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FORMATION AND APPLICATION OF COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES THROUGH SOCIAL NETWORKS: LEGAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL ASPECTS

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ABSTRACT

The rapid development of global networks around the world causes the formation of new interaction modes between its participants. The interconnection between representatives of business structures and consumers of their goods and services through social networks is one of the areas that have been highlighted over the past two decades. Consequently, the need arises for a structured construction of the procedure for their interaction through the formation and implementation of communication strategy. Thus, the purpose of this academic paper is to determine the features of the formation and application of a communication strategy through social media, with the allocation of legal and organizational aspects. To conduct the research, we have used the method of comparison, graphical method, as well as the method of analysis and synthesis. Achieving this goal was ensured by determining the current level of Internet use for access to social networks in the countries of the world, the dynamic changes of social media users' quantity with a forecast for the coming years, along with the formation of social networks' rating by the number of active users. In addition, we have highlighted the features of the social network's communicative environment. Following the defined line of the research, we have analyzed the formation and application stages of communication strategy by companies, highlighting the specific features of each of the stages. At the same time, we have found that the process of communication through social networks encounters some legal aspects, the neglect of which can provoke significant negative consequences. Such legal aspects include: disclosure of sensitive information, illegal use of trademarks and copyrights, the capacity to express neglect, as well as ambiguity of information interpretation due to the small size of social media publications. In addition, specific measures have been proposed by us in this research article to minimize legal risks, which are common, however acquire specific features, depending on the scope and area of their application.

Keywords: Internet, Social networks, Strategy, communications, Stages of creating a communication strategy, Legal aspects, Measures to minimize legal risks

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1. INTRODUCTION

The emergence of the Internet network, as well as the rapid spread of the level of its use, has significantly changed the development of the communication environment, giving the opportunity to form connections between individuals in real space. Every year, the level of interaction between society's members in the online environment is increasing. The process of global informatization is taking place, as a basis for strengthening the interconnection between all members of modern society, as well as involving them in the active information exchange processes, along with the acquisition of large-scale process of creating information. All this ultimately affects the growth of social activity between the participants of the information space, which is embodied in the realization of opportunities for self-expression, social experience exchange, as well as for activities aimed at self-improvement and the society's progressive development. Social networks are one of the key elements in this process; they are the most common basis for cross-border and transcontinental communication of people.

Currently, tens of thousands of social networks have been created and are functioning; they are characterized by the communication, professional, graphic, blogging nature of information presentation. These social networks' users provoke changes at all levels of the Internet network: new genres and directions of Internet communication are being formed, practical principles of communication are being changed, etc. Therefore, it is extremely important to study the various strategies of Internet communications in general, as well as in the context of determining the communication strategies used by users of social networks through the prism of studying their legal and organizational aspects.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

An analysis of the issues outlined in a scientific research makes it possible to draw conclusions that the subject matter of communication strategy formation through social networks is being substantially investigated. Accordingly, more and more authors have been investigating the peculiarities of communication through the implementation of various strategies, especially in recent years, taking into consideration the coverage pace of an increasing number of social networks' users.

The study [1] is the recognition example of the growing role of the Internet network, as well as social networks; in his investigation the author notes that the Internet in its current form is a source of communication and entertainment, however, the level of its commercial use is growing every year. Therefore, as far back as 2002, the author in [1] believed that the Internet would soon become an important sales channel for most successful enterprises. Social networks will be one of the Internet directions, through which the actual distribution will be carried out [1]. We can track now the confirmation of forecasts, made by [1].

A while later, in 2009, [2], highlighted the role of such a social network as Twitter in the implementation of communications of business structures and users, emphasizing that this social network makes it possible to share information in seconds. Business representatives can distribute hyperlinks to Internet resources, talk about their goods or service. At the same time, the formation of interesting messages will provoke an increase in subscribers' quantity, which in turn will lead to an increase in the number of interested parties in the receipt of certain goods and services [2].

Authors in [3] noted, that the significant development of the Internet has led to the fact that most consumers around the world buy goods online. In particular, this situation is caused by the development and growth of electronic payment systems' reliability [3]. However, the practice of purchasing through the companies' websites is already oversaturated with consumers; that is why activities on social networks are becoming so popular.

Author in [4] investigating the communication directions through social networks, has noted that if this or that business representative plans to use this platform for his work, he should have an understanding of how social media fits into the company's communication strategies. Herewith, strategic communications in the framework of corporate communication strategy are determined by the overall goals of the enterprise. This is expressed in the fact that depending on the goals pursued by the enterprise from the social network using, the relevant profile manager will develop specific communication strategies. Such goals, for example, may include: introducing of the brand to various groups of people, increasing sales, launching process, etc. [4].

Along with that in [5] was noted that: "The strategy of communication through a social network is the result of everything that you plan to do and what you are trying to achieve in social media. It manages your actions and makes it possible to assess how successful you are. Each post, response, like and comment should serve a common purpose".

Author in [6], speaking about the use of social networks for various purposes, in particular by companies, notes that strategy creation is the basic ingredient in successful social media activities. There are no specific goals in case of its absence; there is no understanding of which target audience the publications are aimed at. Therefore, there is no understanding of what the audience wants. Consequently, it will be extremely difficult to achieve any significant results [6].

3. DATA AND METHODS

Methods of analysis and synthesis, comparison and graphical method have been used to study the statistical data presented in the academic paper. In particular, the method of synthesis and comparison have been applied to conduct a study of the percentage of people using the Internet for access to social networks. The graphical method has been applied to analyze the dynamics of change in the total number of social networks' users around the world, as well as to reveal the rating of the most popular social networks by the number of active users. In addition, methods of systematization, grouping and logical generalization for systematization of information, the formation of sound conclusions and proposals have been used in the research.

4. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

In the activities of any successful company there comes a stage when the typical ways to ensure its development have exhausted themselves and there is a need to find other areas of long-term development in order to maintain the achieved positions, and significantly improve them. As a rule, in such conditions, the marketing department begins to develop and apply a communication strategy, as part of the overall marketing strategy. Therefore, its essence should be considered in more detail.

Hence, a communication strategy is an action plan for a certain period (usually a year), according to which the company's activities are coordinated in the process of communication with various target audiences. This strategy is usually aimed at creating the desired perception by people, forming a certain image of the company, as well as supporting and strengthening the loyalty of society representatives to a certain product or brand [7].

There are various ways to apply a communication strategy. They include: television, radio, Internet, social networks, etc. As the results of the study have revealed, social networks are the most promising direction in this list. This fact is confirmed by the data provided on the Eurostat website on the number of people who use the Internet to access social networks in different countries (Table 1).

Countries	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
1. Austria	37	44	45	49	51	53	56
2. Belgium	47	52	67	69	72	73	76
3. Bulgaria	37	40	42	45	50	51	53
4. The United Kingdom	58	60	66	69	71	70	73
5. Greece	36	41	44	47	50	53	57
6. Denmark	64	66	65	74	75	79	81
7. Estonia	49	51 ^b	56	57	60	62	65
8. Spain	46	51	51	54	57	58	59
9. Italy	32	36	38	42	43	46	42
10. Ireland	48	50	53	58	59	60	64
11. Latvia	54	53	58	57 ^b	60	61	65
12. Serbia	:	:	49	:	48	52	55
13.Luxembourg	57	60	68	67	68	64 ^b	63
14. Cyprus	44	50	54	60	63	69	72
15. The Netherlands	55	59	59	62	67	66	67
16. Germany	42	42	57	50	51	53	53

 Table 1 Percentage of people using the Internet to access social networks in the period from 2013 to 2019 [8]

Countries	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
17. Poland	35	37	41	44	48	50	53
18. Portugal	44	47	48	52	56	59	60
19. Romania	33	36 ^b	44	44	52	61	60
20. Slovakia	50	54	57	59	60	59	50
21. Slovenia	38	42	37	38	45	49	52
22.Hungary	56	60	61	66	65	65	69
23. Finland	51	56	58	62	66	67	67
24. France	38	39	38	40	43	42	42
25. Croatia	38	40	45	50	47	54	58
26. Czechia	36	40	41	45	48	56 ^b	59
27. Sweden	57	65	62	70 ^b	71	70	72
28. Norway	68	71	73	76	83	82	86
29. Switzerland	:	43	:	:	53 ^b	:	53
30. Turkey	32	38	41	48	54	60	60
31. North Macedonia	55	54	59	60	62	65	68

Thus, the table above shows that there is a significant increase in the percentage of social networks' users in almost all countries of the world for 2013-2019. In particular, the highest growth rate is observed in Austria, Greece, Cyprus, Turkey, Romania and Norway, where 86% of all Internet users use it to access social networks. The use of social networks in Slovakia remained at the level of 2013, while in Italy, Germany, France and Switzerland there was a slight increase in the level of access, which fluctuates only within 5-10%. For instance, this percentage ranges from 20-30 in other countries.

In addition, the dynamics of changes in the number of social networks' users around the world, as well as the forecast for 2021-2023, presented on the Data Platform Statista, confirm the prospects for the implementation of communication strategy through social networks. A visual display of this trend is obtained from Figure 1.

Thus, analyzing the above figure, we can track the steady upward trend in the number of social networks' users during 2013-2020. Moreover, according to the forecasts provided on the Statista website, the number of users will continue to grow by 2023. Thus, the number of people, using social networks has almost doubled over the last decade, which indicates a high level of their demand, and thus turns the social network into a large platform not only for communication but also for targeted impact, in fact, based on a communication strategy.

The high popularity of social networks, even at the initial stages of implementation, led to the emergence of its large list. Let's consider the gradation of the most popular social networks in the world by the number of active users as of April 2020. The study has been conducted by analysts of the Data Platform Statista (Figure 2).

Formation and Application of Communication Strategies Through Social Networks: Legal and Organizational Aspects

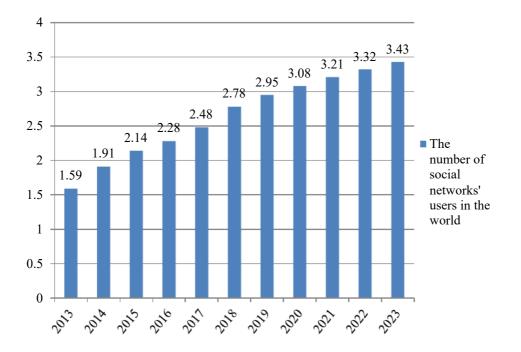
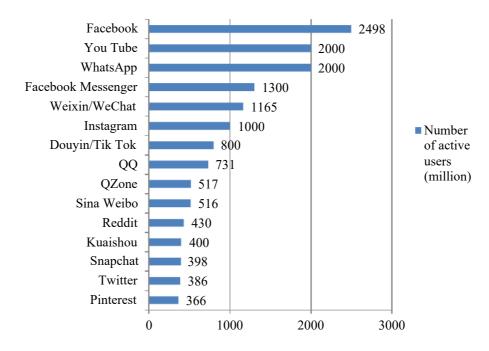
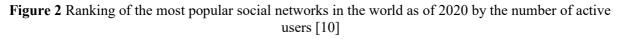


Figure 1 The number of social networks' users around the world (billion people) for 2013-2023 [9]





Analyzing the data shown in the figure, it can be seen that Facebook has reached the most popularity; the number of its users reaches 2498000000. You Tube and Whats App merge behind it; they are used by about 2 billion of people around the world. In addition, Facebook Massenger and Weixin / WeChat have become widespread, with a total of 1,3 billion and 1,2 billion users, respectively. Along with this, the number of Instagram users is reaching the billion mark. Tik Tok, Douyin, QQ and QZone are in the process of gaining popularity. On the other hand, the smallest number of users is tracked on Pinterest, Twitter and Snapchat, where their total number reaches about 400 million. However, it should be noted that the popularity of those

social networks that close the rating is growing every year, in contrast to its leaders, who may already be oversaturated with demand.

In addition, according to a study, conducted by the American company Crowdtap [11], 64% of respondents in the survey have noted that they use social networks as inspiration for shopping. For comparison, this figure reached 51% in 2018. Representatives of the retail business are actively using this trend; it is targeted at consumers with the application of personalized offers and agreements [12].

According to [11], approximately 46% of social networks' users use them when thinking about purchasing, and 40% decide what to buy, based on what they see on social media platforms. At the same time, this figure is growing from year to year.

Therefore, after analyzing the trends in the field of social networks and deciding on the use of one of communication strategies on the platform, its formation takes place, depending on the chosen direction of its implementation. Herewith, the choice of strategy implementation features is influenced by specific features of the communicative environment which is analyzed, namely (Figure 3).

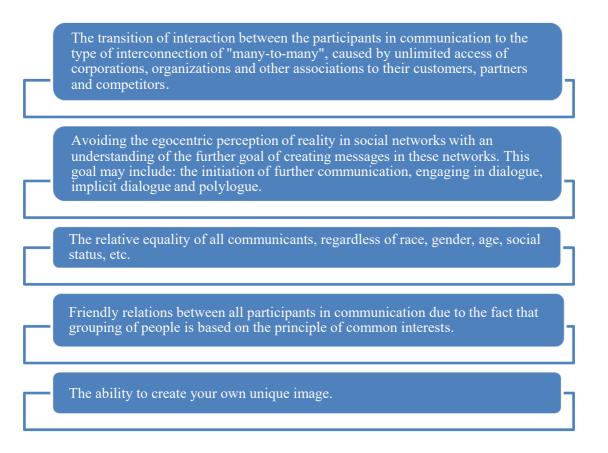


Figure 3 Specific features of the social network's communicative environment [13]

Thus, after identifying the specific features of communication strategy application on the platform of social networks, the steps of its direct formation should be determined.

Thus, the formation and implementation process of a communication strategy begins with a clear definition of its implementation goal and the target audience to which it will be directed. At the initial stage, the manager receives the task to set clear objectives that must be achieved while using social media in the medium and long term. For instance, such goals include: coverage of 500 000 new users, in addition to providing 50% conversion rate. Regarding the definition of the target audience, it is necessary to study the tastes and resources of people who

will be directed to communication, as well as be able to predict their reaction to the strategy of our company or enterprise [14].

Creating a strong community in the social network is the second stage of communication strategy development in order to provide our brand with a powerful increase. As part of the implementation of this stage, the task is set for managers to create an exciting page or user in the selected social network, with the help of which there will be direct contact with the target audience [15]. In other words, we need to be familiar with our audience, know and understand exactly what they want. In addition, an extremely important aspect of communication strategy implementation through social networks is to put the target audience in its center, along with the belief that our company or enterprise is unique in its approaches.

At the third stage, the environment for implementing the strategy is investigated by studying competitors within a specific social network. At this stage it is extremely important to study the approaches to communication by those companies that offer an equivalent or similar product, as well as to determine their own, unique communication style with the target audience, which would not be repeated by competitors [15].

Determining the availability of a consistent forecast and a single strategy for communication in the social network is the next stage of strategy development. In other words, the content, tone, logo, market strategies, forecasts, marketing materials should be fulfilled in the same style; they shouldn't contradict each other [14].

The development of an advertising plan with a chronological display of tasks to be performed is carried out on the fifth stage. Within this stage, it is necessary to plan every detail of the communication strategy, along with the definition of current objectives and the desired intermediate results for their comparison with the achieved ones [14].

The sixth stage of communication strategy development and implementation by companies and enterprises, in turn, is represented by the release of high-quality, interesting and optimized content through the created social communities [15].

Due to the annual growth of users' requests via the Internet for certain products (goods) and brands, it is extremely important to create unique, optimized content to draw attention to the company's platform, as well as maintaining the level of interest and loyalty to our brand. All this is achieved by releasing high-quality, interesting and stylish content [12].

At the same time, it is necessary to actively use texts with fine-sounding headings that would help draw attention to the content of the message that our company wants to convey to the target audience. It is at this stage that the communication strategy is put into practice.

The final stage of communication strategy development and implementation is the determination of its introduction outcomes, next to the analysis of the planned goals' achievement, as well as the final effect of the strategy application. If the desired result is not achieved, the components of the strategy are adjusted, and as a result, its re-implementation is carried out.

Along with this, it is worth noting that the communication strategy is actively applied not only by companies to create a positive image among consumers and simulate the level of sales, but also by representatives of various mass communication media (MCM) for news coverage, discussing various events, signing petitions; opinion leaders use it to disseminate their positions on issues within their competence; public and political figures also use it, etc.

In the process of communication strategy implementation through social networks, it is extremely important to take into account the legal features that can be encountered in the process of its introduction. All legal aspects of the communication strategy implementation can be schematically represented using Figure 4.



Figure 4 Legal features of communication strategy application through social networks [16]

Let's consider each of the aspects in more detail. Thus, the disclosure of sensitive information is customary to be understood as the illegal disclosure of information that is confidential by employees of the company or any other parties. An escalating the threat of spreading confidential information occurs against the background of the speed of information disclosure by social networks, which means that any loss of secret data can become critical for the company.

In addition, small companies run the risk to infringe the right to illegally use trademarks in the course of a rapid desire to interest as many consumers as possible. However, this fact can be considered from two perspectives: positive – when the trademark owner knows about such use and perceives it as additional advertising, but in this case, this trademark should not be used to increase own profit by the company that has used it; negative – when a trademark is used to ensure the growth of own earnings without the privacy of its owner [17].

The expression of neglect concerning competitors, as well as the dissemination of libelous information about them is another legal aspect for the commission of which the company can be held accountable. To avoid this, companies need to create their communication strategies by reflecting their own preferences rather than humiliating others. After all, it is a common practice when business representatives use the expressions: "… unlike our competitors, we…". Such situations arise due to the lack of understanding that a company can be held accountable even through social networks, and the acquisition of wide publicity about the descration of competitors can be fatal for it.

Another aspect – the ambiguity of posts is closely related to the previous legal communication feature through social networks [17]. Such a problem arises, as a rule, due to the limited size of a message on a social network; it can automatically make it ambiguous, and as a result create serious problems for us and our company. That is why, when choosing a person, responsible for communication, it is necessary to critically approach the assessment of his competence in order to exclude the likelihood of such situations.

The illegal use of copyrighted items in the form of photos, videos, articles, etc. is the final legal aspect, considered by us in the course of companies' communication strategy

implementation. The prevalence of this problem is caused by the fact that the authors of the works do not always emphasize in their reports that their works are protected by copyright, and those, who use them, often do not even realize that they are violating the law [16] (Online Business Guide U Space Network, 2015).

Next to the foregoing, there is a need to study the specific features of the social network, which is chosen as a tool for communication expansion. After all, it often happens that materials that do not meet their requirements can be deleted, and the company will be exposed to potential legal liability towards the social network.

Consequently, we will offer a list of measures that companies can use to minimize the risk of legal liability. Herewith, it should be noted that the specific steps will differ depending on the type of business and industry in which the company carries out its activities [15] (Suthar, S., 2017). Thus, measures to minimize risks are as follows:

- 1. development of a policy for the company to implement communications on social networks;
- 2. formation of use conditions or specialized rules for persons responsible for publishing information on social media;
- 3. continuous monitoring and improvement of accounts on social networks to eliminate incorrect and illegal content;
- 4. continuous additional training of staff concerning the company's policy and current legal norms in the field of their activities on the social networks platform;
- 5. conducting digital security measures within the company;
- 6. application of online filters, in terms of age, language restrictions, etc.;
- 7. privacy policy development, as well as ensuring access to it by consumers, where it is determined how the company can use personal information in the future;
- 8. initiation of companies' legal research, including by obtaining permits for the use of items that are subject to copyright.

5. DISCUSSION

Based on the study conducted, it has been established that the sphere of social networks functioning is a niche that has been actively developing over the last decade. Moreover, according to forecasts, the development pace of social media will not slow down in the coming years, which automatically puts this area in one of the priority directions for its activities by companies as well as by individuals. Communications are one of the possible companies and individuals' activities on the social network's platform.

Therefore, the professional approach to the communication process is extremely important, followed by a need of a specific strategy development, in particular, regarding the activities of business structures representatives. Within the framework of this strategy, the persons responsible for its formation should conduct a thorough study of the social media market in order to identify the direction that best meets the company's needs. In addition, the strategy should take into account the specific features of the communication environment – social networks. Along with this, an important step is to determine the purpose of the strategy, as well as the target audience to which it will be directed in the process of its formation. The success of this stage in general largely depends on the correctness of this stage's implementation.

In the process of strategy development, the next step is to create a powerful page on the social network, because it will further act as a source of communication. In addition, it is necessary to assess the environment for future activities of the company from within the social network, as well as make sure that there is a consistent forecast and a unified, formatted strategy

that takes into account all the direction features of its implementation. Thereafter, an advertising plan is developed and the page is filled with high-quality content. At the same time, it is important not to forget about the need to assess the intermediate results of the strategy implementation and make appropriate adjustments.

Next to the above mentioned, it should be noted that the specificity of the communication environment generates a number of legal aspects that firms face in the process of implementing their strategies. Such aspects include the possibility of disclosing sensitive information, the illegal use of intellectual property, the possibility of defamation and the ambiguous presentation of information. Therefore, business representatives need to pay special attention to eliminate the facts of violation of legal norms, including by attracting specialized specialists in this field for additional consultations.

6. CONCLUSION

Thus, the development of the Internet has provoked a new environment for competition, and the presence of high growth rates of users in this network have made the online sector a promising area for companies to conduct their activities. Social networks are one of the sectors for the implementation of online activities; they are actively used by companies to ensure their long-term development. However, it is necessary to have a clear action plan for the successful implementation of the intended goal. The communication strategy is one of these plans, according to which the company is coordinated in the communication process with various kinds of target audiences.

Taking this into consideration, an academic paper defines the current level of the Internet use for access to social networks, according to Eurostat data. Based on the analysis conducted, it has been revealed that the highest level of use is observed in Austria, Greece, Cyprus, Turkey, Romania and Norway, and the lowest – in Italy, Germany, France and Switzerland. In addition, within the framework of this scientific research, the growth dynamics of the total number of social networks' users in the world has been analyzed; at the end of 2020 it amounts 3,08 billion people, which is almost twice as much as in 2013.

Herewith, the analysis of social networks in terms of the users' amount has showed that Facebook is the most popular social network, the number of users of which reaches 2,498 billion. It is followed by You Tube and Whats App; about 2 billion people around the world use these social networks.

Therefore, after analyzing the trends in the field of social networks and deciding on the use of one of communication strategies on the platform, its formation takes place, depending on the chosen direction of its implementation. However, at the initial stage of strategy formation, it is extremely important to take into account the features of the communication environment, which have been also investigated in the framework of this academic paper.

In addition, we have determined the development and implementation stages of the strategy with a detailed description of the features of each of them. Herewith, it has been noted that allocation of a number of legal aspects is a distinctive feature of the implementation of communication strategy in social networks. In particular, these legal aspects include: disclosure of sensitive information, illegal use of trademarks and copyrights, the ability of expressing neglect, and the ambiguity of the information interpretation, which is connected with the small size of publications on social media.

Therefore, companies need to make significant efforts to maintain their activities within the legal framework, because claims for violation of legal aspects often cause huge losses for companies. At the same time, the significant development of social media provokes the formation of a separate niche of legislative acts responsible for regulating this area around the

world, which in turn requires companies to conduct continuous monitoring to take into account the legal features in each country - the environment of their activities.

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