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## **PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF STRATEGIZING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT BASED ON THE BLUE OCEAN CONCEPT**

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## **ПРАКТИЧНІ АСПЕКТИ СТРАТЕГУВАННЯ СТАЛОГО РОЗВИТКУ ПІДПРИЄМСТВА НА ОСНОВІ КОНЦЕПЦІЇ «БЛАКИТНОГО ОКЕАНУ»**

*Currently, strategizing in new market niches is actively developing, driven by the continuous search of economic entities for ways to move beyond competition. Accordingly, the paper's aim is to generalize the practical aspects of strategizing sustainable development of enterprises based on the Blue Ocean concept. The results of the study indicate that strategizing sustainable development of an enterprise in the context of the Blue Ocean concept opens new opportunities for forming long-term competitive advantages, which are based on the combination of innovation, value-based market rethinking, and sustainable development principles. Within the scope of the conducted research, approaches to strategizing sustainable development of enterprises based on the Blue Ocean concept have been further developed. This made it possible to demonstrate that, unlike traditional competitive approaches, strategizing enables enterprises to go beyond existing market constraints and create new demand spaces by integrating economic, environmental, and social objectives. This also allowed for outlining an approach to integrating value innovation into the sustainable development system, taking into account its economic, environmental, and social components. The study's content has shown that strategizing sustainable development based on the "Blue Ocean" approach facilitates the transition of enterprises from reactive to proactive strategic management, oriented toward innovative business models, resource efficiency, and value creation for stakeholders. The study's results also revealed that the insufficient development of tools for implementing this concept within the sustainable development system remains a significant limitation. The applied significance of the research lies in the possibility of using its results to form innovative enterprise development strategies based on sustainability and to develop managerial approaches for creating new market niches with consideration of environmental and social criteria. Directions for future research involve the development of applied models for integrating the Blue Ocean concept into the system of strategic management of sustainable enterprise development.*

*Наразі активно розвивається стратегування в нових ринкових нішах, що зумовлено постійним пошуком суб'єктами господарювання шляхів виходу за межі конкуренції. Відтак, метою дослідження є узагальнення практичних аспектів стратегування сталого розвитку підприємств на основі концепції «блакитного океану». За результатами дослідження встановлено, що стратегування сталого розвитку підприємства в контексті концепції «блакитного океану» відкриває нові можливості для формування довгострокових конкурентних переваг (їх основою є поєднання інноваційності, ціннісного переосмислення ринку та принципів сталого розвитку). У межах проведеного дослідження удосконалено підходи до стратегування сталого розвитку підприємства на основі концепції «блакитного океану». Це дозволило довести, що, на відміну від традиційних підходів конкурентної боротьби, стратегування дає підприємствам змогу виходити за межі наявних ринкових обмежень і створювати нові простори, інтегруючи економічні, екологічні та соціальні цілі. Це, у свою чергу, дозволило окреслити підхід до інтеграції ціннісних інновацій у систему сталого розвитку з урахуванням економічної, екологічної та соціальної складових. Зміст дослідження довів, що стратегування сталого розвитку на основі концепції «блакитного океану» сприяє переходу підприємств від реактивного до проактивного стратегічного управління (тобто управління орієнтованого на інноваційні бізнес-моделі, ресурсоефективність та створення доданої цінності для зацікавлених сторін). Також результати дослідження засвідчили, що недостатня розробленість прикладних інструментів імплементації цієї концепції в систему сталого розвитку залишається суттєвим обмеженням її реалізації. Практична цінність роботи полягає у можливості використання її результатів для формування інноваційних стратегій розвитку підприємств на засадах сталості та розроблення управлінських підходів до створення нових ринкових ніш з урахуванням екологічних та соціальних критеріїв. Перспективи подальших досліджень полягають у розробленні прикладних моделей інтеграції*

концепції «блакитного океану» у систему стратегічного управління сталим розвитком підприємств.

**Keywords:** *strategising; sustainable development; strategic management; market constraints; new spaces; demand; value innovation, real estate.*

**Ключові слова:** *стратегування; сталий розвиток; стратегічне управління; ринкові обмеження; нові простори; попит; ціннісні інновації, об'єкти нерухомості.*

**Problem statement.** At present, strategizing in new market niches is actively developing, driven by the continuous search of business entities for ways to move beyond competition. For example, companies operating in the field of information technology are increasingly implementing the process of developing, adopting, and executing managerial decisions regarding the advancement of innovative products based on artificial intelligence, thereby creating new markets instead of competing in already saturated segments [7].

Under such conditions, traditional models of competitive rivalry are increasingly proving insufficiently effective, as they are primarily focused on redistributing existing demand, which leads to intensified price competition, reduced profitability, and limited opportunities for long-term growth. Moreover, these approaches do not fully take into account the need to create innovative value and to form new consumer segments. Consequently, approaches oriented toward generating new market spaces (where competition is minimal or absent) are being used more and more frequently.

Among such approaches is the Blue Ocean concept, which involves creating new value for the consumer through a combination of innovation and efficiency, enabling enterprises to move beyond traditional industry boundaries [6]. The application of this concept in the context of sustainable development opens up additional opportunities for harmonizing the economic, environmental, and social objectives of organizations.

Therefore, the practical aspects of strategizing sustainable development based on the Blue Ocean concept require thorough scientific consideration, particularly in terms of adapting strategic analysis tools, identifying mechanisms for creating innovative value, and evaluating the effectiveness of implemented strategies. It is also important to take into account contemporary challenges such as digitalization, shifts in consumer priorities, and increasing demands for corporate environmental responsibility.

Thus, the study of the practical aspects of strategizing sustainable development based on the Blue Ocean concept is relevant and significant for the formation of effective strategic decisions aimed at ensuring the long-term competitiveness of enterprises.

*Actual scientific researches and issues analysis.* Fundamental principles of strategizing the sustainable development of enterprises have been addressed in the works of Batchenko L., Honchar L., Hul Ye. [1], Zvieriakov M. I., Kukharska N. O., Klevtsevych N. A., Sarah O. S. [4], and Dyshkantyuk O. V. [3]. In particular, the merit of these scholars lies in the formation of theoretical and methodological approaches to ensuring balanced enterprise development, which integrates economic efficiency, social responsibility, and environmental safety. Notably, these works substantiate:

- the need to integrate the principles of sustainable development into strategic enterprise management;
- approaches to developing long-term strategies that take into account the influence of the external environment;
- mechanisms for enhancing enterprise competitiveness based on resource conservation and innovation;
- the role of corporate social responsibility in achieving sustainable development;
- tools for assessing the effectiveness of implementing sustainable development strategies.

These studies also contributed to the systematization of principles and methods of strategizing that ensure the harmonization of the interests of enterprises, society, and the environment.

Concurrently, despite the thorough theoretical development of sustainable development principles, insufficient attention to the practical application of strategizing based on the Blue Ocean concept has led to a number of challenges. The main one among them is the limited availability of applied tools: enterprises lack clear methodologies for combining sustainable development principles with the innovative logic of creating new market niches.

**Research aim.** This paper's aim is to generalize the practical aspects of strategizing the sustainable development of enterprises based on the Blue Ocean concept.

**Main findings of the research.** An important aspect of this study is the distinction between the concepts of “strategy” and “strategizing,” since, as is evident from the works of O.S. Vyshnevskiy, their conflation is a widespread but methodologically incorrect practice [2, p. 23]. Strategy is traditionally viewed as the result of managerial activity—a generalized action plan or a model of enterprise behavior aimed at achieving defined long-term objectives.

In contrast, strategizing in contemporary scientific approaches is viewed as a more complex process. Thus, Batchenko L., Honchar L., and Hul Ye. [1] define it as a continuous process of long-term systemic cooperation of the entire business collective, using economic tools and incentives to achieve planned business objectives. In the works of Dyshkanyuk O.V. [3], strategizing is conceptualized as a multidimensional process that integrates cognitive-affective constructs, aesthetic-anthropological approaches, and interpretations of consumer experience. Furthermore, Zvieriakov M.I., Kukharska N.O., Klevtsevych N.A., and Sharah O.S. [4] define this category as a system encompassing forecasting, scenario building, design, goal setting, programming, planning, communicative foresight, modeling, analysis of situations and consequences of managerial decisions, strategy implementation, and controlling, as well as a system resource of anticipatory

management aimed at mobilizing internal reserves and creating conditions for the development of entrepreneurship. Summarizing the presented approaches, strategizing can be appropriately interpreted as a dynamic process of forming, substantiating, implementing, and adjusting strategic decisions, carried out under the influence of changes in the external and internal environment. Unlike the static nature of strategy, strategizing has a process-oriented character and involves continuous adaptation to new challenges, the generation of alternatives, and the search for innovative directions of development.

It should be noted that in the context of sustainable development, strategizing gains particular importance, as it implies the integration of economic, environmental, and social aspects into the process of managerial decision-making. Therefore, within the scope of this study, strategizing for sustainable development will be considered as a process of forming and implementing long-term strategic decisions aimed at ensuring the balanced development of an enterprise through the integration of economic, environmental, and social objectives, while taking into account the interests of stakeholders and the influence of the external environment. In essence, such strategizing enables an economic entity not merely to “maximize profit”, but to do so in a way that ensures that [2]:

- (i) the business remains viable in the long term;
- (ii) it does not harm the environment;
- (iii) it takes into account social aspects (employees, consumers, society).

The emphasis on strategising for sustainable development, rather than solely on strategy, in this study is driven by the fact that contemporary business conditions are characterised by high uncertainty, market turbulence, and rapidly changing consumer preferences. Under such conditions, the effectiveness of an enterprise is determined less by the existence of a formalised strategy than by its ability to continuously update and transform it.

The use of the Blue Ocean Strategy framework further strengthens the processual nature of strategising, as it requires a continuous search for new market

opportunities, a rethinking of value for consumers, and the transformation of business models [2; 6]. Its essence lies in the following:

(i) the enterprise does not compete for existing demand but creates new demand; for example, as implemented by Cirque du Soleil, which abandoned traditional elements of the circus industry (in particular, the use of animals and a focus exclusively on children) and formed a new market segment by combining circus arts with theatre, thereby creating a unique product for an adult, financially capable audience.

(ii) value for the consumer and cost reduction are achieved simultaneously (value innovation). As an example, in modular housing construction projects developers use standardized factory-produced modules that can be rapidly assembled on-site. This significantly reduces the costs of real estate development and project implementation timelines, while simultaneously increasing value for end users (through faster access to housing and predictable quality).

(iii) environmental and social aspects are embedded within the business model itself, rather than being added “afterwards.”

Thus, the use of the term “strategising” is more appropriate in the context of sustainable development, as it reflects not only the outcome but also the continuous process of forming strategic decisions, which is critically important in emerging market niches.

In this regard, the practical aspects of strategising sustainable development of enterprises based on the Blue Ocean Strategy concept can be appropriately viewed as a set of managerial actions and tools aimed at creating new market spaces while simultaneously integrating sustainable development principles into the enterprise’s business model (an aspect that is also partially addressed by O.S. Vyshnevskiy [2]).

Among such aspects, it is appropriate to distinguish (see Fig. 1):

(i) identification of potential “blue oceans”;

(ii) formation of value innovation;

(iii) integration of sustainable development principles into the enterprise’s business model;

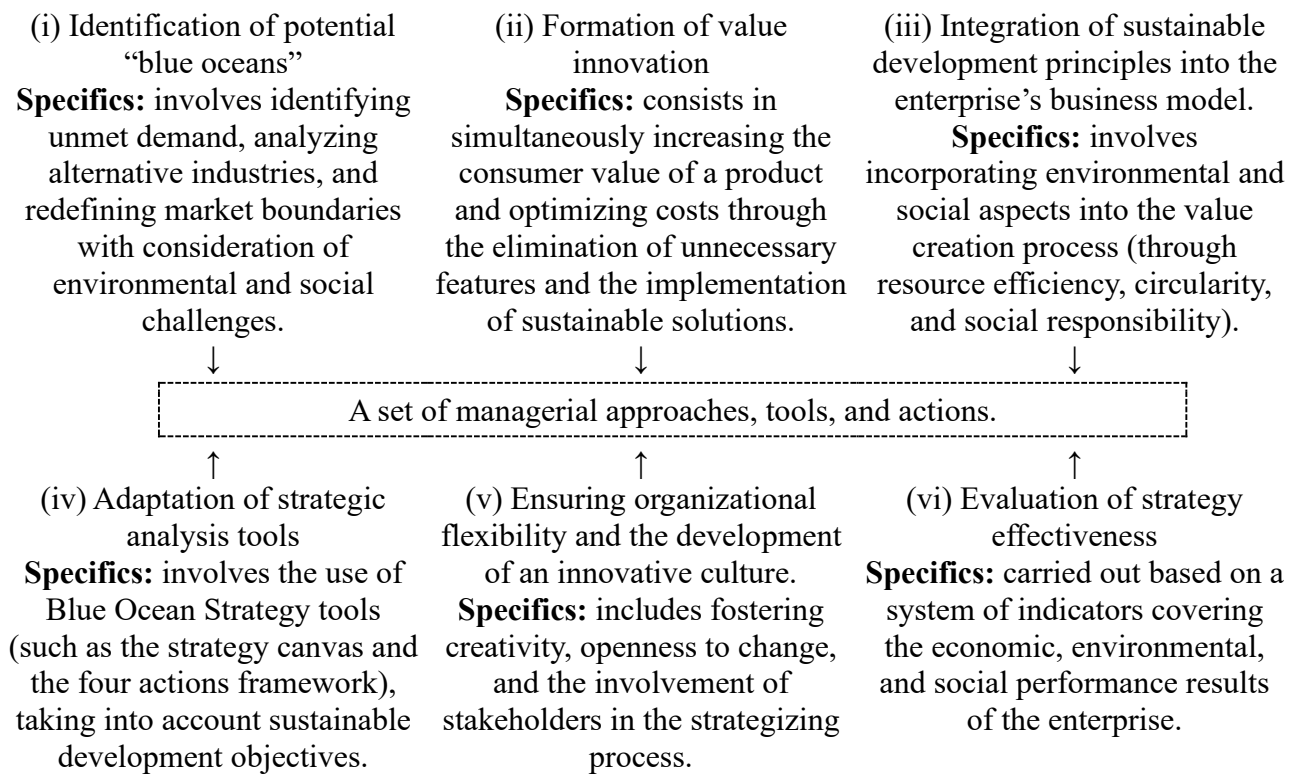
(iv) adaptation of strategic analysis tools;

(v) ensuring organizational flexibility and the development of an innovative culture; and (vi) evaluation of strategy effectiveness.

A crucial aspect of strategizing sustainable development is the identification of potential “blue oceans” (new or unexplored market spaces characterized by the absence or low level of competition and the creation of new demand through value innovation [6]). This process involves analyzing established industry boundaries, identifying unmet or even unrecognized consumer needs, and searching for new market segments in which the level of competition is minimal or absent. By this approach, enterprises essentially rethink the logic of market functioning, shifting from intense competition for existing demand to the creation of new demand.

*They ensure the creation of an uncontested market space.*

*Indeed, the enterprise does not compete directly with rivals but instead generates new demand through: innovative products/services; new business models; and entry into untapped market segments.*



*Ensures orientation toward “non-consumers”.*

*Indeed, these aspects enable the identification of groups that previously did not use the product.*

**Figure 1. Practical aspects of strategizing sustainable development based on the Blue Ocean Strategy concept**

Source: compiled based on [1; 4; 6].

In the field of sustainable development such identification additionally involves considering environmental and social challenges as sources of additional economic and innovation opportunities. For instance, the worsening problem of excessive plastic consumption has stimulated the emergence of a market for biodegradable packaging and reusable alternatives, where enterprises do not compete within the traditional packaging industry but instead create new value for environmentally conscious consumers. Similarly, the development of car-sharing services has enabled the formation of a new mobility segment focused on reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and decreasing the burden on urban infrastructure [5].

One more example is the transition of agricultural companies to organic production and short supply chains, which responds both to environmental requirements and to changing consumer preferences regarding product quality and transparency of origin. In such cases, a “blue ocean” emerges both as a new market space and as a result of integrating sustainable development principles into the enterprise’s business logic.

A key aspect of strategizing sustainable development in new market niches is the formation of value innovation (i.e., innovation that simultaneously increases the consumer value of a product for the customer, although not necessarily accompanied by a reduction in the enterprise’s costs [3; 6]). This approach goes beyond the traditional logic of trade-offs between quality and cost, aiming instead at their simultaneous achievement through a rethinking of the value proposition structure. In essence, the enterprise does not choose between “cheaper” or “better,” but transforms the very way a product or service is created so as to eliminate unnecessary costs while strengthening those characteristics that are important to consumers and aligned with sustainable development principles (environmental friendliness, resource efficiency, convenience, and accessibility [5]).

Practical implementation of this aspect involves revising the traditional characteristics of a product or service, eliminating redundant or low-value elements, and introducing innovative solutions oriented toward sustainability. Such solutions include, in particular [5–6]:

- improving energy efficiency in production;
- using environmentally safe materials;
- optimizing logistics chains to reduce the carbon footprint;
- integrating principles of social responsibility into the value creation process.

As a result, the enterprise not only enhances its competitiveness but also forms a new quality of market offering that meets contemporary sustainable development requirements. Such an effect can be observed in the field of digital services (for example, online banking), which reduces banks' operational costs while simultaneously providing customers with faster and more convenient access to financial services [8].

An important practical aspect of strategizing sustainable development is the adaptation of strategic analysis tools to the needs of an economic entity, in particular through the use of the strategy canvas, the four actions framework (eliminate–reduce–raise–create), and other Blue Ocean Strategy tools, which are selected with consideration of sustainable development objectives (see Table 1).

The essence of such adaptation lies in the fact that traditional strategic analysis tools are used not only to assess an enterprise's competitive position but also to identify opportunities for:

- simultaneously improving economic efficiency;
- reducing negative impacts on the environment and society.

The practical application of each of these tools, for example in manufacturing companies, may contribute to reducing the use of single-use packaging, transitioning to energy-efficient technologies, implementing digital services to decrease resource consumption, as well as creating new service-based business models.

In addition to the aspects identified above, an important element of strategizing sustainable development is ensuring organizational flexibility and fostering an innovative culture within new or unexplored market spaces. This involves: (i) the enterprise's ability to rapidly adapt to changes in the external environment; (ii) the capacity to support creative and non-standard managerial approaches; (iii) ensuring effective cross-functional interaction within the organization.

**Table 1. Specifics of adapting strategic analysis tools to the needs of an economic entity in strategizing sustainable development**

Strategic analysis tool	Specifics of adapting strategic analysis tools to the needs of an economic entity	Result of tool adaptation
Strategy Canvas	allows the visualization of which value-creation factors are redundant or environmentally/socially inefficient, and which, conversely, require strengthening from the perspective of sustainable development.	Blue Ocean Strategy tools are transformed into a mechanism for strategizing sustainable development, ensuring the integration of innovation, competitive advantage, and corporate responsibility.
Four Actions Framework (eliminate–reduce–raise–create)	enables a systematic reassessment of the business model structure: eliminating resource-intensive or outdated process elements, reducing costs and environmental impact, and enhancing key value attributes for consumers.	
Six Paths Framework	enables going beyond industry boundaries by analyzing alternative industries, strategic groups, buyer chains, and complementary products, which in the context of sustainable development allows the identification of new environmentally and socially oriented market opportunities.	
Value Curve Analysis	is used to compare existing competitive offerings and to develop a new value curve with an emphasis on reducing environmental impact and increasing the social relevance of the product.	
“Eliminate–Reduce–Raise–Create” model	an adapted ERRC logic that enables the integration of circular economy principles, waste minimization, and resource efficiency into the strategic planning process.	
Buyer Utility Map	allows for the assessment of the full cycle of the consumer experience and the identification of opportunities to reduce negative environmental impact at all stages of product or service use.	
Value innovation platform	is aimed at integrating economic efficiency, environmental responsibility, and social utility into a unified business model, thereby generating long-term competitive advantages.	

Source: compiled based on [1-2; 4; 6].

In real terms, organizational flexibility is manifested in an enterprise’s ability to promptly revise strategic priorities, change business models, and implement innovations in response to new market opportunities. Innovation culture, in turn, is based on encouraging employee initiative, tolerance toward experimentation and failure, and the systematic development of intrapreneurship.

Particular importance in this process is attached to the involvement of stakeholders in strategizing. This makes it possible to take into account the interests

of owners, management, employees, consumers, suppliers, and society. For example, consumer participation in the development of environmentally oriented solutions contributes to increasing the relevance of innovations and their alignment with sustainable development principles. Thus, organizational flexibility and an innovation culture are key prerequisites for effective strategizing of sustainable development based on the Blue Ocean Strategy concept [2; 6].

On top of that, our position aligns with that of Chan Kim and Renée Mauborgne [6] that an important aspect of strategizing sustainable development is also the evaluation of strategy effectiveness, which should be carried out not only on the basis of economic indicators but also with consideration of environmental and social outcomes, in line with the concept of sustainable development (see Table 2).

**Table 2. The role of sustainable development components in shaping a multidimensional approach to assessing enterprise strategy effectiveness**

Component of sustainable development	Specifics of forming a multidimensional evaluation system	Outcome of evaluating strategies' effectiveness
Environmental	may include indicators of CO <sub>2</sub> emissions, levels of energy and resource consumption, the volume of generated waste, and the degree of its reuse.	Allows assessing not only the financial performance of innovative strategies but also their contribution to creating new market value and reducing negative impacts on the environment and society.
Social	covers working conditions, employment levels, impact on local communities, and stakeholder satisfaction. And the economic dimension includes indicators such as profitability, revenue growth, cost efficiency, and overall financial stability of the enterprise.	
Economic	includes indicators of the enterprise's financial performance, in particular profitability levels, return on investment, revenue dynamics, resource utilization efficiency, as well as the ability of the business model to generate long-term added value.	

Source: compiled based on [5-6].

In essence, this implies a shift toward a multidimensional evaluation system in which strategy effectiveness is determined comprehensively—through a balance among economic feasibility, environmental responsibility, and social significance. To illustrate, implementing energy-efficient technologies may simultaneously reduce enterprise costs and environmental impact, thereby increasing the strategy's overall effectiveness over the long term..

Thus, the practical aspects of strategizing sustainable development based on the Blue Ocean Strategy concept lie in combining tools for creating new markets with principles of responsible and balanced business conduct, which ensures the formation of long-term competitive advantages for the enterprise, in particular:

- innovation-oriented advantages (through the creation of new market niches), resource efficiency (due to cost reduction and optimization of resource use);
- environmentally responsible advantages (through minimizing negative environmental impact);
- socially oriented advantages (through increasing stakeholder trust and strengthening social reputation).

**Conclusions.** The results demonstrate that strategizing sustainable development of enterprises in the context of the Blue Ocean Strategy opens new opportunities for forming long-term competitive advantages that are based on a combination of innovation, value-based market rethinking, and sustainable development principles.

Within the scope of the research conducted, approaches to strategizing for the sustainable development of enterprises based on the Blue Ocean Strategy have been improved. This made it possible to:

- demonstrate that, unlike traditional competitive approaches, strategizing enables enterprises to go beyond existing market constraints and create new demand spaces by integrating economic, environmental, and social objectives;
- Outline an approach to integrating value innovation into the sustainable development system, taking into account its economic, environmental, and social components.

The study has shown that strategizing sustainable development based on the “Blue Ocean” approach facilitates the transition of enterprises from reactive to proactive strategic management, oriented toward innovative business models, resource efficiency, and value creation for stakeholders. It was also revealed that the insufficient development of applied tools for implementing this concept within the sustainable development system remains a significant limitation.

The applied significance of the research lies in the possibility of using its results to form innovative enterprise development strategies based on sustainability and to develop managerial approaches for creating new market niches, considering environmental and social criteria.

Directions for future research involve the development of applied models for integrating the Blue Ocean Strategy concept into the system of strategic management of sustainable enterprise development.

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