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**FLEXIBILITY IN THE FUNCTIONING OF COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES
IN THE E-COMMERCE SECTOR**

Abstract

The unpredictable and changeable environment in which enterprises operate, forces their operation to be flexible, i.e. to react properly to the changes that occur. Organizations can be flexible in various activities and a greater or lesser rate of response to changes. In Poland and in the world the issue of flexibility of enterprises has been taken up by many researchers. However, there are few scientific studies in the literature on the subject of flexibility in the context of the functioning of commercial enterprises, especially enterprises from the rapidly growing e-commerce sector. The dissertation, based on a review of the literature and research of case studies, presents the conceptualization of the concept of flexibility and types of flexibility in relation to e-commerce enterprises. Both types of flexibility typical for commercial enterprises and specific only for the e-commerce sector were identified. Measures of various types of e-commerce flexibility, which were used in the questionnaire research, were also proposed. On the basis of quantitative research, the state of flexibility of trade enterprises from the e-commerce sector was determined and it was shown that the following are of the greatest importance for their operations: the flexibility of the assortment as well as the flexibility of prices and margins. The analysis of the questionnaire surveys also allowed to assess the scale of the impact of individual factors on various types of flexibility of enterprises operating in the e-commerce sector and to reveal the impact of the state of flexibility on the variables related to the market success of an e-commerce enterprise, and above all on the image in the Internet and the level of customer service. The result of the research is a model of the system of cause-and-effect relationships of the most important flexibility in an e-commerce enterprise, which explains the connections between the most important flexibility and their determinants, and between the most important flexibility and variables related to the company's market success. Based on this model and the extensive knowledge developed about the types and dependencies related to flexibility, the work also presents a managerial model of managing the flexibility of an e-commerce enterprise, which is used to shape the appropriate levels of flexibility of the enterprise. As a consequence, research provides many guidelines and tips for making e-commerce enterprises more flexible and managing their flexibility.