Strategies for Sharing Economy Development: International and Russian experience

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Abstract: The development of the sharing economy has greatly impacted not only company processes but also industry transformations. The strategies used by these companies have features related to digital platform activities, the ability to reduce transaction costs, and the construction of social interactions that ensure trust between participants. This study described competitive, industry, operational, marketing, and management strategies used in the sharing economy, as well as how sharing economy models are reflected in the Russian market. The significance of this study lies in the development of provisions of the sharing economy in the field of strategic management.

1 INTRODUCTION

Recent advances in the development of digital technologies, as well as the emergence of new business models, have caused significant changes in society's social and economic areas (Pouri, Hilty, 2018). Business models based on collaborative consumption and resource utilization, such as crowdfunding, crowdworking, and crowdsourcing, which provide temporary access to limited resources, have been combined under the concept of the sharing economy that offeres alternatives to address existing issues (Reyes-Menendez, Saura, Palos-Sánchez, 2018).

The sharing economy lets people exchange goods and services, supporting social and sustainable consumption that usually happens through peer-to-peer connections (Delgado, Soares, Proença, 2023). This business model includes the exchange and collaboration consumption of different types of resources - information, material, labor, financial. At the same time, these companies have different development strategies in terms of how they organize economic activities and their main goals, guidelines, and priorities. In this regard, the study of strategies for the sharing economy development seems to be one of the important tasks to make the application of this model more transparent.

Therefore, this study aims to identify strategies for advancing the sharing economy in both global and Russian contexts using a matrix method. To reach this aim, the strategies of companies utilizing this model as outlined in the research literature were examined. While analyzing this, different types of strategies were considered, including economic and non-economic ones, competitive strategies by M. Porter, management strategies, operational and marketing strategies, and models using in the sharing economy.

2 STRATEGIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SHARING ECONOMY: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Types of strategies in the sharing economy

Recent advances in new technologies, especially ICT, have brought about important changes in the social and economic spheres. New business models, including sharing economies, have emerged as alternatives to solving existing problems. The sharing

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economy, involving peer-to-peer and consumer-to-consumer models (C2C, P2P) via digital platforms, often simplifies the exchange of goods and services among users, promoting social and sustainable consumption (Acquier, Daudigeos, Pinkse, 2017). This is achieved through interaction between users who freely share their opinions, recommendations and experiences online.

The sharing economy model is a business model that emerged in the late 1990s and has become a sustainable way of doing business in the 21st century (Puschmann, Alt, 2016). Digital platforms used in the sharing economy have given rise to new forms of interaction between people who share, exchange or rent underused goods (Diaz, 2020). Sharing can come in various forms, like peer-to-peer rentals, co-working spaces, car sharing, and peer-to-peer loans. Sharing economy initiatives are commonly supported by online platforms linking potential consumers and providers (Heo, 2016).

In a study of companies using this model, S. Curtis emphasizes the importance of utilizing business model patterners in the sharing economy (Curtis, 2021). These templates serve as a tool for identifying trends among existing business models (Remane et al., 2017). S. Curtis identified 8 types of platforms: collaborative community platforms, niche corporate platforms, commercial peer-to-peer platforms, niche peer-to-peer platforms, peer-to-peer space sharing platforms, peer-to-peer mobility sharing platforms, business-to-consumer sharing platforms, coworking space platforms. These platforms vary in their set of characteristics, grouped into categories such as platform type (peer-to-peer, business-to-business, business-to-peer, crowd / cooperative, business-to-consumer, public-to-citizen), practice(shared space, shared mobility, shared goods, shared consumables, shared resources), intellectual property (open source, communal, proprietary), governance model (cooperative, collaborative, commercial), price discovery (free, pay what you can, negotiation / bargaining, auction, bartering, set by resource user, set by resource owner, set by platform).

In addition, one feature of sharing economy platforms is the integration of organizational and market coordination methods to generate value on the platform. In this context, Constantiou I., Marton A., and Tuunainen V. K. identified four models of the sharing economy: Franchiser, Principal, Chaperone, and Gardener (Constantiou, Marton, Tuunainen, 2017). These models were categorized based on the level of control exerted by platform owner and rivalry between platform participants. The first criterion concerns how users are coordinated on the platform, while the second criterion focuses on the market coordination mechanism offered by the platform owner. The "Franchisor" type, exemplified by Uber, and the "Principal" type, exemplified by Handy, are distinguished by robust organizational coordination mechanisms. "Franchisors" use dynamic pricing to encourage intense competition on the platform, while "Principals" employ standard pricing methods. "Chaperones," like Airbnb, encourage competition, while "Gardeners," like Couchsurfing, emphasize service or goods exchange through barter with loose organizational coordination. The last group is characterized by a low level of competition between participants on the digital platform (Constantiou, Marton, Tuunainen, 2017).

The analysis also reveals that this business model is utilized in various sectors, including transportation and hospitality (e.g., Uber or Airbnb). Moreover, sharing economy companies are found in consumer goods sharing (such as Wallapop or Cash Converters) and media and entertainment (e.g., Spotify or SoundCloud) industries.

Over the past two decades, the experience gained from companies utilizing this model has demonstrated a notable influence on development of industries. This impact extends to both established market leaders and emerging businesses. For example, Uber and Airbnb have become leading players capable of changing the “rules of the game.” On the other hand, there are smaller startups focusing on various niches. In particular, several hundred sharing economy startups were founded in Europe in 2016 (Vaughan, 2016). Industry-specific features in the sharing economy led to the examination of industry strategies employed within this model.

Despite the debate in scientific literature about the pros and cons of this business model's expansion, the growth of the sharing economy shows a move towards better resource efficiency and utilization. These changes are driven by advancements in digital technology, shifts in consumer preferences, societal challenges, and evolving values (He M. D. et al., 2017). In this regard, the operational strategies employed by sharing economy firms have been analyzed.

Moreover, the sharing economy brings about new competitive benefits, such as saving costs, optimizing resource utilization, and offers new revenue streams for individuals. Thus, exploring the competitive strategies employed in the sharing economy serves as a complementary aspect of analyzing this business model.

In addition, it is crucial to focus on the marketing approaches implemented, as they made significant

changes in the organization of activities of these companies, and also influenced the redistribution of resources in the industry.

2.2 Economic and non-economic models in the sharing economy

The sharing economy's evolution shows that sharing platforms aim to facilitate better exchange of goods and services. For example, torrent tech enables access to information, while Couchsurfing offers budget travel. These projects focus on social exchange over market transactions, and implement the principle of self-regulation. Emphasizing social connections, cultural exchange, and affordable resource access is central to their concept. In this case, they can be considered as non-economic models (Jung et. el., 2016).

Commercial digital platforms, including sharing platforms, facilitate the connection between service providers and consumers, generating revenue through transaction commissions. These platforms (such as Airbnb and Uber) do not own or manage the assets involved, like vehicles or accommodations, nor employ service providers directly. Instead, independent contractors or freelancers utilize the platform to offer services to clients.

2.3 Sharing economy and industry markets

The impact of the sharing economy on the development of industries is interpreted in different ways. On the one hand, the sharing economy is considered as a separate industry, but this approach is more typical for international practice. In Russian practice the focus made on how sharing economy companies transform existing industries. By creating new niches, these companies present both challenges and opportunities for traditional businesses. On the one hand, sharing economy companies affect traditional businesses by offering lower-cost services, reducing their competitiveness. On the other hand, they can open up new growth avenues, foster collaborations, and develop ecosystems. Considering the life cycle of the industry, the emergence of sharing economy companies indicates the industry's maturity stage. In addition, the integration of digital technologies contributes to the emergence of a new stage that aligns with ongoing institutional and technological changes.

At the same time, it's important to consider how these companies influence the value chain at the industry level. The activities of digital platforms in the sharing economy are part of the transaction sector. This activity can have two aspects. Firstly, digital platform operators help lower transaction costs at the industry level. In this case, service-providing companies gain a new distribution channel. The digital platform operator then acts as an aggregator. Secondly, digital platforms can create a space for interaction between participants who weren't previously involved in economic relationships within the industry. By freeing up unused resources, these companies pose a threat to the traditional market. Meanwhile, researchers have varying opinions on this topic. For example, R. Sainaghi и R. Baggio identify that Airbnb's customers differs from that of hotels during the week, on workdays and trade-fair days, when hotels work prevalently within the business segment, and when Airbnb listings mainly accommodate leisure guests. By contrast, a partial synchronization is revealed during weekends and holidays (Sainaghi, Baggio, 2020). Additionally, these initiatives notably broaden the consumer market, which is seen as a positive industry trend. Consequently, digital platforms and sharing economy firms facilitate resource reallocation and play a crucial role in the industry's value chain.

2.4. Competitive strategies in the sharing economy

When considering specific strategies used by sharing economy companies, we used the systematization of M. Porter, who identified the following types of strategies: cost leadership; differentiation strategy; focusing strategy (Porter, 1998).

First of all, this type of company is characterized by a cost leadership strategy that is possible due to the use of digital platforms and peer-to-peer relationships. Here, it is important to note the redistribution of transaction costs within the value chain. In other words, peer-to-peer digital platforms classified as part of the transaction sector of the economy undertake functions related to marketing, sales, some purchasing activities, and other processes. By charging a fee, the digital platform redistributes these costs efficiently, benefiting from economies of scale and offering lower prices to consumers. The above indicates a more effective implementation of the “cost leadership” strategy in comparison with traditional forms of doing business.

Besides focusing on cost leadership, companies also implement a differentiation strategy, which, according to M. Porter, "creates a strong position to confront the five competitive forces."Digital platforms of the sharing economy, due to cooperation with a wide range of consumers and suppliers, as well

as the established platform policies, provide a combination of a wide range of services, the choice of which allows ensuring the uniqueness of the commercial offer. As an example, we can consider the company Airbnb, which allows the consumer to book a place to stay with a fairly wide range of related characteristics, organize leisure time or book an excursion, which meets the individual needs of a wide range of consumers. At the same time, the range of services provided is differentiated for both the consumer and the service provider. Thus, the service provider can delegate some services to the guest reception team, which handles tasks such as preparing the accommodation, managing the listing, communicating with guests, resolving booking issues, posting reviews, and providing cleaning and maintenance. Consumers in different price segments can receive customized services based on their preferences.

At the same time, the combination of these strategies is not typical for digital platforms of the sharing economy as a whole. For example, travel digital platform VRBO focuses on vacation homes, while Airbnb is more focused on business travel and short stays.

2.5 Management Strategies

In industry markets, sharing economy companies also use horizontal integration strategies to benefit from economies of scale. By broadening the range of suppliers and attracting more consumers, these companies can extend their reach across different regions. Moreover, there is a concept known as "consumption synergy," where travelers who book Airbnb accommodation in the USA are more likely, under similar circumstances, to choose Airbnb for their stays in Europe.

Airbnb's expansion strategy was driven by the goal of increasing accessibility and differentiation of the company's offers. The companies Airbnb acquired ranged from small-scale operations to larger competitors, including HotelTonight and Luxury Retreats. The implementation of this strategy allowed the company to enter an IPO and double the share price from $68 to $146 only on the first day of release. Acquiring Trooly and Deco Software helped Airbnb enhance its technology stack, attracting new customers and improving security and usability. This approach also allowed them to reduce risks company’s risks in terms of ensuring its information security, as well as in improving the usability of the website and application.

For instance, in 2017, Yandex Taxi consolidated its digital services under a new entity covering Russia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, and Kazakhstan.

The strategy of mergers and acquisitions of sharing economy companies can also be seen in the transport sector. In particular, in 2017, Yandex Taxi combined its digital services within a new company in Russia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, and Kazakhstan.

2.6 Operational strategies of sharing economy companies

The business model of sharing economy companies is based on running an online platform that connects service providers and consumers. Income is generated through commissions received by the digital platform operator for each booking. The company itself does not own or manage the assets used (such as vehicles or residential spaces) and does not employ service providers. Those offering services are independent contractors or freelancers who utilize a digital platform (such as Airbnb or Uber) to attract clients.

When looking at how platforms operate, we also look at M. Porter's research, focusing on the value chain. This chain involves core processes such as inbound logistics, operations, outbound logistics, marketing and sales, and after-sales service; along with support processes like infrastructure, human resources, research and development, and procurement. By using AirBnB as a case study, we can explore how these processes are put into practice within a sharing economy business.

The process of "inbound logistics" involves acquiring raw materials and resources for company use. " The inbound logistics" of Airbnb has informational features. The main “supplies” of Airbnb are lists of accommodation options with an accompanying list of services (excursions, etc.)

Processes of operational activities (“operations”) include making agreements with partners, organizing platform operations, and listing information about suppliers and available properties. The service provider directly creates value for consumers, while the digital platform takes on the function of ensuring its quality.

"Outbound logistics" on the digital platform aims to provide quality customer service and reliability during transactions. Marketing and sales processes are based on the design of reputation mechanisms. Compared to traditional business models, the focus of marketing changes in these processes. While traditional business models primarily aim to stimulate

demand, for this type of digital platform, the main goal is to ensure consumer trust. Airbnb also allows guests to rate their host, and hosts can rate guests.

After-sales service is the final stage of the value chain. Airbnb provides its consumers with after-sales services such as air travel protection, cancellation policies, and customer service representatives. Depending on the property owner, cleaning services may be available.

Regarding supporting processes, the most significant process is providing the necessary infrastructure for the platform. Ensuring the functioning of the digital platform and its uninterrupted operations is a key condition for the functioning of this business model. In terms of human resource management, features such as remote work and flexible hours are notable. In summary, organizations utilizing the sharing economy model have distinctive features in their underlying and supporting processes that impact the value creation of the service offered.

2.7 Marketing strategy of sharing economy companies

It is recommended to analyze marketing strategies in the sharing economy through the lens of comprehensive marketing, which includes product, price, promotion, place, and personnel. The application of strategies for each aspect was explored separately. Ensuring product or service quality involves setting standards for suppliers. Thus, Airbnb requires “hosts” to comply with rules regarding advance reservations and ensuring reliable check-in, timely communication, accuracy of information provided, cleanliness, and security. Yandex Taxi sets requirements both for the car, in particular, the year of manufacture of the car, the number of doors, the presence of seat belts, the list of required documents, etc., and for the driver - age, experience, etc. Handy, a digital platform for household services, also enforces specific requirements on service composition, materials, and worker's appearance.

Regarding the "Price" aspect of the marketing mix, sharing economy companies in the transportation sector applies dynamic pricing in real-time, including rates and prices based on current supply and demand, weather conditions, time, and location of booking other factors.

The "Promotion" element of the marketing mix is evident in the transportation sector (Uber, Yandex Taxi) through sales promotions, including discounts and bonus points, to attract and retain customers. Companies also implement incentive programs for drivers, falling under the "Personnel" aspect.

The "Place" aspect is linked to the widespread use of the Internet and offerings from taxi companies and drivers. Economies of scale also play a role in ensuring service mobility and speed.

3 METODOLOGY

The study procedure consisted of 3 stages. Firstly, key strategies followed by sharing economy companies (Uber, Airbnb, Handy, Yandex Taxi, Ostrovok.ru) were identified through an analysis of scientific works, reports, and official websites. These strategies included industry, competitive, operating, and marketing strategies. Secondly, the matrix of sharing economy models based on I. Constantiou, A. Marton, V. Tuunainen was adapted. Finally, it was shown the behavior of sharing economy companies on in the Russian market.

4 RESULTS

Using the matrix of sharing economy models described above, it is showed the development of sharing economy platforms in Russian practice, and also revealed which strategies can be applied in each of the sharing economy models. When adapting the matrix of I. Constantiou, A. Marton, V. Tuunainen to Russian practice, the names of the models were modified (Fig. 1).

High Rivalry between platform participants Low	**Mediator** (Ostrovok.Ru, Airbnb)	**Franchisor** (Яндекс Такси, Uber)
	Ideologist (Bla Bla Car Couchsurfing Torrent)	**Manager** (Profi. Py Handy)
	Loose Tight Control Exerted by Platform Owner L	

Figure 1: Adapted matrix of sharing economy models.

The term “Chaperones” has been changed to “Intermediary.” This quadrant includes companies that connect sellers and buyers using digital platform.

Participants face strong competition and limited control. In Russia, online booking service for hotels, air tickets and other travel services called Ostrovok.Ru uses this type of model.

Companies that use model "Franchisor» maintain tight control over platform participants, while competition remains high. These companies charge a commission for transactions on the platform. In Russia, Yandex Taxi exemplifies this model. Yandex.Taxi allows users to easily take a car at competitive rates. The service offers convenient booking, quick car selection, fixed rates, cost estimates, cash or card payment, driver details, and car information. Yandex Taxi imposes strict requirements on drivers, including experience, license, and regular vehicle checks.

The "Principal" model has been modified as a "Manager". Companies with this model maintain a high level of control over platform participants, but competition on the platform is low. In Russia, an example of such a platform is "Profi.Ru". The platform allows people to find specialists for different tasks. Customers find tutors, driving instructors, plumbers, hairdressers, etc. In total, Profi.Ru has more than 2,600,000 specialists in 900 types of services. More than 21 thousand new orders pass through the website every day. Specialists present information about their skills and achievements. The customer can choose from many options. There is no fixed price on the platform. If an inadequate service is provided, the customer may file a complaint on the platform.

Blablacar can be considered an "Ideologist" BlaBlaCar is the world's leading travel community, enabling over 90 million members in 22 countries to travel together. Through technological solutions, BlaBlaCar connects people seeking rides and travel companions, helping to fill empty seats in private vehicles. This makes travel of any distance more accessible and convenient. Each year, BlaBlaCar's transportation network helps reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 1.6 million tons and brings 120 million people closer, serving as a driving force for the service's development. The platform only provides the ability to search for travel companions, there is no commission, and the platform also does not check participants. To register, people need only a phone number.

The model "Mediator" is similar to the model "Ideologist", but with the addition of a fee for services or products. Participants not only share but also gain economic benefits.

The model "Manager" differs from the model " Ideologist" in that participants want to have guarantees about the quality of the services or goods provided. Therefore, platforms introduce participant control.

The model "Franchisors" encompass all three aforementioned models. This model relies on a certain level of willingness to share.

At the same time, the level of desire for economic benefit is so high that it requires tight control by the platform. Control over pricing and quality is the main task of the platform of this model.

5 DISCUSSION

Among the presented models, the "Ideologists" primarily follow a non-economic strategy, driven by social aims. Mediators, Managers, and Franchisors usually adopt a commission-based strategy to earn revenue by linking partners with customers. These companies establish commissions for service providers, and some digital platforms may offer alternative tariffs. For instance, the company "Profi.Ru" offers two tariffs: "commission" and "response." Under the "commission" tariff, payment is made after service completion, while the "response" tariff charges a fee for service offers.

Due to the digital platform's ability to reduce transaction costs, a competitive strategy like "cost leadership" is common for all the models presented. Additionally, Franchisors and the Mediators also use a differentiation strategy. Companies offer a range of services to provide different customer needs. For example, Ostrovok.Ru provides accommodation options in apartments and hotels, while Yandex Taxi offers various tariffs such as economical, comfort, business, cargo, children, and pet transportation.

As for as marketing strategies, it is important to note that each sharing economy platform has a feedback and rating system. Thus, the higher the level of control, the more control over the participant’s rating increases. With a low rating, there is a risk of losing access to the digital platform. On platforms with a low level of control, the rating is not so important; it only influences the customer’s choice.

The Franchisor and Mediator spent funds for marketing and promotion. At the same time, there are cases of collaboration with other companies, such as offering discounts to bank clients or promotional codes for upgrading the service class. Companies representing Ideologists do not require advertising, as platforms have social aims. These platforms are self-regulated and promoted through «word of mouth».

When developing operational activities, sharing economy companies also focus on the technological

development strategy, investing additional resources in teams of engineers and IT specialists to create software or applications. This strategy is typical for companies that use economic models and depend on economies of scale, which can also lead to the implementation of mergers and acquisitions strategies.

Industry strategies was examine using the example of Yandex Taxi. Initially, Yandex Taxi had low prices for trips in order to attract customers. This strategy negatively impacted traditional taxi operators, who had high costs associated with vehicle depreciation, fuel, taxi fleet maintenance costs, and salaries for drivers, operators and repairmen. Under these conditions, some taxi companies had to close because they became unprofitable. Yandex-Taxi did not have significant costs, since it did not have a taxi fleet and did not hire drivers. Self-employed people worked on the platform. Subsequently, this company also began to apply the strategy of classic taxis, so the company acquired its own branded cars, which can be rent out to drivers.

Based on the information provided, it follows that the sharing economy model is expanding its potential due to evolving needs and technological advancements. The sharing economy is expected to play a larger role in various sectors such as the IT industry, finance, and the innovation of new products. This economic approach introduces new opportunities across industries like manufacturing, construction, and services by optimizing unused resources, creating additional income streams, and enhancing social connections. Moreover, with the rising emphasis on sustainability and corporate social responsibility, the sharing economy is likely to progress towards sustainable investments and engagement in social initiatives.

6 CONCLUSION

In this study, to identify strategies for sharing economy development in global and Russian practice the following results were obtained.

Firstly, the study described the competitive, industry, operational, marketing, and management strategies employed by sharing economy companies.

Secondly, it was demonstrated how sharing economy models manifest in the Russian market, including a mix of Russian and international companies with varying scopes.

The novelty of this research lies in categorizing strategies utilized by sharing economy companies.

The theoretical significance of the results obtained lies in developing theoretical principles for the advancement of the sharing economy. The practical significance lies in studying the implementation experience of various strategies in Russian and international sharing economy companies.

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