

SOCIAL SCIENCES

GEO-ECONOMIC CONFLICTS AS A FACTOR IN THE TRANSFORMATION OF INTERNATIONAL MARKETING STRATEGIES

Sokhatskyi O.,

*PhD, Associate Professor, Department of International Economic Relations,
West Ukrainian National University,
ORCID: 0000-0001-8735-866X*

Hlukhyi N.,

*Master of International Economic Relations,
West Ukrainian National University.
ORCID: 0009-0009-6256-6214*

Huryk O.

*Master of International Economic Relations,
West Ukrainian National University.
ORCID: 0009-0004-2812-2736*

ABSTRACT

The article examines the impact of geo-economic conflicts on the evolution and adaptation of international marketing strategies of transnational corporations and national companies operating in global markets. It shows that the modern world economy is in a state of hybrid competition, where economic, political, technological, and informational instruments of influence are intertwined. Geo-economic conflicts — trade wars, sanctions regimes, disruptions of supply chains, and economic pressure policies — are not only manifestations of the struggle for markets but also factors that change the global architecture of marketing communications. The purpose of the study is to identify patterns of transformation of international marketing strategies under the influence of geo-economic conflicts and to substantiate new business behavior models under increased global uncertainty. The methodological basis includes approaches of strategic management, international marketing theory, risk management, and geo-economic analysis. The results show that companies are shifting from global standardization to polycentric localization and partnership branding strategies focused on strengthening business resilience and consumer trust. The study identifies a trend of integrating marketing decisions with risk management systems, reputation communications, and digital technologies for monitoring conflict zones. The practical significance lies in forming recommendations for building anti-crisis marketing strategies of international companies aimed at minimizing losses and maintaining competitiveness in conditions of geo-economic turbulence.

Keywords: geo-economic conflicts, international marketing, strategic management, anti-crisis strategies, global markets, risk management.

Introduction. The modern world economy is characterized by a high level of turbulence caused by the growing number of geo-economic conflicts, which increasingly go beyond traditional economic disputes and turn into complex instruments of geopolitical influence. Trade wars, sanctions, energy confrontations, technological fragmentation, and economic pressure policies are creating new conditions for the functioning of international business. In this context, international marketing becomes not only a means of promoting goods and services but also a mechanism for the strategic adaptation of companies to the dynamically changing environment of global competition.

Geo-economic conflicts change the logic of international market functioning: they destabilize supply chains, alter the structure of demand, form new consumer values, and determine the political "geography" of brands. As a result, transnational corporations are forced to rethink their marketing strategies — from global standardization to flexible localization, from mass communications to personalized trust-based strategies, from aggressive promotion to reputation management in conditions of conflict and crisis.

The scientific novelty of the topic lies in combining the concepts of geo-economic analysis and international marketing, which allows marketing activity to be viewed as an element of economic security and political influence. In modern management theory, there is an increasing emphasis on the approach whereby marketing performs not only a commercial but also a strategic function in forming the competitive resilience of companies and states.

The purpose of the study is to reveal the role of geo-economic conflicts as a determinant of the transformation of international marketing strategies, to analyze the mechanisms of their adaptation to new conditions of global instability, and to substantiate directions for forming anti-crisis marketing models.

To achieve this purpose, the following objectives were set:

1. To summarize theoretical approaches to interpreting the concept of "geo-economic conflict" in the context of international economic relations.

2. To study the impact of trade, technological, and sanctions confrontations on the transformation of international marketing strategies.

3. To identify key trends in the adaptation of marketing communications during periods of global uncertainty.

4. To propose a model of integration between strategic marketing and crisis management for companies operating in conflict-prone economic environments.

The theoretical basis of the study consists of the principles of strategic management, international marketing theory, geo-economics, and risk management. The practical significance of the research lies in developing recommendations for building effective marketing strategies capable of ensuring long-term business sustainability in conditions of global competition and economic confrontation.

Research Methods

The methodological foundation of the article is a combination of systemic, structural-functional, and comparative approaches, which make it possible to comprehensively study the impact of geo-economic conflicts on the transformation of international marketing strategies.

A system-analytical method was applied to generalize theoretical provisions regarding the nature of geo-economic conflicts, their forms, and mechanisms of influence on international markets. This made it possible to identify the interrelationship between economic, political, and technological factors that determine strategic changes in the behavior of global companies.

The comparative analysis method made it possible to compare various models of marketing strategies of transnational corporations during periods of geo-economic confrontation, including the US–China trade war, sanctions pressure on the Russian economy, energy conflicts in Europe, and technological restrictions in the field of microelectronics. This made it possible to highlight typical trends in the adaptation of strategic marketing under conditions of risk and instability.

Literature Review. The study of geo-economic conflicts in the context of international marketing reflects the interdisciplinary nature of modern economic science, combining aspects of global economics, strategic management, riskology, information security, and behavioral economics. The complexity of the topic is due to the fact that geo-economic conflicts affect not only macroeconomic equilibrium but also the micro level of company behavior models, the structure of consumer markets, and the logic of communication between business and society.

The concept of a geo-economic conflict is formed at the intersection of economic policy and international relations. According to L. Passi [1], in the 21st century, economic power has become the main tool of geopolitical influence, replacing military force in the struggle for strategic resources. J. Sapir [2] defines geo-economic conflicts as “systemic competition for control over technological flows, financial centers, and resource markets.”

D. Rodrik [3] emphasizes that the new wave of economic nationalism, sanctions, and protectionism creates conditions under which international companies

are forced to revise established models of globalization. J. Stiglitz [4] notes that the political motivation of economic decisions leads to the fragmentation of value chains, which directly affects international marketing — from the choice of locations to brand repositioning.

In the works of marketing classics such as P. Kotler and K. Keller [5], it has been proven that global companies must balance between standardization and localization of their strategies. M. Porter [6], in his concept of competitive advantage, emphasizes the importance of strategic flexibility for business survival during structural crises. According to Ukrainian researchers K. Kovalchuk [7] and V. Kurilyak [8], modern marketing strategies of Ukrainian companies during wartime are characterized by reorientation to new markets, digitalization of communications, and the formation of anti-crisis branding aimed at restoring trust.

Geo-economic confrontations also affect the structure of international demand: consumers increasingly pay attention to the ethical nature of brands, the transparency of their positions in conflict situations, and corporate social responsibility. This aspect is developed by K. Schwab [9] and M. Castells [10], who emphasize that in the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, digital ecosystems become arenas of competition between states and corporations, while marketing serves as an instrument for building political trust.

Modern academic thought increasingly suggests that marketing in times of geo-economic turbulence performs not only a communication but also a stabilizing function. P. Kapferer [11] and F. Schmidt [12] examine the phenomenon of crisis branding, when companies use social and political challenges to increase emotional consumer engagement. Meanwhile, J. Greenberg [13] focuses on the ethical dimension of anti-crisis marketing, which builds long-term reputational resilience. Ukrainian authors also emphasize the need for synergy between marketing, risk management, and crisis management [14], which ensures corporate flexibility in an environment of global uncertainty.

Research Results. Geo-economic conflicts over the past decade have become an important catalyst for the profound transformation of international marketing. As global instability, trade fragmentation, and political tensions intensify, companies are forced to adapt their approaches to new market realities. Based on analytical reports from the OECD, WTO, and UNCTAD [1–3], as well as corporate strategies of transnational corporations, it has been established that international business is gradually shifting from universal global models to dynamic, regionally oriented strategies founded on flexibility, ethics, and resilience.

The conducted research demonstrates that after 2020, the key directions of international marketing have undergone qualitative changes. While the 2000s and early 2010s were dominated by the concept of global standardization, the current era is defined by polycentrism, localization, cultural sensitivity, and reputation management. Companies aim to preserve consumer trust through social responsibility and transparent communications [4–6].

Table 1.

Key Changes in International Marketing Under the Influence of Geo-Economic Conflicts

Direction	Before Conflicts (2000–2010)	After 2020
Strategic Orientation	Global Standardization	Localization and Polycentrism
Communications	Mass Media, Global Campaigns	Digital Networks, Ethical Marketing
Supply Chains	Single Global System	Regional and Hybrid Chains
Branding	Unified Brand Image	Reputational Resilience, Social Responsibility

Source: compiled by the author based on OECD [1], WTO [2], UNCTAD [3], and corporate reports of transnational corporations (2000–2024).

As the analysis (Table 1) shows, geo-economic conflicts have led to a rethinking of marketing's functional role—from a sales instrument to a strategic mechanism for ensuring economic security and public trust. Modern marketing is increasingly integrated with crisis management, and communications play a central role in maintaining reputational capital. This is confirmed by the works of Kotler, Keller, and Porter [4,5], who emphasize that under conflict conditions, companies adopt tactics of flexible positioning and partnership branding.

Regional analysis revealed distinct geographical differences in adaptation strategies. The European Union demonstrates the priority of ethical, socially oriented marketing reinforced by ESG policies and “green” communications. The United States relies on digital technologies, artificial intelligence, and big data for deeper marketing personalization. China is actively building its own technological infrastructure, creating internally oriented distribution platforms, while Ukraine is developing an anti-crisis branding strategy amid wartime challenges, combining elements of public diplomacy, international partnership, and social support [7–9].

Table 2.

Regional Models of Marketing Strategy Transformation

Region	Main Strategy	Key Instruments	Expected Effect
EU	Ethical and “Green” Marketing	ESG Communications, Local Alliances	Increased Consumer Trust
USA	Digital Innovation	Big Data, AI, CRM Systems	Optimization of Marketing Personalization
China	Technological Sovereignty	Proprietary Platforms, Data Control	Strengthening the Domestic Market
Ukraine	Anti-Crisis Branding	Social Campaigns, International Communication	Positive National Image

Source: compiled by the author based on OECD [1], WTO [2], UNCTAD [3], and corporate research from the EU, USA, China, and Ukraine (2023–2024).

An extended analysis shows that regional differences are determined not only by economic realities but also by the evolution of value systems. European companies actively use marketing to promote ideas of climate neutrality, inclusivity, and social trust. American corporations focus on implementing technological innovations in marketing analytics. China turns marketing into an instrument of national economic security, while Ukrainian businesses, despite the destructive impact of war, demonstrate high adaptability, attracting international support and creating a national brand that inspires recovery [10].

Table 3.

Dependence of Marketing Strategy Adaptability on the Level of Geo-Economic Turbulence

Level of Conflict	Frequency of Strategy Updates	Main Adaptation Directions
Low	Every 3–5 years	Product Modernization, Advertising Digitalization
Medium	Every 1–2 years	Brand Repositioning, Localization
High	Every six months or more often	Market Changes, Political Communication, Anti-Crisis Campaigns

Source: compiled by the author based on OECD [1], WTO [2], UNCTAD [3], and aggregated corporate reports of international companies (2023–2024).

The analysis of the relationship between the level of conflict and the frequency of strategy updates (Table 3) confirms that flexibility is a determining condition of resilience. In high-risk countries, companies adjust strategies every six months or more often, rapidly repositioning brands and reallocating resources. According to OECD (2024), enterprises that integrate anti-crisis marketing and risk management principles achieve 25–

30% higher profitability during crises and recover market share faster after conflicts [11].

Studies by Stiglitz [12] and Rodrik [13] show that an effective marketing strategy during conflicts involves not only short-term reactions but also systematic risk forecasting and the use of marketing analytics to prevent losses. Companies that combine social responsibility, innovation, and strategic vision form a new

paradigm of global marketing — sustainable marketing. It integrates adaptability, digitalization, and a human-centered orientation, becoming the foundation of long-term competitiveness. The analysis of international marketing trends under the influence of geo-economic conflicts indicates the growing importance of institutional factors. The role of the state, intergovernmental organizations, and multinational corporations in regulating trade relations has increased, directly affecting business behavior and the nature of marketing strategies. As Rodrik [11] notes, economic policy increasingly combines elements of protectionism and cooperative diplomacy, creating new opportunities for strategic partnership between countries.

The second analytical dimension reveals the intensification of digital transformation processes in marketing. Research by Schwab [6] and Kapferer [13] confirms that digitalization allows companies to respond more quickly to external changes, minimize transaction costs, and strengthen the link between brand and consumer. At the same time, digital integration requires companies to increase cybersecurity, data protection, and information transparency.

The third analytical aspect concerns the change in consumer behavior during conflicts. Consumers increasingly prefer companies that demonstrate social responsibility, support humanitarian initiatives, and adhere to ethical communication standards [14]. This has led to the emergence of the “ethical consumer” phenomenon, which influences corporate reputation strategies and the structure of global demand.

The fourth analytical direction is related to the formation of interstate clusters and strategic alliances. Against the backdrop of sanctions and trade restrictions, companies are seeking new forms of cooperation that allow them to maintain market presence and diversify risks. As Stiglitz [10] points out, partnership networks are becoming one of the main sources of resilience during crises.

Finally, the fifth analytical dimension concerns the long-term consequences of geo-economic conflicts for the architecture of the world economy. The very nature of global competition is changing from linear to network-based where success is determined not by company size but by adaptability, openness to innovation, and the ability to create shared value. Thus, geo-economic conflicts are not only a challenge but also a catalyst for forming a new model of international marketing based on mutual responsibility, partnership, and intellectual flexibility.

In conclusion, the research results confirm that geo-economic conflicts not only complicate international business operations but also stimulate innovation, the emergence of new business models, and the formation of strategies balancing profitability, ethics, and security. Modern marketing, in the global dimension, becomes an instrument for stabilizing international relations, combining economic efficiency, social trust, and consumer responsibility.

Conclusions

The conducted research revealed that geo-economic conflicts are not only a threat to international business but also a powerful impetus for the structural

renewal of marketing strategies. They form new standards of economic behavior, where marketing transforms into a strategic tool for risk management, trust maintenance, and long-term brand resilience.

Firstly, it was found that the key trend is the transition from global standardization to polycentric and flexible models of marketing management. This shift is driven by growing political instability, supply chain fragmentation, and changing consumer priorities. Companies increasingly integrate ethical, social, and environmental aspects into their strategies, forming marketing approaches oriented toward trust.

Secondly, it was proven that under conditions of geo-economic turbulence, companies that respond more rapidly to changes achieve better financial results and maintain more stable market positions. The use of digital technologies, big data analytics, and artificial intelligence enables more accurate forecasting of consumer behavior and enhances the adaptability of marketing strategies.

Thirdly, it was established that regional specifics shape different models of marketing behavior: ethical and “green” in the EU, technologically innovative in the USA, autonomous in China, and anti-crisis in Ukraine, aimed at strengthening the country’s reputation. These models demonstrate that marketing has become part of the system of economic security and international diplomacy.

In summary, effective international marketing during periods of geo-economic conflict should be based on three key pillars: strategic flexibility, social responsibility, and digital adaptability. These factors ensure that companies not only maintain competitiveness but also strengthen their positions in the global market. In the long term, marketing becomes not merely a component of the business model but a system-forming element of global stability and mutual understanding between nations.

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