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CLUSTER ECOSYSTEM AND INTEGRATED MARKETING POLICY FOR ITS INNOVATIVE DEVELOPMENT

The relevance of the research topic is due to the need to use clusters to ensure the innovative development of the Ukrainian economy. The purpose of the article is to analyze clusters as ecosystems and identify the main parameters and conditions for their activity. The research methodology includes methods of induction and deduction, analysis and synthesis, which were used to determine the features and structure of clusters and the cluster ecosystem, classification - to reveal the main types of clusters, scientific abstraction and generalization - to form conclusions and prospects for the further innovative development of cluster ecosystems. The article analyzes the four most significant clusters in the Ukrainian economy: IT cluster, agrotechnical, energy and aerospace. As a result of the study, the possibilities and advantages of clusters for the functioning of business entities in the field of innovation activity were identified, in particular, more efficient and rational use of human, physical and financial capital, knowledge exchange, developed communications system, involvement of new technologies, digitalization tools, government support, global competitiveness. At the same time, risks and opportunities for preventing them were identified. The analysis of clusters as a system of interaction, interconnections and interdependence proved the need to approach them as an ecosystem, which not only ensures unity in the use of resources and the creation of synergistic effects, but also shares the risks of its elements. An integrated marketing policy plays a significant role in regulating the activities of cluster ecosystems, which, using digital marketing tools, ensures multi-channel communication, increased consumer loyalty to the brand, effective market segmentation, cost optimization, monitoring and adaptation, processing of information arrays, creativity and innovation. The conclusions identify the main priorities for the implementation of clustering in the activities of business structures and the prospects for its use for the innovative development of the economy. The authors indicate the conditions for the development of clusters in the Ukrainian economy, which include measures of both public administration and integrated marketing policy. Prospects for further research are related to finding ways to increase the competitiveness of clusters and gain high positions in the international economy.

Keywords: cluster, cluster ecosystem, innovative development, risks, human capital, integrated marketing policy, digital marketing.

Statement of the problem. To evolve in today's times, every organization has to find innovative ways to function more effectively by implementing new knowledge and new ideas, transforming or creating new products, services, processes and even business models to add value, improve productivity and achieve socio-economic results. Clusters are a prominent option when it comes to developing and sharing ideas in a multi-platform organization. Considering the

changes that have taken place in the world after the Covid-19 pandemic and the political imbalance in the world, especially the total war between Russia and Ukraine, innovation is necessary for society to function and develop internally, economically and internationally. Clusters are a strong way to bring about better changes in use of all resources (human capital, technologies, physical capital and finance). They could be considered as an ecosystem. At the same time they face certain risks. For achieving wholeness, integrity and openness of cluster ecosystem they need to conduct sound integrated marketing policy.

Analysis of recent publications. Clusters are geographic concentrations of interconnected companies, specialized suppliers, service providers, and associated institutions in a particular field [2]. They can be seen as a breeding ground for innovation and play a significant role in fostering creativity of human capital, competition, and collaboration, all of which are driving innovation development [10]. Cooke P. outlines the role of clusters in the context of regional innovation systems, particularly their ability to accelerate the pace of technological development and foster collaborative environments [11]. O'Connor A. and Meade N. (2012) examine the dynamics of innovation networks within clusters. It focuses on how firms within these networks share knowledge and collaborate on product development [12, 13]. Ketels C. H. (2013) explores how clusters contribute to regional economic development and innovation, with a focus on policy implications [14]. Porter M.E. discusses the importance of clusters in fostering competition and innovation, with examples from industries ranging from technology to manufacturing [2]. Some authors explore innovations in the context of ecosystem; however, there is lack of works especially on cluster ecosystem [15].

Unsolved part of the problem. The main motivation for implementing innovation is that it improves the ability of a company or organization to generate new knowledge and develop new products in cooperation with external partners through various channels. The channels used for cooperation between partners involved in innovation processes depend on the innovation model and the type of organization. One of the best ways to develop innovations is cluster ecosystem, which is relatively new concept and therefore less researched. It is necessary to consider the types of clusters according to its innovation activity and define the main tools for implementation, including integrated marketing policy, in order to promote open cooperative activities. This can help to find innovative solutions to cope with the extreme challenges and prepare Ukraine for sustainable recovery and development.

The purpose of the article is to explore and analyze cluster ecosystem and its potential benefits in fostering innovation, social and economic growth, and sustainable development in Ukraine; to propose necessary measures, including the tools of integrated marketing policy. The article seeks to prove the importance of clusters in driving Ukraine's innovative capacity and helping the country move forward in a rapidly changing global economy.

Research methodology. The article uses systematic and comparative analysis of different academic studies where clusters have been used in the past and ways they can be approved in different sectors in various organizations in Ukraine. The method of classification was used for finding out the clusters' types and describing their main characteristics. The mixed-methods approach has been employed to provide a thorough, multi-dimensional analysis of clusters in Ukraine, shedding light on their potential for driving innovative development and offering insights into best practices for their successful expansion.

The inductive and deductive methods as well as analysis and synthesis have been used to define the advantages of clusters and interpretation them as ecosystem. Additionally, we applied foresight methods to identify considerable ways for accelerating innovation development in Ukraine, including integrated marketing policy.

Research findings.

Clusters refer to geographic concentrations of interconnected businesses, suppliers, service providers, and associated institutions in a particular field [2]. Clusters are essentially groups of interconnected companies, suppliers, customers and institutions in a particular industry or sector that are incredibly useful for driving innovation and development. They create an environment that encourages collaboration, knowledge sharing, and competition, which in turn drives innovation [6]. The concept of business networks and clusters is often used to describe how firms in the same industry can benefit from being located near one another, facilitating innovation and enhancing overall competitiveness [15]. Ukraine, with its strategic location in Eastern Europe, a rich industrial base, and a highly educated workforce, holds significant potential for developing business clusters that can drive innovation and economic growth [1]. The Ukrainian government and various regional authorities have increasingly recognized the importance of clusters for fostering innovation across diverse sectors, including information technology (IT), agriculture, energy, and manufacturing (Tab.1).

Table 1

Key Advantages of Clusters for Innovative Development in Ukraine

Advantage of clusters	Description and explanation
Economic Growth	Clusters diversify the economy and create new industries by fostering innovation in emerging sectors like IT and clean energy.
Knowledge Spillovers	Proximity to other firms and research institutions fosters knowledge exchange and accelerates product development.
Global Competitiveness	Ukrainian clusters can compete globally, especially in areas where Ukraine holds advantages such as agriculture and IT.
Potent Human Capital	Clusters concentrated significant human capital and attract highly qualified workers, crucial for technological advancements in areas such as engineering and biotechnology.
Research Collaboration	Enhanced cooperation between universities and businesses leads to the development of innovative solutions.
Highly developed Communication	Clusters have good communication between units which is extremely effective in digital economy
Government Support	The government offers incentives and support for innovative projects, such as special economic zones and innovation hubs.

By developing and supporting industrial clusters, Ukraine can stimulate innovation and economic growth [2].

Through cooperation, knowledge exchange, and competitiveness, integrated marketing policy; these clusters can promote technological progress, attract investment, and improve the country's position on the global innovation map.

According to our approach, clusters are an ecosystem. The concept of an ecosystem implies a dynamic, interdependent network of entities that coexist and interact in a defined space or context. In the case of a cluster, this ecosystem perspective highlights the interrelationships and connections between different elements within the cluster, such as firms, organizations, resources, institutions, and even individuals. As in a natural ecosystem, the components of a cluster depend on each other to form a functional and resilient system. The growth, sustainability, and innovation of the cluster depend on the strength and health of these interactions. These interactions can include the sharing of knowledge, resources, technologies, and even risks. They also involve adaptation and evolution over time as the ecosystem responds to changes in its environment, whether technological, market-driven, or regulatory.

Furthermore, just as ecosystems have different levels (from local to global), clusters can operate at different scales, from small, localized clusters to large international groups, but all maintain a fundamental interconnectedness and a dependence on collaboration to be successful. We present a scheme of **Cluster Ecosystem** below [Fig 1]:

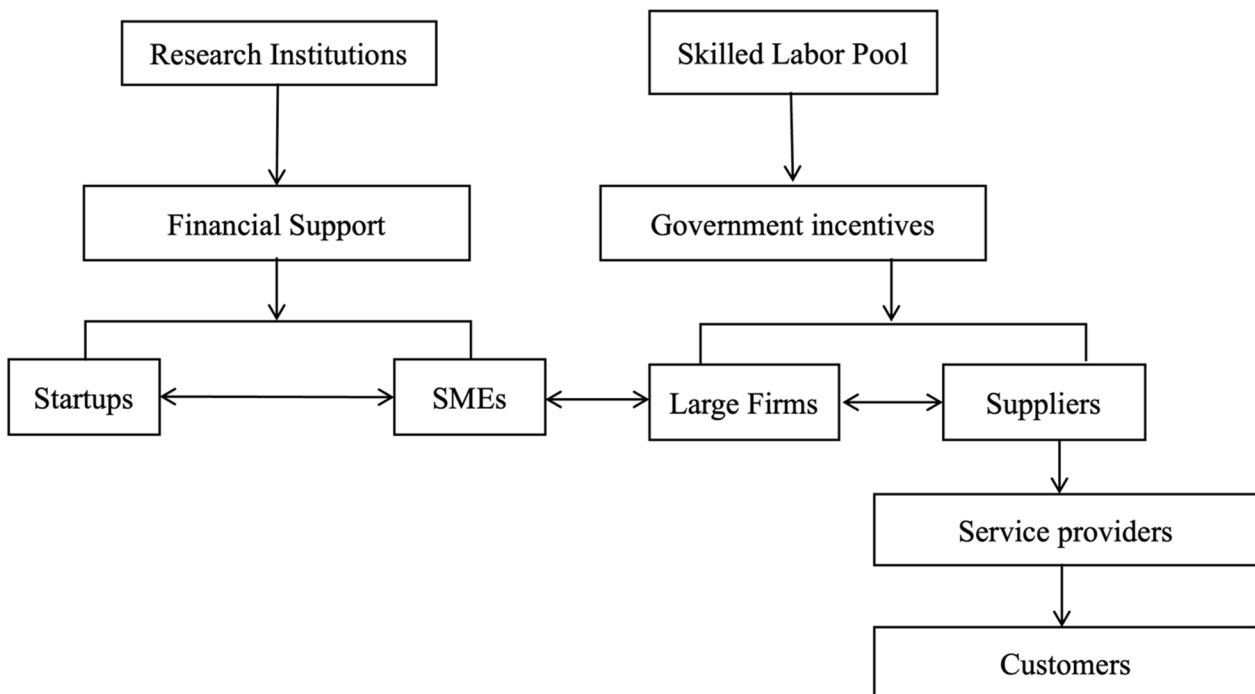


Fig 1: Cluster Ecosystem in Ukraine

The Basic components of Cluster ecosystems are characterized in Tab.2.

Clusters in Ukraine provide substantial opportunities for innovative development across several sectors, including IT, agriculture, and clean energy [1]. These clusters enhance knowledge exchange, foster collaboration between businesses and research institutions, and contribute to the growth of competitive industries. By leveraging government support and focusing on key strengths such as skilled labor and technological advancements [4], Ukraine is well-positioned to enhance its global competitiveness through cluster-driven innovation.

Table 2

Features of Basic components of Cluster ecosystems in Ukraine

Research Institutions	Promote innovation and often lead the way in technological disruptions, especially in IT, biotech, and energy.
Startups	Contribute significantly to regional development by adopting new technologies and business models.
SMEs	Drive industry-wide innovation and market trends, often through advanced manufacturing or energy technologies.
Large Firms	Provide critical inputs and services that support the functioning of the cluster.
Suppliers and Service Providers	Universities and innovation centers contribute cutting-edge research and development.
Consumers	These are diverse and can include businesses, local consumers, international markets, government bodies, research institutions, and investors. The ecosystem's success depends on how well these various customers interact and contribute to the mutual exchange of goods, services, and knowledge within the cluster.

The first place in effective clusterization belongs to IT Cluster in Ukraine's IT sector, which has become one of the most competitive in Eastern Europe, with an increasing number of startups, established software development companies, and international tech firms. This cluster predominantly operates in major cities like Kyiv, Lviv, and Kharkiv [3]. It thrives on a highly educated workforce, particularly in programming, data science, and software engineering.

Key Strengths of IT Cluster in Ukraine include large pool of highly skilled software developers, engineers, and IT specialists; competitive cost advantages compared to Western Europe and North America; high demand for Ukrainian IT services, especially in software development, outsourcing, and IT consulting.

On the other hand, there are definite risks of IT Cluster in Ukraine. Political instability and the ongoing total Russian - Ukrainian war may deter foreign investment in the long term. Lack of a strong local venture capital impedes innovation development of ecosystem. Regulatory challenges, especially in intellectual property and technology laws hinder the smooth functioning of IT clusters.

Nevertheless, we definitely believe in the future potential of IT clusters. The IT sector in Ukraine is growing further as businesses around the world continue to outsource software development and IT services. If Ukraine can stabilize its political environment and improve regulatory conditions, it could become an even more attractive destination for foreign tech investment [1].

Besides, IT clusters face pretty good opportunities, enhancing due to digitalization. Among them are: expansion of IT outsourcing services to new global markets, development of local innovations in fintech, block chain, and artificial intelligence (AI), establishment of more IT startups and tech incubators to foster innovation.

The next type, Agro-Cluster in Ukraine is one of the world's largest producers and exporters of agricultural products, particularly grains, sunflower oil, and other crops [3]. Clusters occupying Vinnitsa, Odessa, and Kherson regions focus on agribusiness, agritech innovations, and food

processing. Key Strengths of the Agro-Clusters are based on fertile land and favorable climate conditions for a wide range of crops. Ukraine has robust agricultural export industry, being one of the top exporters of grain globally. Development of smart farming technologies, such as precision farming, allows improving crop yields and reducing environmental impacts. On the other hand, Agro-Clusters face certain risks: aging infrastructure in rural areas, including roads and storage facilities, limited access to financing and venture capital for small-scale agritech startups, lack of well-prepared human capital. They need radical modernization of agricultural practices development of knowledge and new technologies to keep up with global trends in sustainability and efficiency.

Nevertheless, some positive potential in the agricultural sector offers immense opportunities for innovation, particularly in the areas of agritech, sustainability, and food processing. Further development of precision farming technologies (drones, sensors, AI) is significant. Besides, expansion of the agribusiness supply chain, including more sustainable packaging and food processing is perspective. But innovations require increasing foreign investment in agricultural land and agritech. We see great potential for Ukraine to become a leader in organic farming and sustainable agriculture. The Ukrainian government is introducing programs to support the modernization of agriculture, including subsidies for energy-efficient farming equipment, innovations in agrobusiness, and expanding the export infrastructure.

Next one, the Energy and Green Technologies Cluster is the third key Cluster in Ukraine [16, 17]. Ukraine is increasingly focusing on renewable energy and clean technology to reduce its dependency on fossil fuels, especially after its energy challenges. The Dnipro and Donetsk regions, along with other parts of Ukraine, are starting to see growth in the renewable energy sector, particularly in solar and wind energy [1]. Key Strengths of this sector is rich natural resources for renewable energy, such as wind and solar potential. An established energy infrastructure can be adapted to renewable sources. Government incentives and regulatory support for the development of green energy technologies is very helpful.

On the other hand, energy and green technology cluster meets serious risks. Political instability, especially related to energy security and the war in the eastern regions, may slow down investments in clean energy. The need for major infrastructure upgrades to integrate renewable energy into the national grid. Limited access to financing for renewable energy projects, particularly in rural areas makes a challenge for this cluster.

Forecasting the future trends, we think that the energy and green technologies cluster has a significant opportunity to grow as Ukraine seeks to diversify its energy sources and align with EU energy standards. The European Union has also supported Ukraine's transition to a greener economy which is one of SDG (sustainable development goals) [3]. Great opportunities lie in the expansion of solar and wind energy projects in the southern and central regions. The development of energy storage systems is to complement renewable sources. It is also important to increase investment in energy-efficiency technologies in residential and industrial sectors. It will maintain strong export potential for green technologies, especially in the European market [3].

The Ukrainian government supports this cluster and has introduced a green tariff for renewable energy producers, tax incentives for energy efficiency projects, and programs to modernize energy infrastructure. These efforts can help facilitate the growth of the green

technology sector. Some meaningful characteristics of mentioned clusters could be seen in Tab.3.

Table 3

Notable Clusters in Ukraine

Cluster	Sector	Location	Key Players
IT Cluster	Technology/Software	Kyiv, Lviv, Kharkiv	SoftServe, Miratech, Luxoft
Agro-Cluster	Agriculture/Agri-Tech	Vinnytsia, Odessa, Kherson	MHP, Kernel, Nibulon
Energy and Green Tech	Renewable Energy/Tech	Dnipro, Donetsk	DTEK, Ukrenergo, NBT
Aerospace Cluster	Aerospace/Engineering	Kyiv, Zaporizhzhia	Motor Sich, Antonov

The Ukrainian government has recognized the importance of clusters in boosting innovation and competitiveness. Various initiatives have been implemented to support cluster development:

1. *Cluster Development Programs*: The Ukrainian Ministry of Economic Development and Trade have initiated programs to promote cluster development in sectors such as IT, agriculture, and clean energy.

2. *Special Economic Zones (SEZs)*: These zones provide tax incentives and infrastructure support to attract investment in high-tech industries and innovation-driven sectors.

3. *Venture Capital and Innovation Hubs*: The government, along with private investors, is investing in venture capital funds and innovation hubs to foster new startups and innovative projects.

An integrated marketing policy (IMP) is crucial for the development and success of new products and digital marketing communication, especially in a dynamic market like Ukraine. Here are several advantages of adopting such a policy in this context. Here are several advantages of adopting such a policy in this context:

- *Multichannel marketing communication*: An integrated marketing strategy ensures that the messaging and branding remain consistent across all marketing channels. This is important in digital marketing, where consumers are exposed to a brand through various touch points (social media, websites, email marketing, etc.). A consistent message builds brand trust and recognition. In Ukraine, where digital adoption is growing rapidly, this approach can help new products gain traction more quickly [6].

- *Improved Customer Engagement*: integrated marketing communication (IMC) helps brands to engage their customers more effectively. By utilizing different digital platforms (social media, influencer partnerships, SEO, email marketing), brands can maintain a continuous relationship with consumers, providing them with a personalized experience. For new product launches in Ukraine, where social media engagement is high, this could lead to increased consumer involvement and stronger brand loyalty [7].

- *Better Market Segmentation*: An integrated approach allows marketers to reach a broader audience and segment them more effectively. By combining both digital and traditional marketing channels, businesses can ensure that they are not missing out on specific segments

of the population. For instance, digital channels may help target younger Ukrainians, while traditional channels might be better suited for older generations.

- *Cost Efficiency:* With a clear, unified strategy, marketing efforts can be optimized, reducing the redundancy of efforts and cost wastage. In a market like Ukraine, where many businesses are still transitioning into more digital approaches, integrated marketing allows for better allocation of resources across channels, ensuring that businesses can scale their efforts more efficiently, especially for new product launches [8].

- *Real-time Adaptation and Monitoring:* Digital marketing offers the benefit of real-time analytics, allowing companies to monitor the effectiveness of their integrated marketing campaigns as they unfold. If a new product launch isn't performing well, marketing teams can quickly adjust strategies based on live data. In Ukraine, where market conditions can shift rapidly due to geopolitical and economic factors, this flexibility is essential.

- *Better Data Collection and Insights:* With digital marketing being a core component of integrated strategies, businesses gain better access to customer data, behavior, and preferences. This data can be used to refine product development and marketing strategies. For new product creation, understanding what drives consumer decisions in Ukraine can result in more successful products that meet market needs.

- *Enhanced Creativity and Innovation:* Integrated marketing opens the door to greater creativity by combining different types of marketing tactics. For new products, this allows brands to present their offerings in unique and innovative ways that appeal to different consumer sensibilities. Given Ukraine's young, creative population, this approach can also help brands leverage local trends and cultural nuances to resonate more deeply with consumers.

In the context of new product creation and digital marketing communication in Ukraine, an integrated marketing policy offers several clear advantages, including consistency, customer engagement, cost efficiency, market segmentation, and enhanced creativity. As the digital landscape in Ukraine continues to evolve, adopting such a strategy allows businesses to stay competitive and build strong relationships with consumers.

Conclusions. The Path Ahead for innovation in Ukraine, Ukraine's clusters in IT, agriculture, and energy represent a dynamic opportunity for innovative development in the coming years. Due to the integrated processes of development and creation of new products, services and technologies, as well as the interactive interaction of all their participants, they form ecosystems.

The advantages of clusters are the effective use of investment funds, which contributes to deepening specialization, improving product quality and increasing production volumes, expanding the assortment and creating a new product, as well as optimal distribution of profits among cluster participants. With its potent human capital, natural resources, new technologies, and growing government support, Ukraine can become a hub for innovation in Eastern Europe. At the same time, the development of clusters is accompanied by certain risks.

It is crucial that Ukraine addresses its political and economic challenges, tried to eliminate risks, strengthens its infrastructure, and promotes entrepreneurship to fully leverage its potential in these sectors. The combination of these clusters can also create opportunities for

interdisciplinary collaboration, such as agritech innovations powered by AI and green tech solutions in agriculture. The authors indicate the conditions for the development of clusters in the Ukrainian economy, which include both state management measures and integrated marketing policy.

Ukraine's future lies in its ability to integrate these clusters, improve innovation ecosystems, and establish itself as a regional leader in technological development.

Prospects for further research are related to the substantiation of ways to increase the competitiveness of clusters and their role in ensuring the innovative development of the economy.

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КЛАСТЕРНА ЕКОСИСТЕМА ТА РОЛЬ ІНТЕГРОВАНОЇ МАРКЕТИНГОВОЇ ПОЛІТИКИ У ЇЇ ІННОВАЦІЙНОМУ РОЗВИТКУ

Актуальність теми дослідження обумовлена необхідністю використання кластерів для забезпечення інноваційного розвитку економіки України. Метою статті є аналіз кластерів як екосистеми та виявлення основних параметрів і умов їх діяльності. Методологія дослідження включає методи індукції і дедукції, аналізу та синтезу, які застосовувалися для визначення ознак та структури кластерів і кластерної екосистеми; класифікації – для розкриття основних типів кластерів; наукової абстракції та узагальнення – для формування висновків та перспектив щодо подальшого інноваційного розвитку кластерних екосистем. У статті проаналізовано чотири найбільш значимі кластери в економіці України: ІТ-кластер, агротехнічний, енергетичний та аерокосмічний. У результаті дослідження виявлено можливості та переваги кластерів для функціонування суб'єктів господарювання у сфері інноваційної діяльності, зокрема, більш ефективно та раціональне використання людського, фізичного та фінансового капіталу, обмін знаннями, розвинена система комунікацій, залучення нових технологій, інструментів цифровізації, державна підтримка, глобальна конкурентоспроможність. Водночас для кожного кластера виявлено ризики і показано можливості запобігання ним. Аналіз кластерів як системи взаємодії, взаємозв'язків і взаємозалежності довів необхідність підходу до них як до екосистеми, яка не лише забезпечує єдність у використанні ресурсів і створенні синергетичних ефектів, але й поділяє ризики її елементів. У регулюванні діяльності кластерних екосистем значну роль відіграє інтегрована маркетингова політика, яка, використовуючи інструменти диджитал маркетингу, забезпечує мультимедіальну комунікацію, збільшення лояльності споживача до бренду, ефективно сегментування ринку, оптимізацію витрат, моніторинг і адаптацію, обробку масивів інформації, креативність та інновації. У висновках визначено основні пріоритети впровадження кластеризації в діяльності підприємницьких структур та перспективи її використання для інноваційного розвитку економіки. Авторами зазначено умови розвитку кластерів в українській економіці, що містять заходи як державного управління, так і інтегрованої маркетингової політики. Перспективи подальших досліджень пов'язані з пошуком шляхів підвищення конкурентоспроможності кластерів і завоювання ними високих позицій у міжнародній економіці.

Ключові слова: кластер, кластерна екосистема, інноваційний розвиток, ризики, людський капітал, інтегрована маркетингова політика, диджитал маркетинг.