open an office in the USA (San Francisco or Los Angeles) in the near future and possibly a company or office in Brazil²³.

The main reason for the partnership of companies with G2A is the fact that they have unsuccessfully tried to remove games from this platform. The legal measures proved to be ineffective, mainly because the company is registered in Hong Kong, and apart from this, it is so big that it has certainly found some holes in the system that make the whole venture legal. However, by selling on this platform, they reached new audiences, even though they earned less. G2A earns a commission every time someone sells a game there. It hurts when someone tries to sell a key they have got for free, but at least now we also have something of it²⁴.

Large companies will be able to cope with it, for example thanks to huge marketing budgets, generating hype and encouraging people to submit pre-orders. The smallest, for whom almost every game sold is worth its weight in gold, will have a problem. There is an interesting situation here, because just like a few years ago they were dominated by Steam, without which they practically do not exist, they may be forced, like Black Shell Media, to cooperate with G2A or someone else in the future, as without it, they will not be able to reach the audience²⁵.

The creativity and commitment of employees is built already at the stage of recruitment, even before starting official cooperation with them. Recruitment process takes a lot of time and applies various channels to reach candidates. The company

²³ https://www.biznesistyl.pl/biznes/biznes-na-co-dzien/4483_.html [accessed: 26.09.2020].

²⁴ https://www.komputerswiat.pl/gamezilla/aktualnosci/w-szesc-lat-od-pomyslu-do-siedmiusetosobowej-korporacji-z-wizyta-w-g2a/p0td3t8?utm_source=pl.wikipedia.org_viasg_komputerswiat&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=leo_automatic&srcc=ucs&utm_v=2 [accessed: 26.09.2020].

²⁵ <https://polygamia.pl/z-g2a-direct-kokosow-nie-ma-ale-niektorzy-mniejsi-deweloperzy-niespecjalnie-maja-wybor/> [accessed: 26.09.2020].

cooperates, among others, with recruiting companies, has a dynamic HR department and actively uses LinkedIn and other social networks. However, most talents are acquired through recommendations - they are people who already work for them and are their ambassadors. Although the centre of R&D group is located in Rzeszów, and not in Warsaw (where they have an artificial intelligence branch) or Wrocław, they attracted over 700 young talents from over 40 countries. They are proud of it because diversity is the key to success in their case. They are the young people with the experience gained in different parts of the world, who actually create the organizational culture. Due to diversity, the organization is constantly changing and adapting into the turbulent market²⁶.

Together with the increase in turnover, they dynamically increased employment, which in 2016 reached the level of 700 people. They mainly employed software engineers, and not only to develop the platform, but also in the areas that were originally a surprise to them. One of them was security, and not only in the area of personal data and payments. For example, the trade in illegally obtained keys by some private users proved to be a big problem. Fight with such abuses and simple thefts, required an increasing number of people creating new IT solutions.

Keeping the pace of growth, and even maintaining the achieved position, requires continuous implementation of innovative solutions. They had to be distinguished not only with their offer and security, but also with the ease of concluding transactions and everything that contributes to a positive user experience. The pressure on technological development means that, above all, companies constantly look for young, multi-lingual software developers who are in high demand on the labour market. A good salary is not enough for them. They need challenges that they will want to face. Therefore, it is greatly appreciated that many talented young people believed so much in the future of G2A that they decided to move to Rzeszów, where they have a large research and development centre and the main campus²⁷.

The co-founder and president of G2A received a prestigious award in the BrandMe CEO contest organized by FORBES in cooperation with PwC. This distinction is awarded to the most outstanding business leaders for their achievements and the values they follow. "The leader in times of (forced) transformation" was the leitmotif for the award.

Thanks to such prestigious awards, G2A wants to emphasize the extremely important role performed by video games during this year's pandemic. Millions of people became players to relax, learn new things and establish contacts. Games have helped many people to survive this difficult time and build bonds with others. Such a prestigious distinction is a great honour, especially in such an excellent group.

²⁶ https://www.biznesstyl.pl/biznes/biznes-na-co-dzien/4483_.html [accessed: 26.09.2020].

²⁷ <https://www.ican.pl/a/zachowalismy-energie-start-upu-w-duzej-firmie/D10Kntp71M> [accessed: 26.09.2020].

Communities around the world have faced great challenges. Authenticity has always been essential and is one of the values that guide G2A. Their team consists of avid gamers and geeks for whom work is a passion. They want to continue telling the world about how great people gamers are²⁸.

Conclusions

The presented theoretical discussions and analyses of case study basing on G2A company business model indicate its growing importance in the era of pandemic. The growing power of customers and lack of environmental stability brings an increase in demand on initiatives that reflect the needs of enterprises and the expectations of key stakeholders. There exists a remarkable demand on the cognitive and implicational side to recognise the role of business models in creating stable competitive advantage. First of all, identification of the type of customers needs that is particularly appreciated by entities and their key stakeholders and barriers that limit implementation of innovations into business models of entities need to be developed²⁹.

Research shows that in case study prove that the used current business model of G2A company serves increasing the value for customers.

The poor willingness of entities to take part in research into the influence of pandemic situation on creating innovative business model is an important limitation in the study. Another limitation is taking into consideration only one company. The paper presents only selected aspects of innovative business models basing on example of gaming sector.

Therefore, it seems necessary to develop research tools that allow for the identification of the key elements of innovative, competitive business model allowing effective functioning in the era of pandemic. Entities functioning on the game market has to be balanced against cost and legal aspects emphasising the need for a holistic approach to at upstream offering and distribution processes. The results presented in this paper can serve as a valuable baseline for future more detailed study on innovative business models within pandemic environment.

We can expect to see even more companies focusing their efforts on designing innovative business models.

²⁸ <https://www.g2a.co/pl/prezes-g2a-bartosz-skwarczek-nagrodzony-przez-forbes/> [dostęp: 26.09.2020].

²⁹ B. Kucharska, K. Bilińska-Reformat, *The role of knowledge diffusion in retail chains innovation*, "Handel Wewnętrzny" 2015, Vol. 5, pp. 51-61.

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Author's Resume:

Katarzyna Bilińska-Reformat – associate professor and head of Marketing Management and Tourism Department, at the Faculty of Management, University of Economics in Katowice in Poland. She is interested in issues regarding management, marketing strategies, marketing management. She is an author or co-author of 180 publications, including articles and conference papers published in Polish and foreign periodicals.

Nota o Autorze:

Katarzyna Bilińska-Reformat – doktor habilitowany, profesor Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego w Katowicach. Kierownik Katedry Zarządzania Marketingowego i Turystyki. Zainteresowania badawcze dotyczą zarządzania, strategii marketingowych i zarządzania marketingowego. Autorka i współautorka ponad 180 publikacji, w tym zakresie zarówno polskich, jak i zagranicznych.

Contact/Kontakt:

Katarzyna Bilińska-Reformat

e-mail: katarzyna.bilinska-reformat@ue.katowice.pl