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## **THE BENEFITS AND IMPLICATIONS OF MARKETING RESEARCH IN NON COMMERCIAL ANIMAL WELFARE ORGANISATIONS BASED ON THE EXAMPLE OF RZESZOW ANIMAL WELFARE TRUST. PART 2: RESEARCH METHODS, FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

The aim of the authors is to present the benefits of conducting marketing research in non-profit organisations based on the authors' study of Rzeszow Animal Welfare Trust (Poland) that deals with animal welfare and care for homeless animals. The research was conducted among the residents of the south-eastern part of Poland (Podkarpacie region where the trust is based) between 2007 and 2008. The benefits for the management of organisation, which the research highlighted, were based on the interview with its chairperson conducted in December 2008. Part 2 of the article presents the research methods, findings and conclusions of the study.

### **1. RESEARCH METHODS**

The research for Rzeszow Animal Welfare Trust was being conducted from November 2007 until January 2008. The respondents included people (the same proportions) from different age groups living in the chosen cities and villages of different size in the Podkarpacie region; including among others (for educational purposes of the Trust) – children (11-15 years old), adolescents (16-24 years old) as well as adults and the elderly (25 or more years old). Every age group included (also the same proportions) Rzeszow (the capital of Podkarpacie region) and small cities inhabitants, as well as country dwellers.

The research sample was selected purposeful because of lower time- and work-consumption of this method in compare with random selection (especially taking into account such extensive region as Podkarpacie). The researchers were force to use this method cause the decision about the research was took by Rzeszow Animal Welfare Trust quite late. The problem was that the research findings would turn out useless in helping the Trust to carry out campaign promoting 1% of income tax donation.

After the amount of data had been reduced, 412 questionnaires were analysed (out of the original 450 ones).

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The data was gathered by means of a highly standardised, individual in-depth interview. This particular method was chosen in order to receive casual and unbiased answers to the specific aspects of a given subject (it was taken into consideration that when a questionnaire is used, open questions are rarely and reluctantly answered) and because it is easier (than in a case of a questionnaire) to adjust the set of questions to a given age group. It also allows formulating questions in a more casual manner (which requires, in particular, the proper selection of words as in the case of the youngest respondents). The highly standardised interview enables, on the other hand, to do the research faster, both at the stage of gathering and analysing data, to compare answers to closed questions within the chosen study subgroup and to analyse them quantitatively, which includes presenting the answers in a structured way and by means of central tendency.

The assessment of how useful the conducted research may be and the information on how the results will be used is given in the individual in-depth, semi-structured interview with the Trust chairwoman, which was conducted in the organisation headquarters in December 2008.

The script of the interview, in which the subjects were structured in a particular way, was standardised itself, however, the questions themselves were not (it was the interviewer - the author of the article - who decided about the way and the order of the questions).

## 2. FINDINGS

In this part of the article the results of research carried out amongst inhabitants of Podkarpacie region will be presented. The results refer to the issue of homeless animals' welfare and protection. On their base benefits from the research in managing the Trust will be introduced - in the assessment of the Trust chairwoman.

Amongst all 412 respondents 72% has a pet (dog or cat). In their households, in the cities, definitely prevail dogs. They can be found in 78% of city households. On villages only 9% of households do not have animals. In addition, in almost half of households having animals (dogs or cats) there is more than one animal (very often both dogs and cats).

As the research shows, having animals influence the attitude towards them and it will be discussed in the more distant part of the article.

The analysis of data demonstrates that the examined inhabitants of Podkarpacie region have the positive attitude towards animals. It is displayed in opinions about the purposes of pets owning and roles that animals plays in their lives. Respondents gave their opinion about this issue answering half open question, in which it was possible to put any number of answers. For the largest group of investigated people animals are "*companion*", "*friend*", "*cuddly*" (48% answers). As the main purpose of the pet possession respondents answer "*because I love animals (dogs or cats)*", "*because I adore animals*" etc. (16%).

The owners of the dogs have them also to defensive purposes (16 % of all answers.). This answer appeared mainly in the case of country dwellers. The owners of the cats as a reason mentioned "*fights against pests*" (this answer was selected by more than half of cats' owners that live in the countryside).

The attitude of investigated inhabitants of Podkarpacie region towards animals was possible to identify on the basis of questions concerning homeless, aggressive animals and people who mistreat animals.

The majority of respondents (65%) think that stray animals should be placed in the shelters when 14% of respondents claim that homeless animals should be put to sleep. This opinion was introduced by older people, not having animals. The majority of respondents declare that aggressive animals should be put to sleep (51%). The rest proposed curing (22%) and putting them into the shelters (21%). In frames of possibility of the free reply to this question 2% of respondents claimed that they should be 'killed' (e.g. *"it is necessary to kill them immediately", "I would kill it if I met it"*) in spite of answer *"put to sleep"* that was possible to choose. It suggested that these people prefer 'less humanitarian' ways of elimination aggressive animals. Latest mentioned answer was indicated only by country dwellers.

The respondents have definitely negative attitude towards people who mistreat animals - 81% extremely negative judged such people, 7% expressed the negative attitude. However, amongst examined, there were also people who expressed the indifferent attitude (thinking that in some cases such behavior is justified) (6%) and positive (3%). Amongst the last mentioned group there were both inhabitants of cities and villages. The majority of people expressed negative attitude towards people harassing animals declare that they should be punished (96%). For 65% of respondents censored people who mistreat animals the most appropriate punishment is fine, 21% of respondents think that they should be condemned to the prison. In opinion of 12% they should do social work, in addition they claim that people who mistreat animals should work in animal shelters. In the issue of punishments for these people respondents differ depending on a place of living. Definitely in these issues country dwellers are less radical (thinking in the straight majority that a fine will be an appropriate punishment) and people who do not own animals.

In the issue of the attitude of respondents towards people mistreating animals, the question about current experience of respondents in this scope was set. Majority respondents did not meet such situation personally but only hear from different people or from media. However, children face this kind of situation the most often and they talk about it during interviews. They describe situations and most personal reactions (conversation with the class tutor, parents).

When it comes to supporting animal welfare organisations, 20% of respondents stated that they support them in the various ways. In 48% cases it was financial support, including 4 people (Value Added Tax payers) supported these organisations by 1% of income tax donation. Different forms of the financial support had the form of donations, for example: school meetings (almost a half of examined children chose this form), during the zoological fair, payments to the account of the organisation. The rest of respondents (who declared that they support analysed organisations) as well as part of people who supported financially analysed organisations (19%), helped by giving food, blankets, bowls etc. or in the form of voluntary (only children used this form). Regarding future intentions in the issue of allocating the 1% tax in the future on the animal welfare organizations - 47% of all respondents declared such willingness.

In the scope of the acquaintance of the organisations that take care of animals, 42% claims that they heard about this kind of organizations or they know them but they are not able to name them. The largest group that contains respondents who are able to name any

organisation of this type, mention *Kundelek* (62% knowing organisations mentioned above - mainly inhabitants of Rzeszow where the shelter is localised, and neighborhood villages). A few percent of investigated population also pointed out different organisations – The Animal Welfare Organisation, the Animals Organisation.

Respondents who visited *Kundelek* shelter at any time or know it ‘from hearing’ judged it well or very well (77%), and only small number of respondents (7%) had reservations for conditions in the shelter (however their assessment was not negative but average).

The concept of animal cemetery in the Podkarpacie region was accepted very well - 42% of respondents stated that this kind of need exist (mostly city inhabitants). 71% of them would use it depending on the price of such service. For majority the price should not exceed 100 PLN (the youngest group of respondents would not pay attention about the price). It is worth adding that for 85% of people ever had to bury their animal, they burying them on the own parcel or in the forest.

The results of the research carried out to the number of conclusions, entailing guidelines for managing of the Trust and generating the benefits in this scope. They will be presented in the next part of the article.

### 3. CONCLUSIONS

Generally, recognising the attitude of Podkarpacie region respondents towards animals it can be adjudicate as positive. It is favorably different than the average Pole attitude (it results from comparing research of authors and quoted research of CBOS). Analysing collected data, considering the sex of respondents, it turned out that women have the definitely more positive attitude towards animals than men. The attitude depends on a place of living in a very narrow range. It is slightly better in case of inhabitants of cities than villages. In the opinion of chairwoman of the Trust the attitude of Podkarpacie citizens towards animals is still insufficiently fair. There are plenty cases of abuse the animals and cruelty. The chairwoman conclude that respondents expressing understanding to the need of protection the animals in some cases can be different than the real attitude. (it was stated also in the effect of CBOS research that was presented in *The Context* of the article).

In the process of interviewing, discussing the attitude of inhabitants of Podkarpacie region towards animals (depending on a place of living), an interesting thread appeared. It concerned the real and expected role of the church in shaping attitudes of people towards animals, peculiarly on villages. The chairwoman noticed that the ‘help’ of the church would be recommended in shaping positive attitudes of people towards animals, because the church has significant influence on inhabitants of Podkarpacie (regarded as rightist region of Poland). At present it is unfortunately not noticeable.

Negative attitudes of the majority of investigated inhabitants of Podkarpacie to people who mistreat animals is similar to attitudes of Poles, expressed in national research. As a positive sign of engage Podkarpacie region society into the problem are proposals of respondents to punish people who mistreat animals, more radical than it occurs in reality. It is the evidence of disapproval of the society towards sadists and the chance of the social pressure on carrying punishments out. However, the idea of a social work of people mistreating animals in the animal shelters seems to be unreasonable (taking into consideration the attitude of these people towards animals).

In the opinion of the chairwoman the factors that stopping torturers from abuse of animal are heavy sentences and carrying the punishments out. She is fighting with successes over it for many years. *"Fortunately there are more and more sentences. It is also positive thing that media are publicising cases of the abuse of animals"*- says the chairwoman. In the chairwoman point of view very alarming are cases of the abuse of animals by responsible people working in animal shelters. There are also plenty of cases of not identifying people who throwing the dogs from cars, tying them to trees by motorways or in the forests. It is impossible to punish these people.

The results from analysis of the data connected with allocating the 1% of income tax for public benefit organisations, particularly for animal welfare organisations, it is very small number of people. It results from insufficient awareness of the possibility of such donation and anxieties connected with the formalities accompanying them. The answers of the youngest respondents (11 - 15 years), were very interesting. The majority of them were aware of possibilities transferring the 1% of income tax for public benefit organisations. The large number of respondents declares allocating the 1% tax in the future for animal welfare organisations. Perhaps it is result from 'surveyor effect' but also respondents became more aware of 1% tax donation thanks to questions asked during research.

The results show that 1% tax donation income of the Trust rose in 2008 (in comparison with 2007) at about 20 000 PLN. It could be partly caused by research carried out for the Trust (people became more aware of possibility 1% tax donation to public benefit organisations and existence of the analysed Trust). Certainly this research influenced spreading the idea of transferring the 1% tax to public benefit organisations. Vitally important to the Trust, apart from financial support, is aid in kind being an effect of the education actions for young people at schools of Podkarpace region.

An extensive knowledge about *Kundelek* shelter is not accompanied by the knowledge about the existence of the Trust that take care of the shelter. Out of everyone examined only one person listed the name of the Trust as the known animal welfare organisation. It was constituted as the most surprising result for the authorities of the Trust. However the most optimistic was the assessment of the shelter – very positive relating to the assessment of different animal shelters in Poland. Media transmissions and research showed that the opinion about other polish animal shelters was good and very good only in 17% of cases.

Identified in the research lack of awareness about the existence of the Trust caused taking action in the scope of his marketing communication with the market, in the form of showing the name and also the role in all contacts with media. Also the content and the graphics of the posters were changed (it is the main medium in the actions encouraging allocating the 1% tax to the Trust). Regarding the ignorance of the Trust but the knowledge about the existence and activities of the *Kundelek* shelter, the information from the central place of posters was changed. The catchword *"Transfer the 1% of income tax to Rzeszow Animal Welfare Trust"* was changed to *"Transfer 1% of income tax to Kundelek shelter manage by on Rzeszow Animal Welfare Trust"*.

One of the very positive effect of the research is affirmative attitude of children towards animals and their awareness of helping (for example: by transferring the 1% of income tax that is an effect of educational actions realised by the Trust at schools). These results constituted the effectiveness of undertaking actions, the decision about continuing them and hope for the better future in relations of people and animals.

In the process of conducting research in Podkarpacie region (in Ropczyce town) the first private cemetery for animals came into existence. The findings showed that there is an extensive relation between the declaration of using the cemetery and the charge of the burial. This circumstances stopping the Trust from realisation the plans of building the cemetery on the suburbs of Rzeszów.

The research conducted for the Trust was assessed as a very useful by chairwoman of the Trust. Definitely it influenced on increasing knowledge about attitudes the Podkarpacie society and enabled cognition of the opinion of inhabitants of Podkarpacie region on the protection of animals and the level of acquaintances the organisations in mentioned area. The research has an impact on the Trust in marketing communication decisions, investment, plan of the future communication actions, educational and research action. The chairwoman hopes that the acquaintance of the Trust identified in frames of the closest research will increase thanks to actions undertaking in the area of communication. The authorities of the Trust are also interested in the new research aspects such as perceiving the role of the church in shaping attitudes of people towards animals as well as getting to know the opinion about the animal shelters that became a place to stay for animals who 'got bored' people. These issues became the objectives of the next research, being in the process of the realisation.

#### **KORZYŚCI I IMPLIKACJE BADAŃ MARKETINGOWYCH W NIEKOMERCYJNYCH ORGANIZACJACH OPIEKI NAD ZWIERZĘTAMI NA PRZYKŁADZIE RZESZOWSKIEGO STOWARZYSZENIA OCHRONY ZWIERZĄT.**

##### **CZĘŚĆ 2 – METODYKA, WYNIKI I WNIOSKI Z BADAŃ**

Celem autorów jest zaprezentowanie korzyści, jakie uzyskują organizacje niekomercyjne na skutek realizacji badań marketingowych, na przykładzie badań zrealizowanych przez autorów artykułu dla organizacji zajmującej się ochroną zwierząt i opieką nad zwierzętami bezdomnymi tj. Rzeszowskiego Stowarzyszenia Ochrony Zwierząt. Badania przeprowadzone zostały na przełomie 2007 i 2008 roku wśród mieszkańców Podkarpacia. Wynikające z badań korzyści dla zarządzania Stowarzyszeniem określono na podstawie wywiadu z jego prezesem w grudniu 2008 roku. W ramach drugiej części zaprezentowano metodykę badań, ich wyniki i wnioski.