

## WEB SITE – BASIC INTERNET MARKETING STRATEGY TOOL OF DIGITAL COMPANIES

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*Abstract - The main purpose of digital economy is based on intellectual capital resources management in a virtual world, on a virtual market. Raw materials, energy, money from traditional economy are being replaced with information, knowledge and technological development and changes in the digital economy. Many laws which apply in the traditional economy do not apply in the digital economy. Radical and fast changes which have occurred in the last decade, point to new stages of development which are conceptually and historically changing the economic and social environment and activity of the subjects. Information industry and communication technology influence on development of the new economy globally, not only on national basis as in the traditional economy. Marketing through a company's website is particularly important if it strives to obtain results for the invested time and money. Creating an appropriate web site, as a tool of internet marketing is aimed as effectiveness of the virtual company, increasing the number of consumers of its products and improving its brand, generally. Due to the vast importance of this problematics, the paper will analyze the essential elements for maintaining an efficient marketing strategy of the virtual company, the legal assumptions for registration of a web site in the Republic of Macedonia, obligations of companies in the area of consumer's protection when concluding distance contracts – contracts which are concluded by means of communication at a distance and the actual condition/statistic indicators of using web sites in electronic trade in the Republic of Macedonia and the EU.*

**Keywords:** web site, internet, marketing, distance contracts, consumers.

**JEL classification:** M31, K22, C12

### 1. Introduction

Information is already becoming an important resource which mostly contributes to a realization of competitive advantage on the market. Information begins to be considered as one of the basic resources of the company along with the technology development, companies' digitalization, and Internet development when actually companies which own more information are more competitive, more efficient and are generally more successful on the market. In the 21 century, it is all about information, so accordingly, the internet marketing strategy is based on timely and punctual information. Owning an Internet marketing strategy provides targetting the market and business positioning in a way that provides way to easily find what is offered by those who search for it, i.e. bringing the right product to the right consumer. This is just the first step in the sale process, but also a key one for online business success. Internet trade can be increased by search optimization. [19]

Globally, implementation of Internet marketing strategy, as a new way, finds its practical use in connecting companies worldwide and their adjustment to principles of trade and competitiveness in the world economy. Namely, more and more often online communication takes place among users and providers of certain services or among senders and receivers of certain information which is related to certain business. The Internet, as a new medium in such communication, is based on the application of certain tools, such as website, databases of new sophisticated systems with search words in the page code, which are then used for displaying a certain page. In that way, it significantly affects the number of visitors to a certain website, which is especially important not only for realization of business and promotional goals of the company, but also for generating data which will be purposely used in future.

## 2. Necessity Of Website For Internet Marketing Strategy

The advantage of the internet marketing strategy is reflected in the immediate communication, getting information from the right source, preparing and designing of a product according to the wishes and needs of specific consumer, increasing the direct sale, encouraging immediate purchase, as well as developing and maintaining the brand. The visible thing by which the company shall contact the consumers, both existing and potential, is designing an appropriate website.

A website is a tool by which the virtual company is realizing the goal of its marketing strategy and all activities which are part of it. The art of designing an appropriate website is so profoundly enhanced that there are appropriate website standards for every industry. If a website is created on a way to be more friendly for the consumers, easier to navigate for every consumer, there will be a possibility for direct communication with the users who already require products and services offered by a certain company. It is a fact that companies which nowadays are not present online, are literally invisible for the consumers. Hence, the most efficient marketing instrument which companies should own is the strategic planning of their Internet presence. An Internet marketing strategy which is correctly created defines five levels of sale:

- Marketing expectations of the targeted market/consumer;
- Creating credibility and trust;
- Attracting and protecting the consumers;
- Presenting the product or service;
- Successful realization of sale.

Such defined Internet marketing strategy will make realistic and possible specific Internet marketing goal – the right product to the right consumer. Marketing expectations of the targeted market /consumer are results of a certain company’s marketing. It is about providing an appropriate approach to the target group in the virtual store of the company. A synonym for a virtual store is the website. It can be achieved by search optimization, pay by click system and online advertising, techniques which attract consumers to the company’s website. Regarding creating credibility and trust, in Internet marketing it is characteristic that can be provided also by elements which are part of good website design and developing company's website. On the other hand, in traditional marketing trust and credibility are acquired by good human interaction. Based on data for the percentage of business entities according to the number of employees in the Republic of Macedonia [3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10], which have their own website or home page, are presented in chart 1 and graphics display 1. It can be noted that in all business entities, within the defined time period there is a continued, but insignificant increase of this percentage with smaller variables. A significant percentage of business entities (from 80% to 90%) within the defined period with more than 250 employees have their own website or home page, and 40-50% of the business entities with 50 to 249 employees have their own website or homepage. The credibility, but also the presentation of products is done by a well-organized website. Exactly the website of the company should be a vivid

virtual assistant which will be familiar with the needs and wishes of the consumers which will provide their easy realization. Attracting and protecting the consumers is a stage in which a potential consumer is qualified. Every person who visits the website of a certain company is looking for a solution to a certain issue. That solution can be a product or a service offered by the company. In that sense, the data that is related to people who regularly use the internet as well as households with broadband Internet connection (in the Republic of Macedonia and the EU) within the time period from 2013 to 2018 and as potential consumers, are presented in the following graphic displays 2 and 3. [3]

Table no 1: Enterprises according to the number of employees who have a web site or a homepage (in %)

Year	10 to 49	50 to 249	250+
2010	38	57,6	79,2
2011	52,2	60,8	81,1
2012	44,8	60	85,9
2013	51,7	61,8	84,7
2014	49,8	66,2	88,5
2015	48,5	64,6	85,7
2016	49,6	62,7	83,5
2017	45,3	61,8	80,3
2018	50,6	66,5	87,6

Figure no 1: Enterprises according to the number of employees who have a web site or a homepage

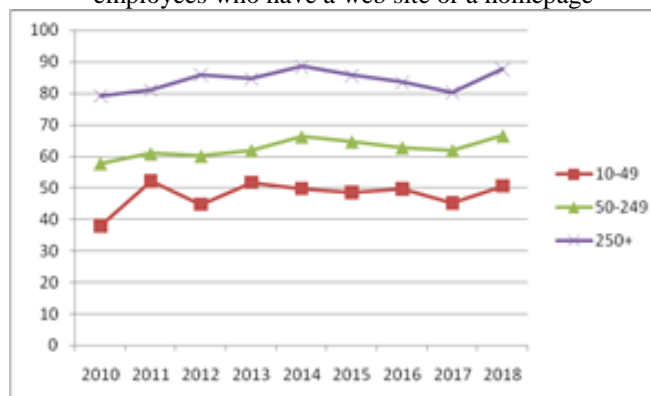
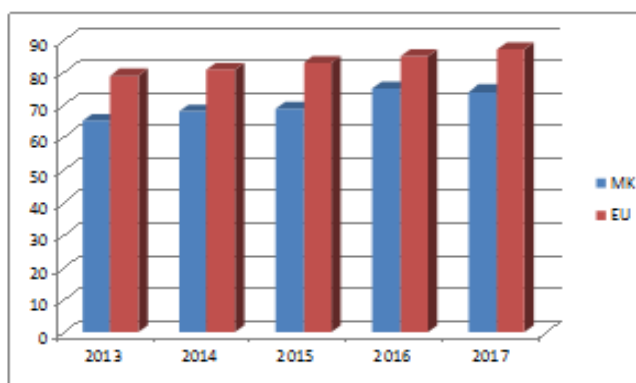
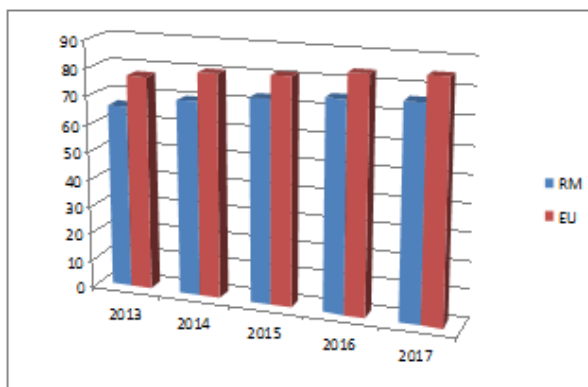


Figure no 2: Persons who regularly use the Internet Figure no 3: Households with broadband connection to the Internet



The histograms presented by graphic displays 2 and 3 indicate that there is continued growth of the number of people who regularly use the Internet as well as the households with a broadband Internet connection, for the Republic of Macedonia and the EU as potential consumers. Of course, there is an obvious difference in percentage participation when taking into consideration the people and the households in the Republic of Macedonia and the EU.

Internet marketing studies show that: 80% of the Internet users had bought something online, 71% of the consumers believe that they will buy something on the Internet other than in the store, 52% of the people who own a tablet prefer buying by using tablet, 44% of the online buyers start the purchasing process by using an internet search engine...(Prevoditjel, 2019). Also, according to another research: E-commerce is increased by 23% during the 2018, but still 46% of the American small businesses have no website. Americans spend 64% of their budget on shopping in a store, and 36% online. More than three-quarters of online buyers would like to receive their orders the same day when they have ordered them. A study by PayPal showed that 43% of the buyers had abandoned the shopping carts because the transport costs were too high. From 2015 to 2017, the

global average rate of abandoning the shopping cart increased from 71,39% to 77,24%. 23% of the users will give up on their consumer basket if they have to create a new user account. [14]

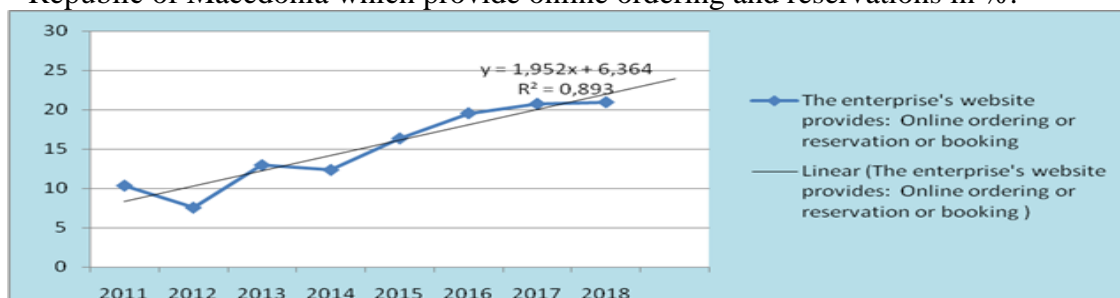
That is why it is necessary to dedicate enough time to the consumers and to help them find what they are looking for. The directives offered by a certain website should be structured in a way which will help those who know exactly what they are looking for, those who know that they are looking for something but are not sure about certain specifications, as well as those who are picky and who need correct guidance. Presentation of products/services is a process by which a certain company presents its products and services to the potential consumers who visit its web site. The presentation of products and services is a type of security that the consumers' attention is drawn and focused and that the motivation for buying is increased. In that sense, providing of online ordering and reservation on websites by the business subjects in percentage (according to the number of employees: 10+) in the Republic of Macedonia within the time period from 2011 to 2018 [3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10] is presented in the following chart 2:

Table no 2: The percentage of websites of business subjects which provide online ordering and reservation.

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
The enterprise's website provides: Online ordering or reservation or booking (in %)	10,4	7,6	13,0	12,4	16,4	19,6	20,8	21,0

The graphics display on image no. 4 indicates that from 2011 to 2018 there was a continued percentage increase of websites of business subjects (according to the number of employees: 10+) in the Republic of Macedonia which provides online ordering and reservations. Such an increase in this period is more than twice. Also, from the trend line, it can be concluded that the percentage providing online ordering and reservations on websites of the business subjects (according to the number of employees: 10+) in the Republic of Macedonia, on average, had increased for 1,952% every year. Assuming that online ordering and reservations on websites of the business subjects (according to the number of employees: 10+) will be realized as a straightforward trend, which is confirmed by the high value of the coefficient of determination ( $KD=0,893$ ). It is expected that this percentage will be around 25% until 2020.

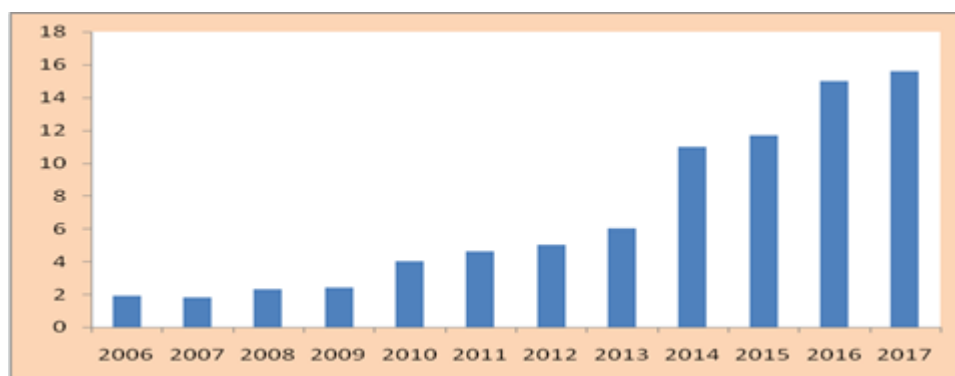
Figure no 4: Websites of business subjects (according to the number of employees: 10+) in the Republic of Macedonia which provide online ordering and reservations in %.



In this context, meaningful is the trend referring to people aged (15-74 years old) who ordered or bought a product or a service on the Internet in the last 12 months, which can be seen from the graphics display on image 5. Namely, continued growth can be seen, with increased intensity from 2014, of the percentage participation of people with age structure from 15 to 74 years old who ordered, i.e. bought a product online in the last 12 months. While in 2017, 79% of people aged 15-74 years old who bought online had one to two orders online for private use, and only 2,7% of them had made orders more than 10 times. Most of the online purchases, 66,8%, have an estimated value of fewer than 50 euros or 92,1% of the online purchases have an estimated value up to 100 euros

and only 0,4% of the online purchases have an estimated value over 1000 euros. Also, most of the products i.e. services, 64,1%, ordered online refer to clothing or sportswear, 19,5% refer to electronic equipment (and cameras), 10,2% to hotel and other vacation accommodation, 6,7% to events tickets (movie, theater, etc.) and 5,8% to books, magazines, newspapers, e-books. Most of the orders, or 22%, from other EU countries, are from Slovenia, and the least, 4%, is from Macedonia and 1% from Turkey. [21]

Figure no 5: Percentage participation of people (15-74 years old) who ordered or bought a product or a service online in the last 12 months. %.



Before switching to sale, certain situations have to be analyzed. First, it should be checked whether the website provides sufficient information for the offered product or service. Then it should be examined whether the description of the product or service is sufficiently challenging to draw the visitors' attention. One thing which is mostly missing on the websites is providing information about the payment and method of payment, i.e. specifying whether it can be paid by a credit card and if yes, which one. All above-mentioned processes should be consistently applied in order to increase the power of the website of a certain company and in that way achieve an online sale increase.

### 3. Website Registration

Taking into consideration the expansion of the Internet use, as well as the fact that a high number of trade deals globally are concluded online or thanks to the Internet, the domain name is often considered as one of the rights of industrial property. The domain name represents a textual address which is used by physical and legal entities for access and running pages on the Internet and is a replacement for the name of the internet address. The actual Internet address is a number similar to an international telephone number. In order to ease the access of the consumers to websites, domain names are used. Domains are a significant means for realizing the activity of legal subjects on the so-called "virtual market". They mostly contain names of trademarks, geographical names, as well as companies of legal entities, and through them, their holders can more easily contact the consumers, i.e. act on the "virtual market". By spreading the Internet use more and more attention is being paid to protecting the domain names.

Registration of domain names is done in companies registrars on the principle "first come first served" when the company-registrar only checks whether there is another domain registered using the same name. [1] Opposite to the industrial property rights which are protected in front of state organs, domain names are registered in front of legal entities who work on registration of the domain names within the domain names of "the highest level". When registering the domain names there is a contractual relationship between the domain name holder and the legal entity doing the registration. According to the Law on establishing the Macedonian academic research network (Official Gazette of RM no. 124/2010, 47/2011, 41/2014), MARnet regulates the Macedonian

domain and runs a single Register for registered subdomains in MK-domain. According to the Statute for organization and management of the top Macedonian .mk domain and the top Macedonian .mkd domain, the registration of domains in the Republic of Macedonia is done by MARnet, but there is a possibility for MARnet to transfer the right for domain registration to third parties which also act like registrars. Currently, there are 18 registrars in the Republic of Macedonia, which up to this moment have registered 18,968 .mk domains, 7,771 .com.mk domains, 865 .org.mk domains etc. [18]

Often in practice, there are disputable situations, due to a violation of someone else's rights or certain abuses, when some people are taking advantage of someone else's market reputation, so in bad faith, they protect and use a domain name which is similar, same or is reminiscent of other competitive company. Mostly, as the weakest link in the trade chain, these situations are harmful to consumers. Due to the number of protected domain names, as well the number of violations when protecting the domain names, an alternative ways for resolving these disputes are implemented, of which the arbitration and mediation appear as the most successful mechanisms. But these mechanisms are used for resolving the disputes arising between the subject who made domain name registration and the other person who believes that such registration had violated some of their rights, and not for resolving disputes between the subject who registered the domain name and the consumer who had been deceived by the reckless subject who had registered the domain.

The deceived consumers can provide their protection according to the Law on Consumers Protection (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia” no. 38/2004, 77/2007, 103/2008, 24/2011, 164/2013, 97/2015, 152/2015 and 140/2018), according to the rules which apply for distance contracts. According to the Law, a distance contract is considered every contract concluded between the trader and the consumer within an organized scheme for sale or providing distance services without physical and simultaneous presence of both the trader and the consumer, by exclusive use of one or more means of distance communication until concluding the contract, including the moment of concluding the contract. Distance Contract is similarly defined in the Directive 97/7/EC (Directive [97/7/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 1997 on the protection of consumers in respect of distance contracts. Before the consumer obliges to a distance contract, the trader is obliged to provide the following information to the consumer: a) main characteristics of the goods or services; b) trader identity, such as their trade name; c) trader headquarters and their phone number, fax or an electronic address; d) total price of goods or services including taxes or if the nature of the goods or services prevents reasonable and upfront calculation of the price, the manner of price calculation and if applicable, all additional costs for transport, delivery or postage costs and all other costs or when those costs cannot be reasonably calculated upfront, the fact that these additional costs can be paid; e) the cost for using the means of distance communication for concluding the contract when such cost is calculated on another basis other than the basic rate; f) manner of payment, delivery and execution, the date until which the trader is obliged to deliver goods or provide a service and if applicable, a procedure which the trader applies for settling complaints; g) a reminder that there is a legal guarantee for conformity of goods etc. For further information see the article no. 86 of the Law on Protection of Consumers This information is of high importance when concluding distance contracts, i.e. during electronic trade. When creating a website, traders must take into consideration the legal obligations for providing minimum information to the consumers of goods, i.e. services offered for online sale. On the contrary, consumers can ask for their protection and action by the competent inspection services. In case of a dispute, the trader, i.e. the service provider is obliged to prove that they had met their obligations from a previous notification to the consumer and that the consumer had agreed to conclude a contract. The Law on the Protection of Consumers in the distance contracts part complies with Directive 97/7/EC (Directive [97/7/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 1997 on the protection of consumers in respect of distance contracts).

#### 4. Testing of statistical hypothesis for the realization of electronic trade

In the data research [3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10] on the various modalities for realization of electronic trade (e-sale – receiving orders through computer networks; web sale – receiving orders for goods and services through website; web site sale in a form of buyers and final consumers (B2C); sale to other enterprises (B2B) and state organs (B2G); EDI sale: receiving orders through EDI – messages in agreed format for example EDIFACT, UBL, HTML in business subjects according to the number of employees (10-49;50-249;250+) the following hypothesis can be defined:

*Hypothesis 1(14,15,16,15,18): Various modalities of electronic trade do not influence on the acquired percentage of realization.*

*Hypothesis 2(14,15,16,17,18): Different number of employees in business subjects does not influence on the acquired percentage of realization.*

These hypotheses refer to data from 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018<sup>1</sup>. For testing of these hypotheses, the most suitable is the parameter test ANOVA when there are two factors with more modalities. By processing these data we get the following statistics of the test and indicators of the statistical conclusion which are presented in table no 3.

Since the empirical values of the Snedecor's variable F, for the data from 2014, 2016, 2017 and 2018 are higher than the appropriate theoretical values of the Snedecor's variable F *crit* for the defined number of degrees of freedom (4,2) and a threshold of significance of 0,95 the set hypothesis is rejected, and we conclude that the various modalities of electronic trade influence on the acquired percentage of realization. Only for the data from 2015, the set hypothesis can be accepted that the various modalities of electronic trade do not influence on the acquired percentage of realization. Also, because the empirical value of the Snedecor's variable F for the data from 2014, 2015, 2017 and 2018 is higher than the appropriate theoretical values of the Snedecor's variable F *crit* for the defined number of degrees of freedom (4,2) and the threshold of significance of 0,95 the set hypothesis is rejected and we conclude that the different number of employees in the business subjects influences on the acquired percentage of realization. Only for the data from 2016, the set hypothesis is accepted that the different number of employees in the business subjects does not influence on the acquired percentage of realization. The significance of these conclusions is confirmed and by the appropriate empirical values of P.

Table no 3: Results from testing of the hypothesis that various modalities of the electronic trade, as well as the different number of employees in the business subjects, do not influence on the acquired percentage of realization for different time period i.e. years (2014,2015,2016,2017 and 2018).

	Statistics (calculated value) of ANOVA (F)	df	Theoretical (table) value of the ANOVA (F <i>crit</i> )	P-value	Statistical conclusion (acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis)
Hypothesis 1.14	27,55902	4	3,837853	9,91201E05	Non Accepted
Hypothesis 2.14	8,635486	2	4,45897	0,0100432	Non Accepted
Hypothesis 1.15	3,658852	4	3,837853	0,055957	Accepted
Hypothesis 2.15	12,28266	2	4,45897	0,003642	Non Accepted
Hypothesis 1.16	10,89116	4	3,837853	0,002537	Non Accepted
Hypothesis 2.16	2,367735	2	4,45897	0,155704	Accepted
Hypothesis 1.17	14,17501	4	3,837853	0,001053	Non Accepted
Hypothesis 2.17	7,339596	2	4,45897	0,015483	Non Accepted
Hypothesis 1.18	15,86409	4	3,837853	0,000715	Non Accepted
Hypothesis 2.18	22,40918	2	4,45897	0,000526	Non Accepted

Source: Authors' creation.

Also, in the research of the data for the above-mentioned modalities of realization of the electronic trade in business subjects according to the various time period, i.e. years from 2014 to 2018, for a number of employees 10+, the following hypothesis can be defined:

*Hypothesis 3: Various modalities of electronic trade do not influence on the acquired percentage of realization.*

*Hypothesis 4: Different time period (years) does not influence on the acquired percentage of realization.*

Table no 4: Results from testing of the hypothesis that various modalities of electronic trade, as well as the different time period (from 2014 to 2018) do not influence on the acquired percentage of realization.

Hypothesis	Statistics (calculated value) of ANOVA (F)	df	Theoretical (table) value of the ANOVA ( <i>F crit</i> )	P-value	Statistical conclusion (acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis)
Hypothesis 3.	39,18111	4	3,006917	4,48E-08	Non Accepted Non Accepted
Hypothesis 4.	9,328799	4	3,006917	0,000434	

Source: Authors' creation

Since the empirical values of the Snedecor's variable F are higher than the appropriate theoretical values of the Snedecor's variable *F crit* for the defined number of degrees of freedom (4,4) and the threshold of significance of 0,95 the set hypothesis is rejected and we conclude that the various modalities of the electronic trade as well as the different time period (years) significantly influence on the acquired percentage of realization. The significance of these conclusions is confirmed and by the empirical values of P.

In the research for the data of percentage of web-sale in relation to the total sale, and when taking into consideration the different number of employees in business subjects and the time period within 2014 to 2018 the following hypothesis can be defined:

*Hypothesis 5:* Different number of employees in the business subjects does not influence on the size of the percentage of web-sale in relation to the total sale.

*Hypothesis 6:* Different time period (years) does not influence the size of the percentage of web-sale in relation to the total sale.

Since the empirical value of the Snedecor's variable F is lower than the appropriate theoretical value of the Snedecor's variable *F crit* for the defined number of degrees of freedom (4,4) and the threshold of significance of 0,95 the set hypothesis 5 is accepted and we conclude that the different number of employees in the business subjects does not influence on the size of the percentage of web-sale in relation to the total sale. Since the empirical value of the Snedecor's variable F is higher than the appropriate theoretical value of the Snedecor's variable *F crit* for the defined number of the degrees of freedom (4,4) and the threshold of significance of 0,95 the set hypothesis 6 is rejected and we conclude that the different time period (years) influences on the size of the percentage of web-sale in relation to the total sale. The significance of these conclusions is confirmed also by the appropriate empirical values of P.

Table no 5: Results from testing of the hypothesis that various modalities of electronic trade, as well as the different time period (from 2014 to 2018) do not influence the acquired percentage of realization.

Hypothesis	Statistics (calculated value) of ANOVA (F)	df	Theoretical (table) value of the ANOVA ( <i>F crit</i> )	P-value	Statistical conclusion (acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis)
Hypothesis 5	0,66968726	4	3,006917	0,586767	Accepted
Hypothesis 6	6,88833674	4	3,006917	0,004039	Non Accepted

Source: Authors' creation.



## 5. Conclusion

In the era of digital economy Internet marketing strategies are the one that promote effectiveness and success of companies on the market. It is a fact that companies which nowadays are not present online, are literally invisible for the consumers.

Even though there are good legal assumptions for using a website as an Internet marketing strategy and large broadband access to the Internet through a fixed connection of business subjects in the Republic of Macedonia, still numbers indicate that companies do not use the benefits of this type of Internet marketing that often. Small number of them have their own website, and only a few of them provide online ordering and reservation. All of that results in a small number of concluded distance contracts by using e-sale. The reasons for that should be found also in the passivity of the companies, i.e. their managers and closeness towards new e-marketing strategies, which are an inevitable part of the digital era worldwide, but also the closeness of the Macedonian average consumer, who while fearing the novelties of the digital era, are more convenient using the conventional ways of purchase.

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