Mapping the Process of Digital Transformation in Marketing: The Evolution of Theoretical Thought and Practice

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Abstract: Though this process is not uniform or predefined, one can (or at least aim to) map its main stages and other objective characteristics. The methodology of this study was a nonquantitative content analysis of scientific papers and other information resources in the field of theory and practice of marketing by domestic and foreign authors for the period from 1971 to 2020. The authors identified four stages of the digital transformation of theoretical thought and practice in marketing and proposed a classification (in six groups) of approaches, technologies, and tools that, on the one hand, implement the digital transformation of marketing and, on the other, are themselves its results. The paper aims to review the real processes of digital transformation occurring and observed in the sphere of marketing. By analyzing scientific literature and business sources and cases on the topic, the authors developed an approach to the systematization and structuring of digital marketing transformation processes that might help researchers and practitioners

build a primary mental map to cope with some uncertainty and ambiguity in the digitalization of marketing.