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Issue

Article



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ON THE IMPORTANCE OF USING HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE TO DEVELOP THE PRODUCTION OF COMPETITIVE AND IN-DEMAND PRODUCTS IN THE REGIONS OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Abstract: In this article, the authors rightly emphasize the historical component of quality, guiding manufacturers of sought-after and competitive products to the need for a high-quality product range policy to ensure financial stability and the production of products that will be preferred by consumers and ensure sustainable demand.

Key words: fashion, technical regulation, certification, standardization, product range, product range policy, financial status, profitability, profit, demand, preferences, relevance, competitiveness.

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Introduction

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The modern economy is increasingly being called "smart," "efficient," and innovative. This is a more understandable definition than "post-industrial," but whether it adequately characterizes its state is a

pressing question. Character manifests itself in development and determines economic policy planning. The recent crisis clearly demonstrates:

- first, that planning is not simply compatible with a market economy; it is necessary to prevent and mitigate the negative effects generated by unbridled economic freedom bordering on arbitrariness;

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- second, the ongoing crisis has exposed the limitations of the desire to present the existing economy as "smart." A smart economy must exist; it cannot be built with intelligence alone.

The central figure in commodity production is not finance, as many politicians, including Russian ones, believe. Money is merely the equivalent of a commodity and will always remain so. A commodity, however, creates labor, which is itself a commodity. Consequently, the movement of production is rooted in the collective expression of human activity, primarily the work of consciousness, its potential.

The mind is not equivalent to consciousness. The mind is a tool for constructing consciousness. "An intelligent consciousness is knowledgeable, cunning, flexible—but nothing more. The mind, like any force, needs a vector to direct the application of the mind, the construction of consciousness. Values play this role: professional, national, universal. Consciousness fuses them into a unique, personal expression. A "smart" economy is nothing if not grounded in values. The most important thing in a person—the decisive factor in social reproduction—is their morality. Not everyone is cut out to be top managers, chief designers, or VIPs in politics. Some must use their brains, others their hands. Trouble occurs when the "brains" and "hands" become sticky and things that shouldn't stick to them. Immorality undermines the foundations of professional culture, as professional activity transforms from a creative force into its opposite – destroying what has been created. A "smart" economy could become a terrifying reality if it continues to be immoral. We are not utopians or idealists; we understand the concrete, historical position of morality well. The issue now is not equality and fraternity, but exclusively conscience and responsibility. The economy can and must be, first and foremost, responsible and "conscientious," and only then "smart." As long as free competition is subordinated to calculations on how to most effectively deceive partners, consumers, competitors, and the state, it is built on corruption, lobbying, and manipulation of media outlets, all of which are natural to market development. Cyclical economic crises will be compounded by unnatural, systemic ones. The system-forming factor of the latter is the lack of conscience and irresponsibility of the largest manufacturers.

Main Part

The classic "greed ruined the sucker" narrative seems childish compared to what American and transnational companies have done. So what should the state, called upon to be the social guarantor of a democratic society and the protector of citizens' rights, have done? It was forced to "add fuel to the fire" by subsidizing businesses bankrupted by fraudulent practices to avoid economic and social collapse. True, European leaders simultaneously dispatched

"firefighters" to the "sources of the fire," making the continued operation of the offending companies contingent on moral principles, and introducing moral and financial regulations designed to sober up the tyrants who had lost all sense of proportion. It's symptomatic: it was France and Germany—the initiators of strict moral and financial monitoring—that first saw signs of economic recovery. England and the United States, more corrupt and less inclined to moral diktats, continue to reap the benefits of their magnates' freedom from conscience and social responsibility.

Russia, as expected, missed a real opportunity to use the crisis to boost national industry. First, they poured money into the banks, then took very vague steps to awaken the bankers' conscience and responsibility. It's as if they'd forgotten that a banker with and without liquidity are "two very different things." There was a chance, through national funds, to make banks act as a financial lever for boosting industrial production, science, and technical creativity in the country. They shouldn't have worshiped the banks—they should have educated them with the ruble (currency). They naively hoped that, having had their fill, the "wolves," instead of continuing their robberies, would serve their savior. As a result, the currency earned on the world market has flowed back, and they have to "start all over again."

How many more opportunities do we have to keep stepping on the same rake, standing in the same corner? There's certainly a margin of safety. The situation can be changed by combining intellect—we have plenty of it—and conscience, the deficit of which has grown surprisingly quickly during the years of democratic reforms. The reason for this state of affairs should be sought in economic chaos and the disproportionate growth of the administrative apparatus.

It's strange: the more officials there are, the less effective the administration—the dynamics are obvious, but the course remains the same.

Our lagging behind others is natural. In the historical "peloton," subjects have their place, they swap places—that's how it should be. For national development, it's a tragedy to fall behind the times, to lose our place in the "peloton." We were eighth in the G8, but we were in the G8. Time will tell what we'll be like in the G20 in 5-10 years. Economically, we're no longer eighth, but for now, we're still in the top ten. Most Russians still remember a time when the USSR held second place in the global economic rankings. History doesn't return, but that's no reason to forget it. Whatever the continuation of history, it is its continuation. By rejecting national traditions, one can end up with nothing. Not only is World War II being falsified, but the country's scientific, technological, and industrial achievements are being distorted and hushed up. Faith in national strength and the people's ability to regain lost ground is being undermined. The

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current situation is extremely difficult, yet it is no more critical than those turning points in Russian history that seemed inescapable: the devastation after the civil war, the loss of the most developed territories in the early years of the Great Patriotic War, compounded by the colossal loss of life among the working-age population and specialists. Back then, the finances available as seed capital today were unavailable. Therefore, the solution to the problem of creating a modern economy technically rests on the need to develop an effective management system and oversee the implementation of adopted programs. Programs have replaced plans. What has replaced responsibility for plan failure? The lack of an effective control system is the most serious flaw in current economic policy, which allows amateurs to manage while feeling like they're doing the work. Economic revival is impossible under the current conditions of professional irresponsibility. Only professionalism and the associated responsibility for the cause you serve can achieve the necessary transition to a new economic quality, building a lean and flexible economy based on the comprehensive development of science, stimulating technological progress, and improving professional training.

The 21st-century economy can be called by many names. The essence of the definition lies not in the name, but in the content of the concept. The diversification of names demonstrates the multifaceted nature of the modern economy. Methodologically, it is important to identify the leading element or elements within this multitude. Undoubtedly, economic quality is among the clear contenders.

The presence of quality in the characteristics of any phenomenon is invariant, as quality combines its most essential attributes. At the same time, it should be clearly understood that quality itself changes—it is historically specific. Accordingly, the concept of quality changes—and must change. From the first attempts by A. Fayol, G. Ford, and F. Taylor to control product quality, which were crowned with significant success, it became theoretically clear: the future of economic quality lies in activity. The determining factor for the economy will not so much be the quality of the product accepted for production, but the quality of the organization and management of its high-quality production. For artisans and small-scale production, the quality of the sample and the finished product are combined with technology, which generally remains unchanged. Here, quality depends entirely on mastery of the technology and adherence to the stated technology under conditions of limited production scale. Often, the foreman, technologist, manager, and marketer are one and the same. Henry Ford pioneered the production of complex products by separating operations and responsibilities, thereby defining a turning point in the fate of quality. From then on, the fate of quality was determined by

"introduced" factors—production organization, management, and control. The skill of the direct manufacturer came to the fore, rather than the ability to masterfully organize production, including its expanded reproduction—that is, procurement, marketing, and personnel management.

The diversification of activities revealed its special position in achieving high-quality results. World War II confirmed: personnel and management are everything! Since the 1950s, the search for quality management programs through operational quality has sharply intensified. While technical regulations for products and components gained relevance at the beginning of the 20th century, half a century later, the significance of technical regulations has been qualitatively clarified. Technical regulation of production organization and management has become the epicenter of interest, as confirmed by the modern international system of quality regulation.

The shift in the focus of economic policy aimed at ensuring the qualitative sustainability of production toward technical regulation of activities has not been without costs and dead ends, which was expected in principle. The activities integrated into production are neither homogeneous nor autonomous, so problem solving has become mired in methodological and theoretical shortcomings in professional thinking.

The concept of "key activities" was first substantiated by A. Feigenbaum. His book "Total Quality Management" was published in 1951.

ISO 9000 and ISO 14000 were developed based on Feigenbaum's proposals. Both series of international standards were expected to facilitate the transition from "conglomerate enterprises" to "system enterprises."

As industrial production developed, scientific and technological progress accelerated and exacerbated a contradiction between the pace of material change and the evolution of management thinking regarding the organization and harmonization of the production process. The latter clearly failed to keep pace with the former, hindering progress and increasing risks and costs. The rigidity of centralized planning only worsened the situation, explaining the stagnation of the 1970s and the decline of the 1980s. The organizational structure of the "conglomerate enterprise" was poorly suited to the transition to a systemic organization of enterprise work, primarily because it failed to foster initiative and creative potential. It is no coincidence that "shock workers," "innovators," and "rationalizers" in the USSR were primarily the work of party, Komsomol, and trade union organizations, which essentially stood outside the immediate production process and formed a superstructure above it. A simplified organizational structure for such an enterprise looks like this (Figure 1). A management structure in which the main production units are functionally autonomous and connected indirectly through a common manager is

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counter-systemic. When someone designs something, others must manufacture it, others must monitor quality, and still others must market the product, this creates disunity among production participants and hinders creative collaboration. Everyone is a nominal

participant in the process and has little understanding of who is doing what, and why. There is a lack of team spirit; everyone acts independently, at their own risk, often at the expense of their colleagues, thereby undermining them.

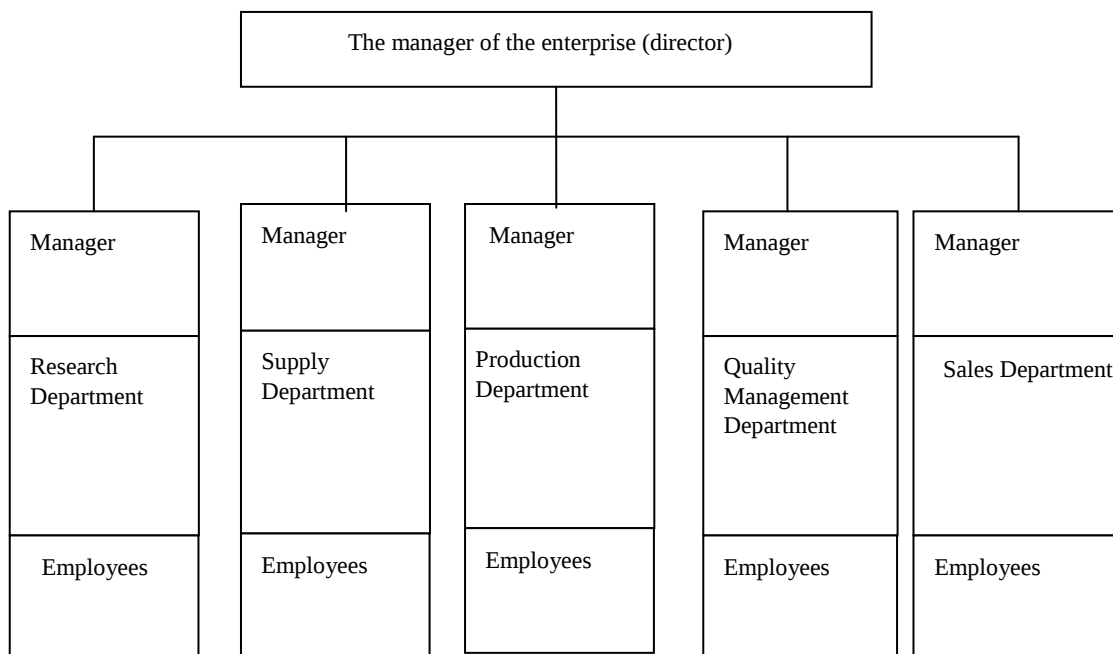


Figure 1. Organizational chart of the enterprise

The fundamental misconception of the managers of "conglomerate enterprises" is the belief that their "brains" should be enough to timely recognize and correct force majeure in the production process.

The management scheme of the "enterprise-conglomerate", in fact, coincides, despite the presence of a specialized department, with the quality management scheme, because the functions of the quality management department are reduced mainly to control activities. In 1924, W. Shewhart proposed to optimize this method of management using the principles of the theory of statistical variation, providing managers with a statistical control chart. The improvement of work was not slow to affect the results, but the matter was limited to partial changes for the better. Instead of applying it as a basis for management, the "philosophy of the theory of variation" has been relegated to the level of statistical tools used by technicians with limited and highly specialized areas of responsibility. Ignorance of the theory of industrial process behavior made management unable to correctly recognize situations that required or did not require action. For this reason, management became extremely vulnerable to three types of costly management mistakes, namely:

treating all variations of the output parameters of the process as a surprise in behavior and suppressing, in fact, their imaginary causes, which leads to destabilization of the process;

treating all variations of the output parameters of the process as natural manifestations and inaction to detect and suppress the causes that cause them, which leads to unstable behavior;

the assumption that process optimization and stabilization are technical decisions for which a particular department is fully responsible, and not the solution of an organizational problem that requires the full support of management and the efforts of several departments."

Restructuring of enterprise management on the principles of system organization provides, namely:

1. Interconnection of key activities, so that different departments of enterprises are coherently involved in the coordination of actions, for example, to revise the quality of products taking into account specific customer comments, improve staff training, promotions, etc.

2. Embedding other processes into key activities.

3. Integration of new core activities into existing ones.

A dangerous misconception in the construction of "enterprise-system" management consists in the interpretation of optimality as the sum of optimal reconstructions of individual departments. In this case, the enterprise is still considered as a conglomerate, a sum of departments that play their own special role. There is no view of activity as the

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integration of all its components. In European literature, the new term "quality revolution" is increasingly encountered. We will not speculate on how adequately it captures the dynamics of policy aimed at improving the quality of production, we will only note that the involvement of the concept of "revolution" in the study looks quite natural. A comparison of the modern practice of quality management with the not so distant past unequivocally indicates a radical restructuring of the understanding of quality technology. In the "quality revolution" there are four stages, namely:

1960s – the stage of self-determination of the quality of goods as the main factor of market competition;

1970s – a shift from the dominance of the quality of goods to the quality of technologies and production;

1980s – transition from quality of technology and production to quality

"quality systems" or "quality management systems";

1990s – ascent to the quality of education, the quality of intellectual resources.

The path of the Europeans to the Bologna agreements was long and difficult. He exposed many shortcomings and contradictions. In particular, namely:

1. the obviousness of the gap between the requirements of the society of industrialized countries to the education system and its capabilities;

2. discrepancy between the fact that the most significant discoveries and inventions are made mainly at the intersection of sciences; and education is based on the division of subjects;

3. insufficient mobility of the organization of retraining of specialists, its increasing lag behind the acceleration of changes in engineering, technology, science;

4. inertia in the development of new educational paradigms, programs, methods, lagging behind in the development of new educational literature.

Nevertheless, there is also serious progress – three levels of quality assurance of education have been identified and balanced, namely:

1. university;
2. national;
3. European.

The intellectualization of the economy, intensified by the transformation of science into a direct force of production, about which specialists of the 21st century are so fond of talking, have exposed the fundamental contradiction of human consciousness between intelligence and decency. Philosophers sought its solution in the rationality of homo sapiens, emphasizing the basic function of morality. Exaggerating the activity of consciousness due to the actualization of intellectual abilities, focusing on the creative powers of the mind, reducing

consciousness to thinking, the supporters of the "smart" economy do not see or do not want to see the dependence of the mind on morality, they oppose the role of the mind to the importance of moral values. We have already noted that the power of knowledge can have its own vector only on a private scale. In systemic terms, the power of knowledge is directed by the fundamental, not the private and corporate interests of the producer. Morality was formed as the first derivative of labor as a way of first survival, then of the development of mankind. The main criterion of social progress cannot be the efficiency of production – this is a purely economic parameter, Man is a social creature and the degree of his achievements is determined by the extent to which movement strengthens human relations – first of all, moral ones. Economic activity should be wise, when the mind is closed not on itself, but on the total, personal, national and universal human interests.

It is time to understand that it is dangerous to hold humanity by the masses of idiots, to build corporate happiness with someone else's "hands". Without a rigid moral regulation that subordinates all other aspects of human existence, there is no historical perspective. The mind is valid only as an operator clearing the way to the economy of the future. If someone likes to call the economy of the future smart, intelligent, then it is necessary to explain that by smart we mean a reasonable economy built not on trickery and private benefits. The current crisis has shown the vulnerability of democratic relations. The freedom of action that led to the crisis was opened by the amorphous nature of democratic postulates, not by the intelligent worship of the regulatory abilities of the market, not by the adequate perception of the actions of the "powers that be". Innovations in economic construction express the new thinking of mankind, fusing intellect and morality. The Chinese and Indians will be the first to build an innovative economy, that is, those peoples who have retained the authority of moral values in their minds, subordinating scientific and technological achievements to national interests. It is they who in the near future will "swindle" both Europeans and Americans, and, apparently, us too!

One hundred and fifty years ago, Karl Marx wrote: "In our time, everything seems to be fraught with its opposite. Even the pure light of science apparently cannot shine except against the gloomy background of ignorance. All our discoveries and all our progress seem to lead to the fact that material forces are endowed with intellectual life, and human life, deprived of its intellectual side, is reduced to the level of mere material force. This antagonism between modern industry and science on the one hand, and modern poverty and decay on the other, this antagonism between the productive forces and the social relations of our epoch, is a tangible, inevitable and indisputable fact. One may not share the communist conclusion of K. Marx, but one thing is

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indisputable – he is absolutely right in assessing the socio-economic situation in the middle of the 19th century. Perestroika was and remains necessary in the public consciousness. Money should not rise above morality, otherwise the main citadel – homo sapiens – his wisdom – will collapse. The legitimacy of K. Marx's conclusions is confirmed by the socio-economic situation that has developed today in the footwear industry of Russia. The liberalization of foreign economic relations played a fatal role in the catastrophe that occurred, namely:

on the one hand, there was a flood of better imported shoes, as a result of which Russian shoes were no longer in demand;

on the other hand, taking advantage of the right to set any prices, our manufacturers raised them to the level of prices for imported shoes, and the level of quality remained the same.

And for this reason, they also stopped buying it. The government would have intervened, to protect its producers (with cheap loans and customs barriers), but this was not done. The government did not help due to the erroneous beliefs: our light industry is not competitive, there is nothing to invest in it, it will be cheaper if it is brought from abroad. When we hear about the protection of Russian manufacturers of anything: machine tools and cars, clothing and footwear, food and furniture, etc., we always think about the shadow side of the coin from such innovations: the quality of goods. Because in the absence of imports, people will take anything.

But manufacturers have something else in mind: decriminalization of clothing and footwear entering the domestic market. The demand of the Russian light industry market with a total volume of 1250 billion rubles is formed by the following sources: 230 billion rubles (18.4%) - Russian legal manufacturers; 240 billion rubles (19.2%) – legal imports; 780 billion rubles (62.4%) are illegally imported and produced counterfeit goods, the same picture is typical of the shoe market.

Today, the population of Russia acquires about 600 million pairs of shoes, the domestic industry produced only 52 million pairs (in 2024 - 42 million pairs), 100 million pairs are officially imported. Where do the other four hundred million come from? They are imported in all kinds of illegal ways, i.e. there is a huge volume of shoes that would be in demand if domestic shoe enterprises were provided with financial support and legal protection. Why is there no end to those wishing to invest in the oil and gas industry? Why do car companies go to Russia? Why are there people who want to invest even in agriculture? And why, against the backdrop of all these "why don't investors go into the light industry?"

The general answer is that there are no favorable conditions for investors. Therefore, everything is fine with the creation of joint ventures in the oil and gas and automotive industries, because ministers and

governors monitor each enterprise there. And then officials will be afraid to take bribes and will not drive investors around the bureaucratic circle. And the opening of light industry enterprises, due to their small volumes, is entirely in the hands of officials. In addition, foreign companies are arguing: why create enterprises in Russia, take risks, when our goods are already well bought there? And Russian and Western companies go to China, where there are ideal conditions for investment; where there is cheap, disciplined labor; where there is a stable favorable tax system. Today, the equipment at the enterprises of the light industry is extremely worn out. The renewal rate in recent years has been 0.4 – 0.6% per year. At the same time, at foreign enterprises, technological equipment is replaced every 5-7 years, that is, 15-20% annually. How to compete here?

Funds are needed for the technical re-equipment of the industry. They can either be earned by the enterprises themselves, or provided in the form of loans, or come from foreign investors. The capabilities of the enterprises themselves are very limited. Loans from commercial banks are expensive, the government does not encourage concessional lending, foreign investors, as already mentioned, do not go to the industry.

Hence the answer to the question of what to do?

First, to provide enterprises with loans at minimal interest rates, or even better - without them (as to farms producing food, under the national project "Development of the agro-industrial complex").

Secondly, it is necessary to create such conditions for foreign companies to go into the light industry, bringing their design, production culture, management, etc., in addition to capital.

It should be noted that the last twenty years have shown that the enterprises of the light industry are very responsive to the slightest attention of the authorities, to changes in the conjuncture. Take, for example, 1991, known for the default. Imports became more expensive, and light industry immediately revived. There was growth for three years. Another example. Exceptionally low export duties on raw hides led to their mass export abroad. Leather and footwear factories found themselves without raw materials. In 2000, a protective duty was introduced on the export of leather up to 500 euros per ton (instead of 100 euros). As a result, the production of finished leather in Russia increased from 1.1 to 2.2 billion square decimeters. Instead of importing leather goods, their export began. The fact that the resuscitation of light industry is not only necessary, but also possible, is evidenced today by examples of the successful work of individual enterprises of the industry in the Southern Federal District and the North Caucasus Federal District, both old and newly created. Let's name at least a few. The Novorossiysk shoe factory "Breeze - Bosphorus", the enterprise was created "from scratch", gives 16 million pairs of shoes

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per year and all shoes are in demand. Rostov enterprise "Gloria Jeans". It is also new, it began with a cooperative. It produces products worth 7 billion rubles (up to 10% of all Russian garments and up to 30% of children's goods). His products go abroad, including in the United States. So it is enough for *Rodina* to lend a shoulder and its light industry, which is in such a difficult situation, will start working, especially in the Southern Federal District and the North Caucasus Federal District.

We are not even talking about the fact that the revival of the light industry would help solve the social problems of small towns in the Southern Federal District and the North Caucasus Federal District, in which more than 16 million people live today. At the same time, for a district center of 10-20 thousand people, a shoe factory for 300 employees is a large, city-forming enterprise, which not only gave money to the budget and produced goods necessary for the population, but also provided a decent life for many residents of a small town or district center. And now the factory was gone. It is unlikely that car factories or branches of defense plants will ever be built in these cities, but light industry plants are welcome. But so far, as far as we know, the problem in such a formulation is not even discussed by the government.

Previously, every enterprise of light industry, like any other, had mobilization reserves (equipment, tools, materials, etc.), which made it possible to switch to the production of products necessary for the army within a day, in the event of the outbreak of war. God forbid this happens - we will have nothing to dress and shoe our army, especially since the Southern Federal District and the North Caucasus Federal District are border districts with a difficult situation. This is another reason why it is necessary to take the light industry very seriously. All these fears have now been confirmed. A very acute situation has developed with the provision of children's shoes. Most Russian shoe enterprises continue to reduce the production of children's shoes due to the high rise in prices due to the abolition of subsidies from the federal budget, and some shoe factories, including those in the Southern and North Caucasian Federal Districts, have completely stopped production. In 2025, compared to 2024, the production of children's shoes decreased by 21%. In the consumer market of the Southern Federal District and the North Caucasus Federal District, goods for children of domestic manufacturers were actively displaced by foreign suppliers who can afford to transfer shoes for sale on the condition of payment after their actual sale. However, the flow of beautiful and fashionable children's shoes that poured into our markets from abroad. Most of them do not have certificates of conformity, not to mention hygienic certificates, which is a crime against children. Consumer demand acts as the main factor influencing the formation of the assortment, which, in turn, is aimed at maximizing and satisfying the demand of the

population. Consumer demand combines a whole group of indicators that will form their niche for domestic footwear, *taking into account age characteristics and labor activity, namely:*

- shoes for children;
- shoes for the elderly;
- leisure shoes;
- special-purpose footwear;
- office shoes.

for a socially vulnerable group of people, namely:

- shoes for the unemployed who receive social benefits;

- shoes for pensioners;
- shoes for people with chronic diseases.

Taking into account the characteristics of the regions:

- national footwear;
- exclusive shoes;
- elite shoes.

Thus, the implementation of the requirements of the main parameters that form consumer demand will make it possible to form the distinctive features that the new assortment of shoes will have to satisfy. The parameters that determine demand include, namely:

comparative competitive advantages;

the product must have pronounced features, or pronounced advantages in comparison with analogues, products, or services of competitors existing on the market;

social orientation; it is necessary that the product fits into the existing social conditions, so that the proposed product corresponds to the established lifestyle and value system of the consumer;

ability to satisfy the consumer;

The product must perform all functions to meet the key needs and requests of the buyer.

The following set of measures is proposed, namely:

- *creation* of regional programs for the development and maintenance of domestic shoe production in the districts;

- *taking* measures to reduce the import of shoes into the regions. These measures should include, first of all, the suppression of trade in shoes imported by smuggling and without permission to sell them in local markets;

- *assistance* in the employment of young specialists, university graduates at existing and newly created shoe enterprises;

- *assistance* to enterprises in the process of promoting domestic shoe brands in local markets. First of all, it is necessary to develop a competent marketing strategy for regional shoe enterprises;

- *creation* of a special program of crediting light industry enterprises in the regions, taking into account the specifics of production: the seasonal nature of the products sold and the specifics of the

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turnover of working capital of enterprises in the industry.

In our opinion, for the successful implementation of all these measures, it is necessary to be interested in both federal and regional branches of government in the organization and development of the shoe cluster, which will provoke a decrease in prices for components, energy costs and transport, providing the manufacturer with in-demand and competitive shoes due to the price niche. All this taken together will ensure a long life and stable positions not only in the domestic, but, most importantly, in foreign markets. All that is needed is the goodwill and interest of all participants in the implementation of the proposed activities. Such progress has been made, and now the firm will and desire of the parties concerned is required. And again, the state of quality of domestic goods is the main basic, the basis for the success of modern domestic enterprises. Such a conclusion has the right to life, because quality is the most ancient value of mankind. And it is in terms of the quality of Russian goods, services, and the quality of management that we lose in global competition. Have you seen complex products with the inscription "Made in Russia" anywhere in the world? We didn't see it either. For a long time, they hoped for the worldwide ISO system. Alas, in Russian conditions, it has slipped into crisis. Sorry, dear colleagues from the world of quality certification, but it's time to publicly list what it has turned into and what almost everyone recognizes among themselves:

- an immense number of documents in which there is no strength to navigate;
- the meaninglessness of many of them (for example, ISO requires job descriptions, and everyone rushes on the go to sketch something, and then forgets them without a trace);
- An entrepreneur once said, "We are ISO certified." And then he added: "Don't think about it, we were certified by such and such a Norwegian company." Can you guess what I'm talking about? Yes, the sale of certificates. Not everyone, of course, sells, but reputation is never accidental.

So now, you will say, why not deal with quality? No, you just need to understand that the light did not converge on ISO.

Let's agree on the terms. What is quality? Compliance with standards, most will answer. Of course, where standards are possible, this is the case. Although standards have tolerances. And the difference between the upper and lower divisions in these tolerances can be significant. And there are also the limits of standardization. Let's say, contact with a client. Everyone knows that the quality of such contact is critically important for the success of a business, when prices, assortment, and deadlines are equalized under the pressure of competition. A certain set of friendly words, dress code, etc., can be considered a standard, although we know well what they cover.

business processes is also gradually approaching absurdity. And somewhere it has already achieved it: in various companies we already find a harsh description of the interview not only for hiring, but even a standard for a meeting and for negotiations.

Now another approach appears: quality is compliance with the needs of the client, the user. Whoever buys evaluates. You just need to understand more precisely what exactly he appreciates. If you hit it, here it is, the required quality, i.e. the degree of satisfaction of the consumer with the properties of the product. But this approach is also limited and stretches from the last century. At that time, the formula was considered indisputable: the buyer is always right. In our time, another imperative is much truer: the buyer does not know our capabilities.

What are we leading to? The understanding of quality as conformity (to a standard, a need) is becoming obsolete. Today, it is much more capacious to understand it as a comparison with another product or with the same but the same one. Comparison gives the superiority of a product over a product, a service over a service, a specialist over a specialist, an organization over an organization. Comparison with a standard or a need does not imply superiority. minimum. And who is the minimum enough? A few. On the other hand, superiority is of interest to everyone, because the law of increasing needs is inexorable. In practice, this means switching the quality assessment system to levels. For example, namely:

A. Sufficient quality, below which the defect goes, i.e. the minimum permissible, the use of which will not cause damage.

B. Reference quality – according to the principle of compliance with the standard, i.e. the best of the available. A standard can come from a standard, but it can be any sample: from what we have in our company, from competitors or at least somewhere in the form known to us.

C. Avant-garde quality is something that has been achieved for the first time, surpasses the standards, but can count on effective demand and profitability immediately or in the future.

This is the vertical of quality. It may allow for more degrees. And one more thing:

It's time to abandon the idea that any quality can be measured. Everything can be evaluated, but few of what is important to us can be measured.

Conclusion

In the new economic conditions, only such production is progressive, which actively and dynamically responds to emerging problems. The principle "to produce only what is needed, when necessary, and as much as necessary" requires the adaptation of shoe enterprises to the conditions of production in small batches with frequent changes in the range of footwear, i.e. to the conditions of a large

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assortment of small-scale production. The efficiency of the shoe enterprise, and in many respects the ability to survive in competition, depend on the ability to readjust to the production of shoes in a short time and at minimal cost in accordance with fluctuations in demand. The development and implementation of flexible production systems opens up great opportunities for this. Technological and organizational flexibility of production systems determines the variable potential of enterprises, their ability to quickly and adequately respond to changes in market conditions and acts as a mechanism for optimizing the structure of the technological system in order to reduce the cost of footwear. Thus, the development of flexible technological processes for the production of leather goods ensures high

efficiency with a large assortment of footwear production and will provoke a sharp increase in demand for the products of footwear enterprises of the Southern Federal District and the North Caucasus Federal District. The same problems are typical for other branches of light industry. The sores are common, and their treatment may have some slight differences, but the consciousness and desire to get them out of this swamp is possible only if "Rodina" lends a shoulder and the light industry starts working successfully again, because the basic values in society are still preserved, namely:

- professional;
- national;
- universal human.

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