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THE PARTICULARS OF THE ACCOUNTING FOR ONLINE PAYMENT OF GOODS

Assoc. Prof. PhD, Iuliana ȚUGULSCHI

Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova

tugulschi.i@ase.md

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8544-7327>

Assoc. Prof. PhD, Rodica CUȘMĂUNȘĂ

Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova

cusmaunsa.rodica.georghe@ase.md

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0444-9799>

Assoc. Prof. PhD, Natalia CURAGĂU

Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova

curagau.natalia.zaharia@ase.md

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1953-0330>

***Abstract.** Actually, commercial entities apply in electronic/online commerce a diversity of forms of delivery of goods and ways of payment by buyers. As a rule, the sale of goods online requires payment in cash directly at the commercial entity's headquarters or through couriers such as cash on delivery. In the context of the aforementioned, in practice there are uncertainties regarding the conduct of transactions for the online sale of goods. In this article are examined the problematic accounting aspects of online goods deliveries with payment through different methods provided by the legislation in force.*

***Key words:** e-commerce/online, cash payment, courier, postal courier, cash on delivery, tax invoice.*

JEL Classification: M41

Introduction

Nowadays, commercial entities apply a diversity of forms of delivering goods and ways of payment in e-commerce. As a rule, the act of selling goods online requires the payment in cash directly at the commercial entity's headquarters or through couriers such as cash on delivery.

Therefore, in practice there can appear uncertainties regarding the conduct of transactions for the online sale of goods, among which the following can be mentioned:

- how should the sale of goods be documented in electronic commerce?
- who must issue the tax receipt in case of goods delivery by courier: the seller or the courier who transports the goods to the buyer?
- what is the accounting treatment of goods delivery operations in electronic commerce?

In this article, the accounting aspects of online goods deliveries with payment through different methods provided by the legislation in force are examined.

The purpose of this article is to research and examine the accounting and fiscal aspects of operations regarding online sale of goods depending on the different forms of payment applied by buyers, and the objective lies in the investigation and elucidation of the issues listed above. In this context, the provisions of the national accounting regulations were studied, as well as the works, researches and opinions of contemporary economists and scientists in order to make conclusions and come up with recommendations regarding the issues addressed.

Applied methods

The research method emerges from the analysis of the theoretical and practical material regarding the particularities of the accounting of online payment methods for goods. The basis of the theoretical foundation was the analysis, synthesis, deduction and the inductive method used for a clear and representative interpretation of the studied topic. The importance of this article's research lies in achieving the nominated goal and objective, by examining the provisions of national and international accounting regulations, as well as the works, researches and opinions of local and foreign authors, scientists and researchers, in order to solve the problem in question.

Results obtained and discussion

The rapid development of technologies offers various payment methods for orders placed by buyers in online stores. Among these: payments with full payment in cash, by bank card, with the application of the refund when the goods are delivered by post, etc. All these payment methods present certain particularities in terms of the way of documentation and reflection in accounting.

In the context of the sale of goods via the Internet or online, the most applied method of payment is in cash. In such cases, payment of the value of the goods can be made in cash directly at the online store or through the courier.

In case of payment of the goods in cash, operations related to the online sale of goods are reflected in the accounting in the manner provided for cash sales in offline stores.

Cash settlements with consumers are carried out with the application of checkout and control equipment (ECC), according to the provisions of Government Decision no. 141 of February 27, 2019 "On the application of checkout and control equipment when making settlements". According to it, checkout and control equipment are in these case cash register and control machines with fiscal memory, other IT systems, with or without electronic devices (such as payment terminal, cash-in terminal, currency exchange machine, as well as others that have a dedicated and identifiable application program), with cash register and control machine functions intended for the registration of cash transactions (in cash and/or by other payment instrument), storage, printing, encryption and delivering to the Fiscal Service server of the State the managed financial information, which ensures the protection of work algorithms and recorded data from unauthorized modification.

When making monetary settlements in cash and/or by other means of payment for economic operations with payers, taxpayers are obliged to use the cash register and control equipment, issuing to the payers the cash receipts/tax documents issued by it, or to transmit in electronic form to the phone number or e-mail address indicated, in the case of presentation until the time of payment by the payer of the data regarding the phone number or e-mail address. This obligation extends to all structural units (office, shop, section, warehouse, commercial unit, automatic sales machine (called according to international customs vending machine), cash-in terminal, currency exchange machine, service provision unit, including transport-taxi etc.).

Cash register and control equipment are installed in each of the designated places (workplace of the cashier, cashier-operator, seller, service provider, etc.) for receiving and temporarily keeping money. If the tax-payer accepts, in the established manner, payment cards as a non-cash payment instrument or other payment method in the framework of monetary settlements, these settlements are also carried out by means of cash register and control equipment.

Thus, when carrying out the mentioned commercial transaction, the seller issues the receipt, which must correspond to the actual amount paid, and then hands it to the consumer. At the end of the day, the following are printed: the daily closing report (pasted in the ECC register), which is a record document of the daily management and contains the summary of fiscal data that is entered in the fiscal memory when it is printed, as well as the control strip - a confirmatory document containing a copy of the fiscal data printed on the receipts given to the consumers. So, the buyer is issued a receipt confirming that the goods have been paid for in cash.

It should be noted that the ECC voucher must be issued at the moment the courier receives the money from the customer, meaning the moment of purchase must match the real time. Thus, the issuance of cash vouchers to customers implies that the current calendar date and the time with a maximum deviation of 15 minutes from the real time are printed on the documents (with the exception of making the deviation by one hour during the transition period from summer/winter time to winter/summer, which will not exceed November 20/April 20 of the current year).

At present, it is increasingly common for the buyer to pay for goods using other payment instruments, i.e. payment using a credit card. Within this payment method, for servicing POS terminals, banks charge commissions that differ according to the specifics of the card used, the type of transaction, etc.

Amounts collected daily with payment by credit cards (terminal) are recorded in the register of the cashier-operator. Later, these amounts are contrasted with those received on the entity's current account (minus the bank commission, depending the case).

***Example 1.** A retail entity owns an online store through which cosmetic products are sold. The buyer ordered a set of cosmetic products worth 1,800 lei, including VAT (Value Added Tax). The accounting value of the goods is 950 lei, the related commercial allowance – 550 lei. The buyer chose to pay for the goods in cash upon receipt of the goods. The courier is an employee of the commercial entity.*

In accounting, the following accounting formulas are drawn up:

Table 1. Accounting formulas related to the sales of goods with cash payment

No.	The content of the operation	The amount, lei	Correspondent accounts	
			debit	credit
1.	Reflecting the accounting value of cosmetic products handed over to the courier	950,00	217	217
2.	Collection of cash from the buyer by the courier of the trading entity	1800,00	241	221 or 832
3.	Registration of income from the sale of cosmetic products (without VAT)	1 500,00	832 or 221	611
4.	Reflecting the VAT amount from the sales value of the goods sold to the buyer (1,500 lei × 20%)	300,00	832 or 221	534
5.	Settlement of the amount of VAT included in the sales price of the cosmetic products sold	300,00	837	217
6.	Settlement of the commercial addition related to the cosmetic products sold	550,00	831	217
7.	Settlement of the accounting value of the goods sold	950,00	711	217

The buyer can pay the value of the goods by applying the bank card via the Internet. In this case, the trade entity/shop concludes a contract with the bank where it is served to open a special current account in order to accumulate financial resources from the credit cards of the buyers. Subsequently, the accumulated amounts are transferred to the current account of the trading entity. At the same time, the bank sends the entity electronically a report on the amounts withdrawn from the buyers' cards and the bank commissions withheld on the day of each transaction. Based on the report, which serves as payment confirmation, the online store delivers goods to the customers.

Online payment by credit card at the address of the online store is usually carried out according to the following algorithm: the buyer selects the requested goods from the store's website and adds it to the "basket", then choosing the option "Pay" or "Place an order", he must select the payment method - "Credit card" and then enter the information requested by the system.

As a rule, money transfers from the buyers' credit cards are received in the company's current account minus the retained fees (such as monthly fee that is usually retained at the beginning of each month, the bank fee averaging between 2.0% and 4% which depends on the bank that issued the card). The bank also retains an insurance deposit of around 5% - 10% representing the amount that is retained by the bank and credited to a special insurance account for a period of up to half a year, later being returned to the company's current account. The bank independently determines possible risks based on the frequency of customer returns and determines the percentage of the guarantee deposit for each online store individually.

Example 2. A retail business owns an online store selling food and non-food products. A buyer ordered household goods online on 29.09.202N worth 3,850 lei, including VAT. The

accounting value of the goods is 2,420 lei, the related commercial allowance – 788.33 lei. The buyer paid for the goods by credit card, and on 02.10.202N the amount was registered in the current account of the commercial entity.

Bank commissions are 2% of the amount collected from the buyer, and the bank commission for payment authorization – 3.50 lei. The goods were delivered to the buyer on June 2. The security deposit is 5% and is kept for four months.

In accounting, the following accounting formulas are drawn up:

Table 2. Accounting formulas related to online sales of goods with payment via bank cards

No	The content of the operation	The amount, lei	Correspondent account	
			debit	credit
1.	Collection on 29.09.202N of the cash from the buyer's card to the special bank account of the commercial entity	3850,00	245	523
2.	Transfer of the guarantee deposit to a special bank account (3850 lei x 5%)	192,50	244	245
3.	Calculation of the VAT amount from the advance received from the buyer	641,67	225	534
4.	Cashing in to the store's checking account minus the security deposit	3657,50	242	245
5.	Reflecting the payment authorization fee by the financial institution	3,50	713	242
6.	Reflecting the accounting value of household goods delivered to the courier on 02.10.202N	2420,00	217	217
3.	Registration of income from the sale of household goods (without VAT)	3208,33	832 or 221	611
4.	Reflecting the amount of VAT from the sales value of the goods sold to the buyer	641,67	832 or 221	534
5.	Extinguishment of the buyer's claim from the account of the advance granted in advance	3850,00	523	832 or 221
6.	Cancellation of the VAT amount from the advance received from the buyer	(641,67)	225	534
7.	Settlement of the amount of VAT included in the sale price of the household goods sold	641,67	837	217
8.	Settlement of the commercial allowance related to the goods sold	788,33	831	217
9.	Settlement of the accounting value of the goods sold	2420,00	711	217

Another way of paying for goods in online stores is payment through postal couriers. In such transactions, the notion of refund applies.

The notion of "cash on delivery" is traditionally associated with sending/deliveries through postal service providers/payment companies, which is the status of ÎS "Poșta Moldovei". Thus, the cash on delivery service is a postal service whose particularity consists in the payment by the recipient to the sender, through the postal network, the value of the good that is the object of the

postal shipment. In other words, the given service involves the collection of money from the recipient (buyer) by the postal courier, at the time of delivery of the goods, and their subsequent remittance to the seller.

If the goods are delivered by postal courier, the cash on delivery service is included in the category of optional additional services. At the same time, cash on delivery submissions must clearly bear the heading "Reimbursement" followed by the amount of the refund. Although the notion in question is mainly applied by postal operators, it is also used by third-party legal entities that provide goods transportation services with the collection of payment from the buyer.

The notion of "reimbursement" is provided for in art. 1434 para. (2) lit. c) from the CC which stipulates the following indications that a waybill must contain:

- a) prohibition of transshipment;
- b) the expenses that the sender takes upon himself;
- c) the total of the reimbursement amounts to be collected upon release of the good;
- d) the declared value of the asset and the amount representing the special interest upon release;
- e) the sender's instructions to the carrier regarding the insurance of the good;
- f) the agreed term in which the transport must be carried out;
- g) list of documents handed over to the carrier.

It should be noted that when paying cash on delivery until the buyer pays for the goods, ownership of the goods remains with the seller. The money that the buyer pays at the post office cashier upon receipt of the goods is released as payment to the seller of the goods. For cash on delivery services, the buyer is usually charged a postage fee.

After the buyer pays for the ordered goods by mail, the money for the goods is recorded in the seller's bank account. At the same time, sales revenue is recognized at the commercial entity on the date of transfer of ownership of the goods, and the confirmation is the notification received electronically regarding their delivery. Therefore, in order to send goods by mail and receive payment for goods by cash on delivery, the seller company must conclude an agreement for the provision of postal services and register in a personal account on the website of the postal entity.

In these transactions, the online store receives a request for the goods, and the buyer selects cash on delivery. The online store transfers the goods to the postal courier on the basis of the internal goods transmission document, in which the list and price of the goods are indicated.

At the time of payment by the buyer for the goods, the representative of the postal service issues the ECC check, which separately indicates the cost of the goods and the cost of postal services if, according to the terms of delivery, postal services are paid by the buyer. The postal entity transfers to the seller's bank account the amounts received from the buyers for the goods.

If the goods are delivered at the expense of the seller, the postal organization provides the seller with a tax invoice and a service provision act, based on which the payment of postal services is made. The exception being the state enterprise "Poșta Moldovei" for which according to art. 117 paragraph (3) of the Fiscal Code, it is not necessary to issue a tax invoice for postal services.

In the accounting, the goods delivered by means of the carrier/postal courier that executes the delivery orders, must be reflected separately. For this purpose, for example, the analytical account 21711 "Goods sent to the carrier/courier" can be opened at the sub-account 2171 "Goods

at the warehouse". This is also important from the point of view of control over the location of the goods, when carrying out the inventory, etc.

With reference to the issuance of the tax invoice in the case of retail trade and the provision of services in specially arranged places, as well as in electronic commerce, we report that they are regulated by art. 117 para. (3) from Fiscal Code no. 1163 – XIII of 24.04.1997 of the Republic of Moldova. According to him, for the retail sale and the provision of services in specially arranged places and in the framework of electronic commerce, with payment in cash and/or through non-cash payment instruments, the issuance of the tax invoice is not mandatory (except in cases when it is requested by buyer, but not later than the last day of the month in which the delivery took place), if the following conditions are met:

a) the taxable subject keeps track of the amount received and paid in cash and/or by means of non-cash payment instruments at each commercial and service point with the use of checkout and control equipment, through the services of the banks, of the State Enterprise "Post Moldova", through other payment service providers. Registration through the checkout and control equipment is performed at the time of receiving the amount in cash and/or paying the amount with a non-cash payment instrument, except for amounts paid with a non-cash payment instrument in electronic commerce. At the end of each working day, the data of the daily closing report of the cash and control equipment is entered in the cash and control equipment register;

b) at the end of each working day, the total amount of VAT is entered in the record documentation. on the deliveries made, and the data from the tax invoices that were paid in cash and/or by means of non-cash payment instruments are entered in the record document of the purchased material values.

In the context of the aforementioned, in electronic commerce, when selling goods to individuals, the issuance of the tax invoice is not mandatory (it is issued if requested by the buyer), provided that the provisions stipulated in letter a) and b) from para. (3). Thus, if the tax invoice was not requested by the buyer, when delivering the goods to a natural person, the seller is entitled to use and issue primary documents developed independently, approved by the management of the entity in compliance with the provisions of art. 11 paragraph (7) and (8) of the Accounting and Financial Reporting Law no. 287/2017.

In the situation where the delivery of the goods is carried out by means of the courier, we consider that some specific internal documents must be completed. Postal couriers, for example, at ÎS "Poșta Moldovei" for cash-on-delivery deliveries fill out the TFP 3 cash-on-delivery mandate form, and other postal operators apply documents accepted in international practice as a document accompanying the delivery, such as the postal invoice express, which is an accompanying document for express postal items subject to postal services. The postal operator presents the form of this document for completion to the supplier of the goods, as a rule, offline or online through the personal cabinet opened in electronic form in favor of the commercial entity.

Thus, upon receipt of the goods, the buyer applies the signature in the document accompanying the goods:

a) on the tax invoice issued by the seller (if it was requested by the buyer) or on the primary document prepared independently by the seller. A copy of this document is given to the buyer together with the goods;

b) in the case of sending the goods through the transport entity - on the waybill, in addition to the document specified in letter a);

c) in the case of sending the goods by courier - in specific documents additionally applied or on the mobile phone screen if it is equipped with the application that allows confirmation of the receipt of the goods, in addition to the document specified in letter a).

Conclusions. As a result of the conducted research, the following conclusions can be drawn. According to art. 108 para. (2) of the Fiscal Code of the Republic of Moldova, for goods the date of delivery is considered the date of delivery (transmission) of the goods to the buyer (beneficiary) or, if the goods are transported, the date on which the transportation begins, with the exception of export goods for which the date of delivery is considered the date their removal from the territory of the Republic of Moldova. Thus, if VAT(Value Added Tax) is applied to the online delivery of goods and the delivery is carried out by the carrier, the VAT obligation arises on the date on which the transport of the goods begins indicated in the accompanying documents. If the carrier is a postal operator, in accordance with art. 103 para. (13) of the Fiscal Code, postal services are exempt from VAT without the right of deduction.

From the above it follows that, based on the tax invoice (if requested by the buyer) or the internal document drawn up by the entity, the sales revenue related to online deliveries will be recognized in the seller's accounting. At the same time, the information from the report presented by the carrier/courier serves as an additional confirmation that the deliveries were made within the terms stipulated in the contract.

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