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Preface

Assoc. prof. Mariana Cernicova
Guest editor

This new issue of *MASTERCOM – Politehnica Graduate Student Journal of Communication* is ready for print in the year when Politehnica University Timişoara (UPT) celebrates its' centennial history. It resonates with the university's tradition of educating new specialists to be not only experts in their field of choice, but also researchers, who may aspire to continue studying at doctoral schools. The journal gathers scientific contributions of the MA students in Communication, Public Relations and Digital Media from the Faculty of Communication Sciences, Politehnica University Timişoara. A first version of the papers was presented at the annual undergraduate students' conference *The way of new communication. Research hypotheses* held in May 2019 at UPT. The conference allows MA students to share early or in-progress research findings in the fields of communication and digital media, as part of their preparation of the master theses.

Most papers deal with new media topics: social media, Instagram, blogs, digital citizenship, features of the digital generation. Also the selected papers for this issue show the interest students take in local issues such as the preparation for the European Capital of Culture, a role Timisoara is going to play in 2021, rebranding of a local business, digital communication strategies used by Timisoara-based employers for recruiting and maintaining quality human capital, communication of specialized information to the general public – the case of severe weather events. Some papers deal with topics from the field of interest of the young generation, such as Instagram profiles of

celebrities or communication habits of peers. MA students make a bold step forward, preparing their scientific contributions for publication. Kudos! To all authors – our encouragement for continuing the journey of critical thinking, reflecting on the online and offline communication strategies around them, gathering momentum to join the stream of specialists furthering the growth of the Romanian school of communication sciences!

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Digital Storytelling. The Impact of User-Generated Content in Social Media

Ana-Maria Popescu

Abstract: *Stories have always been a very important, compelling and entertaining form of communication from sitting around a fireplace to going to the movies. Through all of the changes and evolution we have lived through over the centuries and decades, stories have been one constant, giving us hope, dreams and entertainment. Networks and their inherent network effects now offer a global audience to anyone, anytime, at almost no cost. With the ever-growing evolution of technology, we can definitely talk about digital storytelling – the art of telling stories using digital multimedia, such as images, audio and video. The aim of this article is to analyse the way in which European capitals of culture are promoted on social media and the impact and contribution of user-generated content in this process. Furthermore, the marketing and promotional strategies based on storytelling, used to reach the target audience, will be closely examined in order to be able to provide useful information for the visual promotion of a European capital of culture on social media.*

Keywords: *audience, digital storytelling, European capitals of culture, social media, visual marketing*

1. Introduction

Nowadays, more than ever, it is hard to imagine the world without social media. Social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook or Twitter have totally changed the way we communicate and share information with each other. Social media and virtual communities allow people to connect more easily with one another and with organisations (Holden, 2013: 299). There is no doubt that storytelling works efficiently in getting a message across and that digital marketing tools are being used successfully to raise awareness about causes and campaigns.

Storytelling is a perfect communication strategy to become more transparent and accessible to the audiences. Websites, email, blogs, and social media are all dynamic online channels through which stories can be spread far and wide. More than that, anyone who has access to the Internet and has a desire to document life experience, ideas, or feelings through the use of story and digital media, could be a digital story-teller. Through stories, we better understand both ourselves and those around us. Digital storytelling has the potential for connecting a community through shared experiences and developing tolerance by understanding someone else's story. Due to that, community engagement became a driving force in digital storytelling.

The main purpose of this paper is to identify how a European capital of culture can be promoted on social media through visual storytelling and user-generated content. The most effective way to communicate (the message -> the reception -> the final reaction) and the impact generated by marketing and promotional strategies will be closely analysed in order to draw attention to the way in which storytelling is used to reach the target audience.

This paper is based on the hypothesis that people spend more and more time in the virtual environment, sharing content on social media and wanting to be part of a community. At the moment, of Instagram's 1 billion monthly active users, more than 500 million of them use the platform every day (source: https: //blog.hoot

suite.com/instagram-statistics/, accessed on March 20, 2019). Thus, the Instagram pages have become a good environment for companies to strengthen their relationships with the target audience. With the Instagram evolution, we can see not only the evolution, but also the importance of visual storytelling. Using this method, the content is more likely to have a strong impact on the target audience, because it is based on the transmission of emotion. This is the feature that differentiates visual storytelling of the text because images have the power to generate faster responses among users.

2. Research methods

2.1 Comparative analysis

The object of the research involves ten European capitals of culture. Using an analysis grid, I will analyse the way in which they use Instagram and digital storytelling in order to promote their culture and reach their target audience. Since for every European capital of culture many different accounts were created, some of them by institutions and some of them by users, I will focus only on the pages with the highest number of followers. In this analysis, I will pursue the type of content published in the last three months (from February to April), the type of content presented, the frequency of posts, the tags and hashtags used and the interaction with the followers.

Following the analysis of these Instagram accounts, I will focus on the following indicators to discover the impact of user generated content in social media:

- the type of the page;
- the description;
- the number of followers;
- the type of posts;
- the frequency of posts;
- the number of likes;
- the types of messages;

- the level of interaction;
- the presence of tags and hashtags;
- the design of page;
- the communication style;
- the language and importance of addressing the public.

To identify the most important elements and strategies used to reach the audience and grow the impact of visual content through storytelling, the common points and the characteristics that differentiate them, I will perform a comparative analysis of the selected Instagram accounts. Moreover, I will analyse the most followed Instagram account created to promote Timisoara, because I want to highlight the differences between the ten European capitals of culture previously analysed and Timisoara, that was designated to be one of the European Capitals of Culture in 2021.

2.2 The experimental method

On the other hand, in order to find more useful data about the audience and how they interact with visual content, I have created an Instagram account to test different types of content through the experimental method. This research method will allow me to manipulate one variable to determine if changes in one variable could cause changes in another variable. The key features of the experimental method are control over variables, careful measurement and establishing cause and effect relationships.

The experiment will be conducted on the Instagram account @exploretimisoara for one week. During this experiment, I will test two different visual posts, image vs graphics, but with common elements. The purpose of this comparative experiment is to identify how users interact with these two different posts, what their reactions are when they see the content and also their actions. This method and statistics provided by Instagram Business are good as it makes the data more valid and less biased.

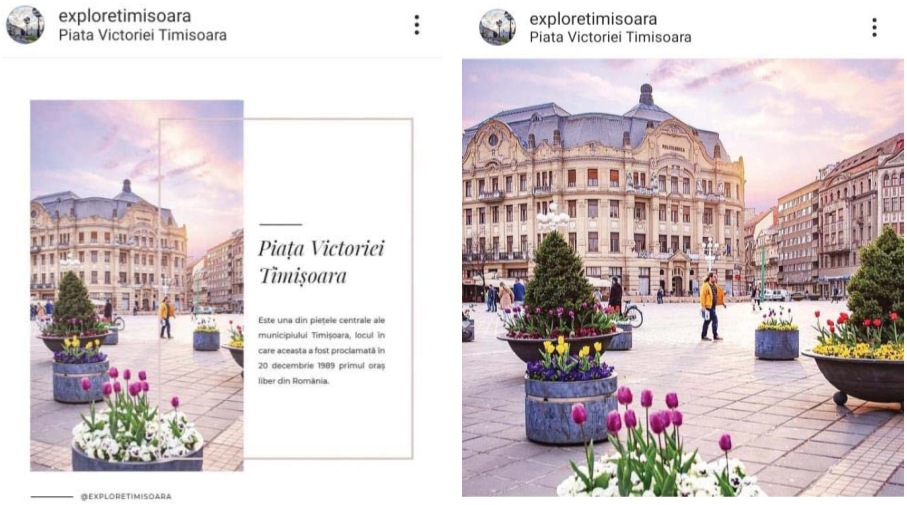

Figure 1: Posts used in the comparative experiment

3. Results

Using the analysis grid, I was able to identify the most common elements and strategies used on Instagram in order to promote cultural content. In the following tables, I have registered important data about the visual content published on five accounts included in this analysis.

After the analysis of all representative Instagram accounts of cities named European Capital of Culture between 2010-2019, there are some important elements to be mentioned. The results highlight the fact that regular posts may increase the number of users and their interest, the content type generated by users increases the interest in the cultural content and the presence of tags offers users a quick search of the desired information but, at the same time, it is also a very good point for the Instagram specific search. On the other hand, people interact more with images than with graphics, most of the accounts were created and administrated by users who do not use a template to present the content published.

Table 1: The analysis of the European capitals of culture on Instagram

Variable	City	Essen	Istanbul	Turku	Tallinn	Marseille
Type of page	Official	✓	-	✓	✓	✓
	Created by users	-	✓	-	-	-
Description	General	-	-	-	-	-
	Informative	✓	✓	✓	-	✓
	Persuasive	-	-	-	✓	-
	Emotive	-	-	-	-	-
The number of followers		34,700	283,000	19,800	53,400	60,100
The total number of posts		7,254	1,428	1,347	1,328	774
Type of content	Picture	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Carousel	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Video	-	✓	-	✓	-
	Stories	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Graphics	-	✓	-	-	✓
	Highlights	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Live	-	✓	-	✓	✓
	GIF	-	-	-	-	-
	IGTV	-	-	✓	✓	-
Content creator	Admins	✓	-	✓	-	✓
	Users	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
Posts frequency	Regular	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Irregular	✓	-	-	-	-
Language	Formal	-	-	-	-	-
	Informal	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tags & hashtags	Yes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	No	-	-	-	-	-
Call to action	Yes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	No	-	-	-	-	-

Table 2: The analysis of the European capitals of culture on Instagram

Variable \ City		Essen	Istanbul	Turku	Tallinn	Marseille
Message size	Small	✓	-	-	-	✓
	Medium	-	✓	✓	-	-
	High	-	-	✓	✓	-
Interaction with the followers	Frequent	-	-	✓	-	-
	Rarely	✓	✓	-	✓	✓
	Not at all	-	-	-	-	-
The most appreciated post		1,661	33,100	1,767	6,636	4,982
Most comments on a post		24	2,566	26	75	99
Image promotion	Agressive	-	-	-	-	-
	Public interest	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Design	Dominant colour	-	✓	-	-	-
	Template	-	-	-	-	-
Website		-	-	✓	✓	✓
Logo		-	✓	✓	✓	✓

Most of the analysed accounts are based on user generated content and through reposting their images, these accounts are creating a community. Informal language gets the accounts closer to their target audience, through comments and friendly language, because all of these are creating a good atmosphere.

As far as the comparative experiment driven on @exploretimisoara is concerned, which is an Instagram account created especiallys for this study, it is desired to perform specific analysis of the audience behaviour and interaction with the different type of content involved in this process.

4. Conclusions

There is no doubt that social media can influence the way in which people interact with the different types of content published online. In

the digital age, people's attention and concentration have changed considerably. After carrying out this analysis of the content published on the Instagram accounts included in the research, one thing is clear: visual content gets messages across fasters. This happens because for people it is easier to understand something that is represented visually and also because a social media platform allows people to interact, appreciate and distribute the content through simple actions and minimal efforts.

An image that resonates with the target audience can elicit joy, appreciation, sadness, shock, fear or anger. Through the power of communities and visual storytelling, the content is more likely to be shared. In comparison with the text, visuals come in an appealing, engaging format to entice people to interact with the content. Because most of the accounts involved in this analysis are based on the user-generated content, it is very important for the administrators to keep in touch with active followers and, most importantly, to attract the target audience in order to use it as a promotional tool.

In the dissertation thesis, I will analyse all the Instagram accounts selected for this study, including the one most representative for Timisoara in order to collect more relevant data. On the other hand, because Instagram Bussiness offers a series of statistics about customers and their behaviour, through the comparative experiment, I will try to discover what type of content raises the most reactions among the target audience involved in this experiment.

Even if people interact more with the content published online, for a city that was named European Capital of Culture in 2021 it is important to be also promoted offline. Based on the results from the analysis and the comparative experiment, I will propose a graphic package with promotional materials for Timisoara.

Storytelling in the digital age offers various ways in which the content can be presented. This digital age has made the passing of information instant and worldwide, all at the touch of a button. Moreover, social media platforms have changed fundamentally the

way stories are told, the types of content produced, how the audiences are reached and empowered to create content.

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The Analysis of Quality Standards of the Online Translations. Case of the National Centers for Information and Tourist Promotion

Andreea-Cristina Badalea-Lică

Abstract: *This paper consists in a comparative study regarding the translated content of the four Romanian cities shortlisted for the title of European Capital of Culture 2021. It will determine if the information delivered by those sites is correctly translated into English and it will also show if a foreign visitor will be as well-informed as a native Romanian speaker regarding the chosen subjects.*

Keywords: *digital media, European Capital of Culture, informativity, translation*

1. Introduction

The most important power of humankind is communication. Through this process, we became superior and we succeeded in evolving in a relatively short period of time. But what does communication mean? Is it only the exchange of words belonging to the same language? Or maybe just a simple interaction between two people, mediated by phrases and gestures?

Nowadays, the communication process shakes hands with the digital media world. It is an enormous step and the most interesting way of combining two of the natural laws developed by humans. This union permits a lot of changes into the simple life, starting with the power of doing almost everything from the comfort of our homes, playing with our phones or laptops. The help we received from the online space comes hand in hand with the translation ability. It is important to specify that the proximity between two cultures, even in the virtual word is also mediated by a translator. Every piece of information exposed on a webpage is carefully translated and transferred by a specialised person who knows the rules of creating appropriate content. This transfer from the source language into the target language should be done in accordance with some complex background knowledge of at least two different cultures.

In order to translate correctly and to make the audience understand the content, it is necessary to give explanations when they are needed or to describe the translated fact in accordance with the cultural background of the target language.

2. Research method

For this research, two analysis grids were used. The first one represents a personal contribution to the informativity section contained by the second grid, which shows the properties and qualities of the translation. The first one shows the design of the page, some basic elements that are indispensable for the analysis and it also verifies if the interface is user-friendly. It also focuses on the integration of culturemes, an issue specific for the translator's work and which makes the difference between human translation and machine/automatic

translation. The grid has two columns, one for the Romanian part and one for the English part.

This table is divided into the translation properties and the translation qualities. The first category implies the acceptability of the translation and the source dependence of the target text. It must establish if the translation is as informative and as faithful as the Romanian source text. It will also determine if the translation is accurate and if it can be well-understood by an English speaker. The second category concerns the linguistic and stylistic qualities of the translation.

Informativity level grid

Design	**RO**	**EN**
Background	Light blue	Light blue
Pictures/ videos	Descriptive pictures regarding the subject. There are no videos.	The pictures are preserved in the exact position as in the source text. There are no videos.
Menu	The menu's writing is in yellow letters with a white background. It is positioned on the left side of the page.	The menu keeps the colours from the source text, and it has an appropriate translation into the target language.
Search button	There is a search button above the menu, on the right side of the page which says "Scrie aici".	The search button is preserved on the same position as in the source text and its description is also translated as "type here".
Contact info	The contact information button is on the bottom of the page. There are many other contact information sections on every page which has a hotel or a restaurant in order to facilitate communication.	The contact button is preserved on the bottom of the page and the information is well- translated. The target text has the same format as the source text, keeping the contact information sections right in their place.
Links	There are many links sending the user to the related pages meant to complete the information. E.g.: www.bucharestairports.ro	The links can be found in the same place as in the source text. E.g.: www.bucharestairports.ro

Social media icons	There are 4 social media buttons on every page of the site which offer the possibility of sharing the article on Facebook, Tweeter, LinkedIn and via Email.	The social media buttons are kept in place and they support the sharing option of the articles.
Translation buttons	There are 3 translation buttons on the top left corner of the page. They can be accessed with a double click. Ex: Romanian, English and French	The translation buttons are in the same place as in the source text. They do not change their order. Ex: Romanian, English and French
Culturemes	There are many historical characters mentioned into the content and the name of some important vestiges which are implying some background knowledge, but they are being explained in order to make the content clearer. E.g.: Voievodul **Vlad Țepeş**	The names are preserved and well-translated. The translator has some additional explanations put in brackets in order to clarify the meaning of the name and to integrate them into the English culture. E.g.: Prince **Vlad the Impaler** (Dracula)

Translation properties and qualities.

Translation properties and qualities	**RO**	**EN**
Translation properties		
Acceptability	The source text has a proper structure and it was written in an adequate manner. The content is also well-selected, and it offers a great amount of information about the main parts of the city.	The target text respects the acceptability requirements, being a compact translated content, which has the same format as the source text. It also transfers the same amount of information into the target language, offering the same view of the pages to a foreign audience.

Source dependence	**Faithfulness**	The original content is also faithful to the communication situation and to the style of the Romanian language.	The target text is faithful to the source text because the meaning is reproduced with accuracy and the structure of the text is also preserved. It is also well-integrated into the English language.
	Informativity	The webpage informs the audience about Bucharest, its history and its important points of interest. The original content contains specific details and additional information in order to help the interested visitors to discover Little Paris only using this site.	The same amount of information is gathered into the target text. There are no missing parts from the source text. In addition, there are some parts that were adapted by the translator in order to make the content appropriate for the target culture.
Translation qualities			
Linguistic qualities	**Accuracy**	The source text offers a structured and original content, filled with useful information written in an accurate way.	The intended meaning of the source text is preserved into the target text. The whole composition is translated accurately, being a great help for the interested visitors who access the site.
	Grammaticalness	The content is well-written, and it has no grammar mistakes.	There are no grammatical mistakes into the target language.

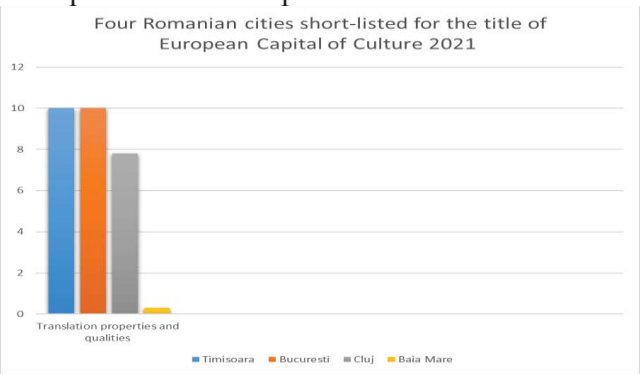
	Connectedness	The pack of ideas is homogeneous, and it consists of a logical structure of the content.	The target text is coherent, and it follows closely the pattern of the source text.
	Appropriacy	The original source text is appropriate to the communication situation.	Since this site is meant to inform the audience, the target text has the appropriate structure and it is correctly expressed according to the communication situation.
Stylistic qualities	**Clarity**	The content of the site is clear and easy to understand.	The target text content is also clear because it follows the source text structure, integrating the information into the English language.
	Naturalness	The source text has its naturality due to the fact that it is written by a native Romanian speaker.	The translated content is as natural as it can be. It does not seem to be translated because it has an adequate expression and the language is correctly used.
	Fluency	It has a fluent order of ideas; the meaning is clear, and it can be easily remembered, and the needed information is right in its place.	The target text has an easily understandable expression and it is fluent since it has an informative content and a simple flow of ideas. It also has an easy to follow pattern, which makes any kind of visitor to be able to find the needed piece of information.

3. Results

The chart exposed below presents the order of the analysed webpages and their place in the hierarchical scale of a proper translation. As we can see, Timisoara and Bucharest have the same level, the maximum one, which means that they achieved all the required fields from the analysis, possessing at the same time a complex content correctly transferred into English.

Reaching a total of 78%, the translated content of Cluj's website gets the third place. It has some irregularities as far as the translation is concerned, some clarity and naturalness problems, but it delivers the content into the target language, offering information about the needed subject.

The last place of the scale is taken by Baia-Mare's webpage, which has no translation. The content of this site is up-to-date and well-structured, but it is only available in Romanian. Because of this fact, it cannot be placed in this top.



4. Improvement proposals

Based on those facts, I suggest that the transfer of information from Romanian to another language to be done by a translation specialist. In this way, all the required features will be respected, and the results will be proper and ready to be added to those sites. This action will increase the trust of the source and, implicitly, it will give some safety feeling to the reader behind the computer. Having a good translation posted on

their websites will help the managers of the site promote the official page of the city on many more social media platforms, making it well-known on the virtual space. Another step to be done is the update of information. The existent content should be improved and updated constantly in order to keep the visitors up to date.

5. Conclusion

Taking into consideration all the analysed features and the meaningful content presented in this study, it is as clear as possible that there is room for improvement in Romania's online appearance regarding the tourism field. Because it is a developing area, we should put more effort into highlighting the good and interesting possessed parts, following at the same time some existent patterns, which are meant to help us reach a great purpose.

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Corpus

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Organizing the Content and Building the Relationship in Digital Communication

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Abstract: *Through their nature, people are inclined to seek human interaction and to have social connections. There are many types of communication, but they all require interaction, which leads to the communication being categorised in only two greater categories, intrapersonal and interpersonal communication. Kory Floyd (2013:48) defines interpersonal communication as "the communication that arises between two persons, in the context of their relationship, and evolving, it helps them negotiate and define their relationship". Because of the need of people to interact and build social connections, technology has developed so much that the social interactions begin to know a new way through which they can be achieved, social media and the different platforms dedicated to this phenomenon are increasingly spreading and developing due to the large use by the people. Nowadays, almost every person who has access to the internet has an account and uses at least one social media platform. Comparing both the traditional media and the social media, we can conclude that, in the traditional way, the user or the recipient of the content was merely a receptor, and the communication happened unidirectionally, from the sender of the message to its recipient, without any interaction of any kind between the two. Now, due to social media, communication has a greater degree of interaction, the*

sender of the message and the producer of the content which is later delivered to the receiver can engage with its audience and can interact with them. Momoc (2014:26) renders a definition of social media, claiming that "social media refers both to the social networks like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and to the content-oriented networks like YouTube or Flickr". Because people seek interaction, social media come in and provide it for them in such a way that physical distance or any other barriers are removed. Moreover, besides social media, the blog has developed, which allows people to share thoughts and experiences with the followers. One of the most addressed topics concerning blogs is travel. According to Raluca Tudor (2013): "travellers use blogs for communicating their experiences, for offering objective evaluations and subjective opinions about the characteristics of visited destinations. They use social networks to increase the visibility of their blogs in the virtual space. Travel blogs represent a cheap and accessible information source about a travel destination, and bloggers participate in producing and broadcasting the tourist destination image in the virtual space. Analysing travel blogs and their constitutive elements, our main goal is to observe what kind of relationship is created between the author of the blog and the readers of the articles posted on it.

Keywords: *communication, relationship, social media, travel blog.*

1. Introduction

Nowadays, the need for communication and interaction is increasingly growing. This leads to many technological developments which allow the communication and render any physical barriers such as distance to the minimum. Social media allow people to connect and stay connected all over the word, regardless of their culture, language or even distance. If one has access to the internet, s/he can be connected with anyone, anytime.

Travel blogs have a different approach, meaning that they allow people to read and cultivate themselves about a certain travel destination without being necessary to visit that specific location. This way, anyone who desires to go on a vacation or to travel to a specific

destination, can just simply search for that destination and read and get informed about any details concerning the flight to that destination, the resorts and hotels s/he can stay in, the main attractions s/he can visit while being there and many more other pieces of information regarding the said destination.

The main objective of this paper is to analyze the main elements and characteristics of travel blogs in order to underline the role that the blog and its constitutive elements play in establishing a relationship between the author of the articles posted on the blog and the readers and the followers of that blog or article.

2. Research method

2.1. Comparative analysis

For my analysis, I have consulted a series of specialised articles and books concerning visual and written message, traditional and electronic texts, digital and interpersonal communication, as well as social media and how to create and develop a successful and popular blog. I call this analysis a comparative analysis, not because I compare two blogs between them, but because I compare one blog to the recommendations and to the characteristics studied in the theoretical part of the paper.

Considering all the specialised resources consulted and all the information learnt during this process, I was able to develop an analysis grid with the following parameters:

- **name of the blog**: if it is chosen in such a way as to be suggestive and interesting for the users;
- **target audience**: who are the users targeted by the content of the blog, what social environment do they come from;
- **type of information**: subjective or objective information, with persuasive or informative purpose;

- **style of communication**: in what manner the author of the message addresses the readers, if it is formal, informal or colloquial;
- **sender – receiver relation**: depending on the style of communication, the relation between the sender and the receiver of the message, meaning the author of the article and the reader can have a close, friendly and personal relation, or a distant, reserved and impersonal one;
- **frequency of posts**: how regularly the new updates and articles are posted on the blog;
- **type of images**: if there are images included within the blog and what kind of images are posted;
- **quality of images**: if the images are clear and well taken, if they have a good quality or resolution, if the colours or the luminosity of the images are/is good:
- **relation text – image**: if the image comes to support and emphasise the text or if it contradicts and denies what is written within the article;
- **organisation of content**: what kind of elements are emphasised within the blog, if it contains menus and categories in which the articles are classified;
- **accessibility and ease of navigation**: if the blog is intuitive and the information can be easily found or if the blog is confusing, hard to navigate and to find a certain information;
- **possibility to share and promote the blog**: which are the means by which a user can share and thus, promote the blog on his/her personal social media profiles;
- **possibility to connect on social media**: if the blog contains associated social media profiles and pages which can be used to promote the blog, to notify the followers about any updates concerning the blog, etc.

3. Results

In this section of my paper, I will present the conclusions I have reached while analysing one travel blog.

For the starting point of the analysis, I will focus on the travel blog *Valiza cu călătorii* (roughly translated and referred to as *Travel suitcase* throughout the rest of this paper*)* and I will compare the blog, its constitutive elements and the visual elements it contains to the theoretical information I have studied and which helped me develop the analysis grid. This blog is a personal blog owned by Cristina Stoica.

The first element in for the analysis was the name. According to Bădău (2011: 45), the name of the blog needs to be well-chosen as to attract visitors, to persuade them into accessing the blog and to incite their interest to read the content. It also needs to contain keywords related to the domain, in this case the travel domain, in order to be well-indexed by the search engines. What I can conclude about the name *Travel suitcase* is that it is a well-chosen name, it is both interesting and attractive to the users, but that it also contains keywords such as *travel* or *suitcase*, both related to the domain of travelling. Both these aspects lead the blog to gain popularity, to be often accessed, and also to appear in the first results in a search engine, leading it to gain more followers this way.

Another element in our analysis referred to the target audience of the blog. Bădău (2011:38) claims that it is very important for the content creator of the blog to consider the target audience, the people you are addressing the message to, their age or their social background. While analysing this blog, we have reached to the conclusion that *Travel suitcase* is mainly targeted to a younger audience, to viewers aged 25-35, followers that do not have many responsibilities that may interfere with a trip or a vacation.

Bădău (2011: 39) suggests that, when creating a blog, the blogger needs to think about the type of content to be posted on the blog, how

frequent will the content be posted or updated, if the content will include images, if the language will be formal or informal.

About this, the next point on my grid concerns the type and the quality of the information posted on the blog. In my analysis, I have concluded that the information posted by the blogger is both subjective and objective. Concerning the subjective information, this refers to impressions and experiences from the vacations, recommendations and advice concerning destinations, and likes and dislikes about certain trips. As for the objective information, this consists mainly of information about geographic location of a destination, main touristic attractions in the area, local cuisine or currency, accommodation or flight recommendations. This information serves a greater purpose, which is to persuade the readers into travelling, into desiring to see and have the experiences that the blogger has seen. As far as the quality of the information is concerned, I have concluded that the information posted on the blog is authentic, verifiable and trustworthy, being very helpful to any person who wants to be informed about a certain destination, prior to visiting it.

Concerning the communication style of the blogger and the relation s/he is creating with the readers, I have reached the conclusion that s/he tries to be really friendly, using an informal, quite colloquial language and words, thus creating a very personal and close relation with the reader.

It is very important that the blogs stay connected to the viewers and remain in their attention so that they do not forget about the blog and stop following it. In order to achieve this, I have observed that it is very important to post regularly. In my analysis, I have concluded that the blog *Travel suitcase* posts regularly, uploading 2 or 3 articles per month. This way the blog can stay in the viewers' attention, leading them to access it more often and keeping them engaged.

Another important aspect to be analysed is that of the images. A travelling blog depends very much on the images; these are its main purpose. Joannés (2009: 181) suggests that images must be "the best for

the blog", the most representative. Moreover, the images cannot be displayed randomly on the website; they must be close to the text they are completing. During the study and the analysis of the *Travel Suitcase* blog, I have come to the conclusion that the images are numerous, very qualitative, most likely taken with a professional camera and maybe by a professional photographer and that they are representative for a travelling blog, containing images of the destination, tourist attractions, even images containing the human factor, meaning images of the blogger enjoying the vacation. These images have the purpose of supporting the textual information, of creating a visual context in which the reader of the article can place the information s/he reads about.

Another important aspect in this analysis concerns the organisation of the content. Bădău (2011: 47) specifically states that a blog should include distinct menus and categories to facilitate the navigation of the blog and of the articles by the readers, and that the articles should contain tags in order to be more specifically indexed by the search engines. Moreover, the blog should include buttons for liking or sharing the content in order to give the readers the possibility to promote the blog, leading the blog to obtain more visibility on social networks.

Concerning the organisation of the *Travel suitcase* blog, I have noticed that it contains a main menu, having 7 distinct categories, which contain the articles related to the main subject of that specific category. It also has a very creative design and it is easy to navigate, offering the viewer the possibility to search for keywords in a search bar available.

Moreover, the blog contains specific designated buttons that the viewer can click on, allowing him/her to like and share the content and the blog, and connecting him/her to the additional social media profiles available on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.

In conclusion, the *Travel suitcase* blog is a well-created and properly promoted blog, having an inspiring and good name,

containing numerous and qualitative images and very well-organised design and content. As for the improvements, this blog could really help a new visitor by setting up an archive where s/he could find all the articles available on the blog. Moreover, it could be friendlier to the users accessing the blog from different devices, such as a tablet or a phone. The reason for this is that there are many images among the parts of text, and comparative to the landscape orientation of the laptop or the computer, the portrait orientation of the phone will oblige the user to scroll very much in order to reach the text information, which can be unpleasant. Also, the button for the Instagram page does not work, it leads to an inexistent page, and the blogger should either remove it or update the address, in case this was changed, causing that button to malfunction.

4. Conclusions

I would like to conclude by saying that this experience and this research have allowed me to acknowledge the importance of the interpersonal relation between the author of the blog and the reader; it is building a platform for the success of the blog.

In this respect, I must say that there are certain elements, such as ease of access, attractive design, quality images that can lead to the user's fidelity and to building and maintaining a long-term relation with them. On the contrary, the elements that make the navigation and the access hard, a boring and simple design, bad quality images or even lack of images can lead to the abandonment of the lecture and to the cease of following the blog by the user.

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Personal and Professional use of social media

Mihaela-Mădălina Boată

Abstract: *As human beings, our instinct is to socialize. Our human needs are about belonging, interacting and sharing attention. Over the years, technological evolution has made it possible to have a global meeting in one place, the online environment. Just as real life we choose the way we must talk to people around us, to be formal or less formal. According to Oxford Dictionaries, the meaning of formal is to be done in accordance with some specific communication rules and etiquettes, so that to be suitable for an official moment. On the other side, informal interaction means more familiarity in an unofficial framework.*

Keywords: *online environment, online interaction, social media*

1. Introduction

Social media has become a society itself embracing various communities. It is increasingly present in social context. Social media performs multiple functions ranging from informing, to convincing the public, to build social relationships between its members. The features of social media tools respond to user audience requirements. So, the condition for a social networking tool to be effective is knowing the

internet users` interests and needs. Many social media tools are used to promote and influence decisions. Thus, digital marketing was born.
People are consumers of all kind of social media products. Whether we are talking about informative genres, such as *Wikipedia, Answers.com*, whether online rating: *TripAdvisor, Zagat, Google places* or the most commonly used-multimedia platforms: *YouTube, Instagram, Facebook* etc. All these social media tools influence the way people live.

The research was conducted in stages. In the theoretical part, we talked about virtual world and social networks, but also ways of managing online and offline identities. A second step was to analyse the current situation. We have analysed what users think about social media platforms. We have highlighted issues such as: the most used platforms, how many active social media accounts, personal or professional preference in the online environment, time spent etc.

2. Methodology

In order to achieve the study objects, we have selected the following research methods: the questionnaire we applied to the 82 respondents. By applying the questionnaire, we proposed to find out which are the social media tools preferred by the users, also the most used social media platforms and, at the same time, what are the reasons why users prefer to create accounts on certain social media platforms instead of any others. After that, I compared using the content analysis, two social media tools belonging to different domains, the both being used by the users for professional and personal purposes. We have objectives such as: to identify the similarities and differences between the two platforms, how they work and the benefits and opportunities through using these two platforms: *Facebook* and *LinkedIn.* In the end of the research we applied individual interview to a person activating in the digital marketing field and we highlighted the main social media tools used in online promotion and the impact of these tools in the professional and personal environment.

3. Results and discussion

The aim of this study is to observe the degree and the way social media tools are used in personal and professional activities and, the purpose for which these platforms are used. The result of the research will be illustrated in the following fragments

As a research method the questionnaire collects a series of written questions and and/or graphic images. Thus, by applying the questionnaire we have obtained more relevant results. The most popular social media tools that respondents have an active account are those used for personal purposes. The main reasons for users to choose these online social tools are to create and maintain links with close friends and family. Navigating on social media platforms takes place in leisure time, work hours, at school or even during meals.

Specific aspects of the content analysis method are objectivity, systematic and quantitative nature. The working tool is the content analysis grid which has the role of encoding the information to be submitted to the expertise. So, as a result of applying content analysis to the both platforms, *Facebook and LinkedIn*, we have concluded the following: referring to the categories of constituent elements, between the two platforms there are a lot of similarities regarding to profile management, media and social impact, interface interaction and other users communication, just as the table found in annexes.

Profile management on *LinkedIn* and *Facebook* is guided by similar principles in terms of provided information and confidentiality of created profiles. The difference is that the information required to create a LinkedIn profile is of course primarily professional and less personal information.

I have pointed out the possibilities of interaction with the other users and especially of establishing a connection between them. From this point of view, there are two differences between the less formal platform, *Facebook* and the official one, *LinkedIn.* I am talking about the impossibility of establishing video or audio connections, or reviewing the links created with the rest of the subscribers in the *LinkedIn* platform.

On the other hand, *LinkedIn* offers to its subscribers the opportunity to recommend and get recommendations. In other words, it gives people the opportunity to generate feedback about other people regarding to their professional interactions. In this way, offering this single option *LinkedIn* meets twice the users` needs. They have the possibility to provide reviews and above all, to promote those who they chose to recommend.

Since *Facebook* and *LinkedIn* are both online social media platforms, the social impact and the media are important issues to be studied. *LinkedIn* provides users *online learning* tool that we do not find on *Facebook.*

The functionality and role of using the both platforms are important issues in content analysis. In my research study, following the application of the questionnaire, it was the Internet's tendency to move to social media tools belonging to the personal sphere. In this way, by establishing so many similarities between the two platforms, LinkedIn and Facebook, we have set out some basic instructions necessary for the effective use of the LinkedIn Professional Platform.

Below is the synthetic presentation of my findings:

Analysed elements		**Social media platforms**	
Categories	**Subcategories**	***Facebook***	***LinkedIn***
Personal profile manage-ment	Updating profile data in other users` new stream	✓	✓
	Check profile views	✓	✓
	How many users have searched for your own profile	✗	✓
	Multiple profile types: ➢ Private profile ➢ Public person profile ➢ Company profile	 ✓ ✓ ✓	 ✓ ✓ ✓
	Information required to complete the profile:		

	➢ Name ➢ Mail address ➢ Phone number ➢ Password ➢ Birth date ➢ Hometown ➢ Relationship status ➢ Sex ➢ Studies ➢ Recommendations ➢ Professional Experience	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✗ ✓ ✗ ✗ ✗	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✗ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
	Chronology	✓	✓
	About section	✓	✓
	Confidentiality control	✓	✓
Other users' communi-cation	Audio calls	✓	✗
	Video calls	✓	✗
	Chat	✓	✓
	Audience settings	✓	✓
	People you may know	✓	✓
	Import contacts	✓	✓
	Request/Delete/Block contacts	✓	✓
	Groups	✓	✓
	Reacting: ➢ Buttons ➢ Write comments	 ✓ *Like* *Love* *Haha* *Wow* *Sad* *Angry* ✓	 ✓ *Like* *Clebrate* *Love* *Helpfull* *Curious* ✓
Interface interaction	Platforms using instructions	✓	✓
	Types of file that can be posted: ➢ Text ➢ Images	 ✓	 ✓

	➢ Audio ➢ Video	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓
	Follow option	✓	✓
	Recommendations	✗	✓
	Simultaneous message transmission	✓	✓
	Smartphone application available	✓	✓
	Notifications settings	✓	✓
	Android/IOS operating system communication	✓	✓
	Other applications communication (e.g.: *google maps,* event planner)	✓	✓
Social/ media impact	Developing promotions	✓	✓
	Events	✓	✓
	Post adds	✓	✓
	Locations function	✓	✓
	Questions option	✓	✓
	Online learning option	✗	✓

As I stated from the beginning of the paper, in the research part I used both quantitative and qualitative methods. Of the qualitative ones, I chose the individual interview. The interview was applied to a marketing and sales specialist. In the online marketing field, tools are chosen according to several criteria. Some of these criteria are: the promotion level, message to be sent, and kind of public we are addressing to, the budget, the time allocated. The real beauty of online promotion also comes from allowing internet users to react and interact in real time.

4. Conclusions

Social networks are already integral part of our lives. Through them, the internet has come to mean a social adventure of inter-human relationships. We all have been brought to the same point globally.

Social networks become more and more sophisticated and require to the users to pay more and more attention using these social

media tools. Online has grown and now social media has roles and functions professionally and personally. In the online environment, information is transmitted in real time. Social media tools have social and cultural functions, entertainment and business functions alike.

The online environment is easy to handle, versatile and transparent. Thinking of hypothetical situations where a message might be misunderstood, it could be easily rectified, and such situations can be clarified. So, because they are accessible and easy to use social media tools are gaining ground and their marketing utility will become more and more important.

Many people use their personal profile to sign up for professional platforms even if they do not work in the digital market field. The new generations are already informed about the multitude of social media tools. The online space is accessible to everyone, but the way it is understood and used is the decision of each of us.

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Insta-story for Personal Branding and Product Promotion

Anca Jurj

Abstract: *Social media represents a space of online communication, where a big community of people share thoughts and experiences and communicate with texts, photos or videos. Moreover, social media is the preferred way for sharing advertising messages, allowing the development of influencers. There are people who have a community developed around them and their platforms (blogs, Youtube accounts, Facebook accounts, Instagram accounts) on which they have a strong impact. Through their content, they demonstrate their knowledge in a certain field and influence the attitude and the behaviour of their followers. Lately, the influencers started to have a big audience on Instagram due to the content shared on the feed or using the Insta stories. These stories last for 24 hours and allow users to share moments and ideas during the day without having to keep them permanently. They present a way of interacting online for personal branding and for products promotion, by capturing the attention of the followers. This paper presents the relevance and the fame of influencers and shows how they use the insta-stories for promoting.*

Keywords: *content creators, influencers, Instagram, personal branding, product promotion, social media*

1. Introduction

Social media creates a virtual space that allows us to evolve and to assimilate what is beneficial to us. We are influenced by the things we see in this virtual space, which share common values or interests with us. Whether we talk about celebrities, bloggers, vloggers or influencers from Facebook and Instagram, our attention is captured. We read what we find interesting, we see what is topical and what brings new and exciting information.

The main purpose of my research is to find out how personal and product promotion are achieved through insta-stories. Using this Instagram platform tool, the influencers promote themselves and other brands. Therefore, I have decided to do some research to emphasise the reasons for using Instagram; the public's opinion on the concept of influencer; the influencers' level of fame; the reasons they have a big audience and the style used for promoting and inspiring others.

2. Methodology

My intention was to connect with the theoretical information by using two quantitative research methods: the online questionnaire and the content analysis. They helped me achieve the goals that I have established from the very beginning.

I have created a questionnaire through which I wanted to find out why people use Instagram and whether they feel influenced by what they see on this platform. At the same time, I wanted to see what people understand when using the term *influencer* and to find out who their favourite influencers are and the reasons for following them.

Regarding the way the questionnaire was applied, I have used www.isondaje.ro/; it was based on 17 questions, consisting of 9 closed questions with ordinal scaled answers, 3 open questions and 5 factual questions. The questionnaire was distributed across various social networks (Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp) and it was applied to a total of 82 respondents.

Some of the questions used in this questionnaire were:

Q6: How often do you follow the insta-stories posted by others?

1. *Never;*
2. *Rarely;*
3. *Sometimes;*
4. *Quite often;*
5. *Often;*
6. *Regularly.*

Q7: To what extent do you feel you are influenced by what you see on Instagram?

1. *To a very large extent;*
2. *To a large extent;*
3. *To the right extent;*
4. *To a lesser extent;*
5. *To a very lesser extent.*

Q8: What do you mean by the word "influencer"?

Q12: List three reasons why you chose to follow your favourite influencer.

After having completed this stage, I have moved on to the content analysis, which is the extension of the questionnaire. The purpose was to confirm and to complete the conclusions obtained before. The fields chosen by the respondents were Beauty, Fashion, Travel, Lifestyle. Alina Ceusan, Ioana Grama and Sinziana Iacob were in top 3 of the influencers appreciated by the public. Therefore, I have analysed 12 insta-stories of these influencers with the purpose of highlighting the way they build their posts, they promote themselves or they advertise other brands. Some of the chosen criteria were:

1. *Type of content*

Content	*Fig 4.2.1*	*Fig 4.2.2*	*Fig 4.2.3*	*Fig 4.2.4*	*Fig 4.2.5*	*Fig 4.2.6*	*Fig 4.2.7*	*Fig 4.2.8*	*Fig 4.2.9*	*Fig 4.2.10*	*Fig 4.2.11*	*Fig 4.2.12*
Text	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Image	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Video												
Live												

2. *Promoting type*

Promoting type	*Fig 4.2.1*	*Fig 4.2.2*	*Fig 4.2.3*	*Fig 4.2.4*	*Fig 4.2.5*	*Fig 4.2.6*	*Fig 4.2.7*	*Fig 4.2.8*	*Fig 4.2.9*	*Fig 4.2.10*	*Fig 4.2.11*	*Fig 4.2.12*
Personal	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓				✓	✓
Promoting	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

3. *Field*

Field	*Fig 4.2.1*	*Fig 4.2.2*	*Fig 4.2.3*	*Fig 4.2.4*	*Fig 4.2.5*	*Fig 4.2.6*	*Fig 4.2.7*	*Fig 4.2.8*	*Fig 4.2.9*	*Fig 4.2.10*	*Fig 4.2.11*	*Fig 4.2.12*
Beauty					✓	✓						✓
Fashion		✓	✓									
Lifestyle							✓					
Travel				✓								
Promoting	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cultural								✓	✓		✓	

4. *Use of tags*

Use of tags	*Fig 4.2.1*	*Fig 4.2.2*	*Fig 4.2.3*	*Fig 4.2.4*	*Fig 4.2.5*	*Fig 4.2.6*	*Fig 4.2.7*	*Fig 4.2.8*	*Fig 4.2.9*	*Fig 4.2.10*	*Fig 4.2.11*	*Fig 4.2.12*
Yes	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓
No		✓				✓	✓		✓			

5. *Swipe-up option*

Swipe-up	*Fig 4.2.1*	*Fig 4.2.2*	*Fig 4.2.3*	*Fig 4.2.4*	*Fig 4.2.5*	*Fig 4.2.6*	*Fig 4.2.7*	*Fig 4.2.8*	*Fig 4.2.9*	*Fig 4.2.10*	*Fig 4.2.11*	*Fig 4.2.12*
Yes			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
No	✓	✓			✓						✓	

3. Results

After having applied the questionnaire regarding the influencers on social media, I have obtained the following results:

1. The respondents use the internet regularly in proportion of 75,6%.
2. 43.9% of the respondents spend more than 5 hours on the internet.
3. 61% of the respondents spend between 3-5 hours on Instagram.
4. 63.4% of the respondents watch insta-stories regularly.
5. 58.5% of the respondents feel influenced by what they see on Instagram
6. Most respondents use Instagram for entertainment, for following public figures, for being aware of the current trends or for inspiration.
7. Many the respondents think that an influencer is a person who influences the audience through what they post on social media.
8. The fields preferred by the respondents are Beauty, Fashion, Lifestyle, Entertainment and Travel.
9. The most watched influencers are Alina Ceusan, Ioana Grama and Sinziana Iacob.
10. They are appreciated for the inspirational content, for the original posts, for the inspirational advice and for the way of empathising with the followers.

Some of the results obtained after having applied the second method, the content analysis of insta-instories, were the following:

1. The stories are uploaded daily.
2. The stories are created in an informal style.
3. The influencers interact with the fans by replying to the messages and by using questions.

4. All the analysed stories contain texts and images and use a colourful design.
5. The insta-stories show the way the influencers empathise with the public.
6. These stories are meant for personal branding or for product, place and event promotion.
7. The influencers use tags for a qualitative promotion.
8. The influencers use the Swipe-up option. By clicking this button, the followers are redirected to different links where they can find more details.
9. The purpose of the stories can be informative, persuasive, emotional and cultural.
10. The influencers organise contests and give-aways.

4. Conclusions

Social media help the users to create and share content, to express opinions and experiences. There are groups, forums, blogs and social networks which offer the possibility of communicating and of developing a personal brand. We live in a digital world which is designed to facilitate our activities and to help us gain benefits from this virtual environment. The phenomenon of influence in the virtual environment is frequently encountered in the society in which we all live together, and there is a big chance that it will continue to exist in the foreseeable future.

People are already used with the concept of influencer, which is a person that can influence people in the online environment by informing, inspiring or persuading them to join an event or to buy a product.

They want someone who can help them transmit creative and authentic content.

They appreciate a coherent influencer who can interact and emphasise with the public. People need a strong mentor who gives a

good piece of advice. Also, it is important for an influencer to know how to promote his/her personal image or to know how to promote other brands. People want an influencer they can trust when it comes to choosing a product or a place. They also need tips and tricks for the basic activities. They want to be inspired by the influencers who promote beauty products, fashion outfits and places to go.

Therefore, it is important to be aware of the existing relationship between the influencers and their followers and to accept the importance of the influencers in the virtual space. The society we live in constantly offers us the opportunity to develop and to use more and more innovative means of development. We can follow people who share the same interests and opinions with us and who inform and educate us.

So, can insta-stories be used as a way of personal branding and product promotion? Well, at the end of the paper, I have concluded. It is obvious that they can be used for these purposes. Firstly, the influencers became content creators. They started to write blog posts and to share different things on Facebook and Instagram. Then, they began to inspire people and to share creative content. They started to be recruited by different people and companies to promote their brand. The product promotion helped the influencers to create their own brand by promoting their own image. The personal branding and the product promotion go hand in hand, being linked to each other. Once they became famous, people could gain the public confidence. The followers listen more to the people who are close to their interests because they trust them, and they appreciate their interaction style.

Based on what I have discovered from the theoretical and applicative parts, I have proposed 10 steps for improving the influence through insta-stories:

1. *Choose a brand aesthetic.*
2. *Start discussions to find out what is relevant to your community.*
3. *Create the type of content that people want.*
4. *Announce news about events and contests that you organise.*

5. Use the right hashtags for every subject you share.

6. Constantly use links to your blog or website.

7. Always mention other influencers and other brands.

8. Use "Tap for more" tactics.

9. Encourage your followers to send you private messages.

10. Keep your best stories on your Instagram account by using the Highlight option.

After reading about all the features that a insta-story should contain, I have created an example which is useful because it shows a part of the things that I have presented before:

Fig. 1 Example of insta-story

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Instagram, A Tool to Keep the Artists' Popularity in the Romanian Music Industry. Case Study: Smiley and Irina Rimes

Daniela Marin

Abstract: *The article uses research tools specific for communication sciences and has aims at dealing with the features specific for social platforms, namely the Instagram network. That domain is relatively new and is currently growing. Instagram, at present, is an indicator of a new lifestyle and, in the music industry, it is one of the mostly employed social networks for growing and maintaining the popularity of artists.*

Keywords: *Instagram, mobile applications, music industry, online communication, Social media*

1. Introduction

The main objective of this scientific article is the research of the personal brand and the social networking domain. The purpose of the paper is, following the research, to present a proposal to help image counsellors.

I chose the concerned topic because it represents the present situation of the population, and as a matter of fact it is, for the most part, a new way of lifestyle.

In this paper, I focused my attention on how to maintain the popularity of a public figure using social media tools, namely the social network that has taken on a large scale for a few years, and in Romania, Instagram.

As a matter of importance today, social networks have a special place in the life of a public figure. The reasons are different, ranging from paid advertising to contact with the public, which, of course, is one of the most important aspects.

There a lot of definitions for the brand term. The specialists say that there is no single definition for this concept. Sasu C., Luca F.A., and Ioan., C, (2013) consider that the personal brand is topical in services and marketing. This type of brand is based on two elements that need to coexist and have a close connection: the person and the marketing. In this structure, the person is one who builds his/her brand and image and marketing is that one that maintains the brand/the image.

2. Research methods

For the research, I have used two research methods, one of a qualitative type, namely content analysis, and a quantitative method, namely the questionnaire. With the help of them, I have tried to reach to a valid conclusion to help me in the final proposal.

With the aid of the content analysis, I have monitored two official Instagram accounts for one month. The Romanian artists that I

have chosen as a case study are Irina Rimes and Smiley. Both are known nationally and internationally, having a great reputation in the Romanian music industry.

By means of content analysis, I have been able to find out what kind of posts the two shared with the community that they created on Instagram. These posts are part of various areas such as daily activities, food, visited places, product placement, advertisements, connections with another public's people.

The questionnaire is the second method that I have used. It is a quantitative method and by the means of it, I have interviewed a sample of sixty people.

In this questionnaire, I have followed several objectives, such as the degree of use of these social networking sites, the preferences and trends in the online multi-networking, the wishes of the persons regarding the type of Instagram posts, the interaction of public persons, etc.

3. Results

By following and monitoring their official accounts, it seems that an important issue in keeping your community close to you is to be present in the online environment.

The posts of the two are diverse; the advertising is not lacking. The comparative analysis highlights the fact that Smiley is more active on this platform than Irina Rimes. Posts are more numerous; so are the storytelling publications.

Order response is an important step in keeping a public bill on the waterline. The two artists respond to the comments, but after analysing the content, I can say that none of them respond in a fully way.

The difference in the presence on Instagram for the two is not very high, but it is a factor that coincides with the number of posts.

Smiley having been on the platform 2 years earlier than Irina Rimes, there are more messages on his main page than on hers.

Online is about attendance, the more you post, the more the world pursues you. Irina's postings are not very much different from those of Smiley's, but Smiley has more than a million followers posting daily and 10 story posts per day.

The questionnaire I have applied comprised 15 questions: open-ended questions, closed answer and multiple answers. All 60 people that I have interviewed are aware of the existence of this social network and 47 of them prefer Instagram to the detriment of other social networks.

Table 1: Comparative analysis of artists by extensiveness of the network

	Irina Rimes	Smiley
Number of followers	41,300	1.3 mil
Number of persons followed	1078	369
First post	06.09.2014	01.09.2012
Total number of posts	1,257	1,901
Number of posts/month	11	31
Number of comments (average)	100	200
Number of likes (average)	15,000	20,000
Stories (per day)	6	9

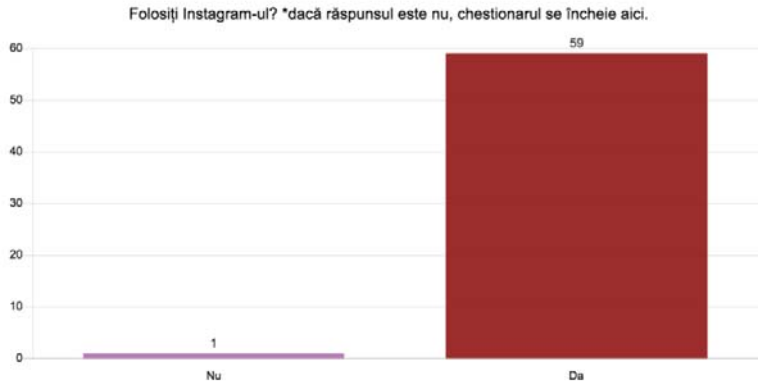
Table 2: Comparative analysis by content of posts

Variable		Irina Rimes	Smiley
Stories	Yes	X	X
	No		
Daily activity	Yes	X	X
	No		
Tags	Yes	X	X
	No		
Reposts	Yes	X	X
	No		

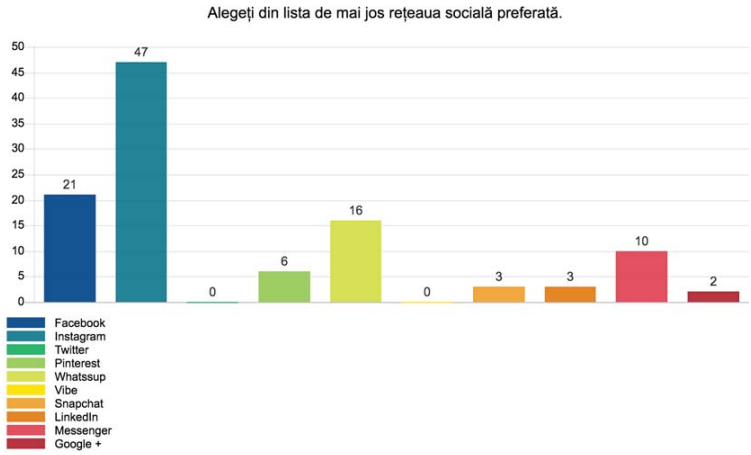
References	Yes	X	X
	No		
Places	Yes	X	X
	No		
Food	Yes	X	X
	No		
Content type	Text		X
	Image	X	X
	Video	X	X
	Live		

The respondents prefer Instagram for many reasons such as interaction, membership, socialisation, design, public figures, entertainment, fun, pleasure, etc. The analysis of the profiles maintained by the two artists shows that they master the art of social interaction and regularly feed the public with information, thus ensuring their popularity also via Instagram.

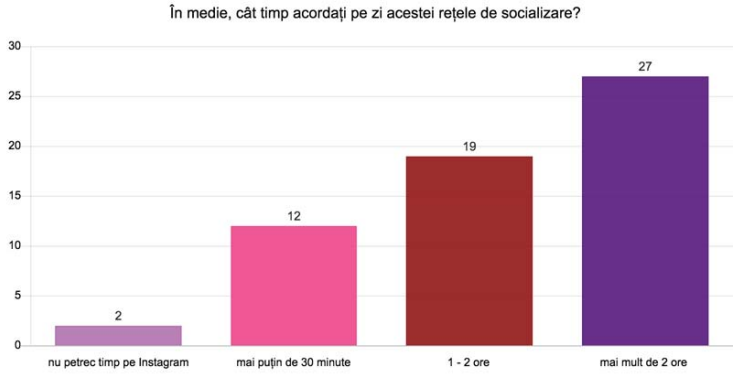
My analysis of the young generation preference for social platforms, via questionnaire, showed that out of 60 respondents only 1 is not following Instagram, as seen below:



Instagram stays high in the preferences, it is surpassing by far the earlier Facebook:



Also, the time given to following Instagram is rather high:



The majority of the respondents spend more than one hour/day to see the novelties on this platform.

In order to highlight the reasons for Instagram following, I resorted to cloud representation, which gives an overall image of the received responses:

As far as the respondents are concerned, they have an average age of 20-26 years. They are Instagram users. Of the 60 people interviewed, only one is not using the platform.

Most of them claim that they prefer the Instagram to the detriment of another social network, and the reasons they prefer it are interactivity with others, socialisation, attachment, curiosity, inspiration, pleasure, type of postings, public figures, and platform design.

Respondents say they use the tools the platform provides, and most of them spend more than two hours on Instagram. More than half of those interviewed follow a public person claiming that the reasons for pursuing a public person are related to the content posted and that they are his/her fans.

Another hit followed by this survey is related to the influence of a public figure and the answers were 43 affirmatives. Contests, exhortations, celebrity recommendations influence the consumer. Thus, although Instagram was invented in the first phase for sharing images and videos, it is now also used as a tool to promote and maintain the popularity of a public figure.

The question related to what the respondents would like to see on a public person's official account helps me discover people's preferences and the proposal to end the paper. The most common answers to this question are related to a public person's daily activities, posted content, given recommendations, actual feedback on various products or services, places visited, and the usefulness of posts.

Although the analysed responses are gathered from a small group of people, 60, the results are consistent with the findings in major scientific literature.

4. Conclusion

Today's social applications are many in number and most of them have the purpose of connecting, sharing, sharing moments with others. Over time, there have been changes to their operating system. Currently, they are also used in companies for promotion, popularity on the market, connecting with the world around them professionally. Instagram has become an image and video sharing application, an app that helps you do a lot more.

Maintaining popularity is not an easy task. With the help of this in-depth research, I hope to shed light on celebrity means of maintaining the high profile.

The two selected artists are very popular at the national level and their level of use of Instagram is very high.

Instagram is the application with which the two artists interact most often with the public. I say this because their accounts, although they are official, post daily stories without the help of a PR person.

Account tracking and the analysis I have carried out this month show that the two have a very high online activity, posting each day.

The subjects posted on this network are part of both the professional and the personal area. The aspects of transparency and those related to what happens behind the curtains attract the followers.

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Impact Methods for New Employees' Integration

Victoria-Paraschiva Debucean

Abstract: *The article discusses the importance of integrating human beings into a collective group from an early age, the impact factors and the role of the employer to integrate a new employee, so that there is productivity and winnings on both parties. Everything begins in childhood, when the family is the decisive factor regarding the child's social integration. Afterwards, during adolescence, the family remains the main educational agent that conveys to the youth the society's fundamental ideas, values and concepts. Finally, the teenager matures, and s/he must be given all the resources needed to be able to integrate into the workplace, to obtain favourable outcomes in terms of labour productivity. This is where the HR department intervenes. The Human Resources department plays a key role in professional employee integration because HR is a strategic partner of the company's leadership, a link of collaboration between employee and employer; therefore, responsible for the integration of new employees. One of the most important factors in a company with a high productivity goal is the relationship between people. The way in which people's relationships unfold in one way or other rests on the efficiency of the company and on the labour productivity.*

Keywords: *integration, work group, new employees, organisation, company, efficiency*

1. Introduction

Whether it is about new friends or the first few days at a new job, it takes a period of accommodation to reach integration into an already formed group. A social group that does not accept an individual as part of the group can change the course of his/her life in such a radical and subtle way that s/he gets to question what is wrong with him/her and his/her actions. The opposite reaction occurs when a totally wrong group for an individual accepts him/her as part of it and changes him/her without they even realising it.

The family is the primary factor in the development and socialisation of the child, as a fundamental framework within which its psychological and social needs are satisfied. Primary socialisation is realised during childhood, which represents precisely this process of transformation of children into real human social beings, by learning the basic values, by training and language, a process with a deeply affective character, unlike the other forms of socialisation, secondary and continuous.

Relationships between people depend to a large extent on the integration into a team and on the methods and efforts that a company makes to facilitate all the resources needed for these relationships to bring productivity.

A company must invest in its resources. It must provide new employees with all the necessary tools, so that integration is beneficial for both sides. Whether it is training, online integration platforms, team buildings or parties, all of them aim to create a perfect and long-lasting integration of the employee.

2. Relations between co-workers

Miuţ M. (1981) points out that the relations between the members of a collective group are carried out on two levels: one regarding the relationships between the members of the collective and the other regarding the vertical relationships between the leaders and the ones

that are being led. The lack of collaboration in the group leads to negative results, but the good collaboration between the members ensures the fulfilment of the tasks at the level established by the management.

Conflicts between generations can take many forms, often extremely troublesome and very difficult to solve. When older people are leading, they often tend to keep vacant leadership positions for people of the same generation to the detriment of other, more competent people but of younger generations. If people of younger generations are leading, they will do the same. These situations lead to worse results in terms of labour productivity.

3. The mission of the Human Resources Department

The role of a professional HR department is to help the organisation evolve, solve conflicts, show skirmishes, and contribute to their elimination. HR is a strategic partner of the company's leadership. It is equidistant, a link of the collaboration between the employee and the employer. The active and effective listening through which it is understood that what the company and the employee want is the right way to increase the level of trust. HR is an important part of the building and then implementing company strategies. The company's mission is in line with the employee's needs and company's business needs. By developing strategies, the employee can help change the organisation so that it better adapts to the environment in which it operates.

A well-prepared integration program has the following advantages:

- reduces staff fluctuations;
- provides the new employees with all the necessary information, facilitating the adaptation process;
- softens the overcoming of the first contact with the company, which often generates disappointments;

- represents an organised and natural introduction to the society's traditions and values;
- provides a good understanding of the company's communication system;
- increases work performance.

The integration period of an employee may take between several months to a year. During this time, it is recommended that the HR department staff organises meetings with the new employee at intervals of 3 and/or 6 months and one year after hiring him/her to note how s/he has integrated in the activities and the collective group. All of this has the role to determine to what extent the new employee has integrated into the workplace and whether his or her employment will be completed or not.

4. Research

The research methods I will use are analysis, interview, and questionnaire. In order to achieve my goal in this research, I will analyse the classical integration methods and use the interview as a method of validating the results. In the second part I will present and analyse the C.OnBoard platform and for validation I will apply a questionnaire.

In order to figure out the perfect recipe for integrating new employees, I have decided to look at the integration methods used by Continental AG.

In the first part, I will analyse the classic integration methods used by Continental AG: "induction days", team buildings, end-of-the-year parties. To support my ideas and to see through the eye of who organises all these activities, I will have an interview with the HR specialist, Anca Daescu.

Examples of interview questions:

1: What are the classic methods of integrating employees into Continental AG?
2: How long do the induction days take?
3: How many team buildings are organised per year for each employee?
4: What percent do you think the HR department should contribute to integrating new employees?

In the second part, I will analyse a special platform created by Continental AG for new employees. This platform is called C.OnBoard and is a mandatory online course for all those who are new to the company, in order to present them a tour of all departments, but also to let them know about all the benefits, evaluation processes and more.

C.OnBoard platform analysis:

This eLearning program is designed to provide new employees with fundamental information to support their successful start with Continental AG. It will help them getting to know the new company - its strategy and structure as well as its culture.

As a high-quality eLearning program, C.OnBoard provides new employees with relevant information about the company. With animated learning scenarios, it focuses on an entertaining and easy way of gaining knowledge and facilitates a smooth start at Continental AG.

Upon the login to the platform, the new employee will have three months to work through all the modules on a flexible basis. S/he can enter and leave the modules and the platform whenever s/he likes. When leaving and re-entering a module, the content will be saved automatically and start from where s/he has stopped it. Once a module is completed, the icon of the module will become grey. This way s/he can see on the menu which modules s/he has already completed. The eLearning program is mandatory for all white-collar employees (excluding Executives and Senior Executives).

C.OnBoard consists of 20 modules, each between 10 to 20 minutes long. The overall time effort is ~4-5 hours. The eLearning modules of C.OnBoard are available in English and in English with Chinese, German, Portuguese, Romanian, Spanish and French screen texts and subtitles and in English with Japanese subtitles.

In order to see how effective this platform is and how it can be improved, I will run an internal feedback questionnaire within the company.

Example of questionnaire questions:

1: Was the content of the C.OnBoard easy to understand?
2: Was the time spent to complete the online course enough?
3: Was the content beneficial?
4: Overall, are you happy with the C.OnBoard platform?

5. Results

Based on the analysis of the two methods, I will conduct a case study that will present my results and my proposal.

6. Conclusions

The more the Human Resources department is involved in the building of company strategy, the greater the organisation's ability to anticipate and respond to the needs of employees and customers will be, and consequently, the easier it will maintain its competitive advantage. But in order to maintain this advantage, companies need to have reliable employees, professionals in the true sense of the word, eliminating any trace of distrust, frustration and social isolation created among the group of employees. That is why they have to be briefed with all the necessary information ever since employment.

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Generation Z – how can digital natives be influenced through online tools?

Iuliana Grazela Stroe

Abstract: *Generation Z (also known as Gen Z or The Net Generation) is the demographic cohort after the Millennials. Gen Zers were born between 1995 and 2010 and they represent a third of the world's population. Most of them have used the Internet since a very young age and are confortable with technology and social media. They believe in diversity, equality and authenticity; this generation is rather optimistic and motivated to always aim higher. For the digital natives, self actualization is of high priority, as well as a fulfilling job and a good working climate. The people of Generation Z are considered the future of global economy simply beacuse they are the largest group of consumers worldwide. The buying process of the generations before was simple: see and buy, but this generation is different. Before they go shopping, they look for inspiration online, on social media and ask for reviews. In other words, technology is a very important part of their buying habits. Another aspect that is merely interesting about Generation Z is the way they choose their career. But we will find more about that soon. This paper shows how employers and brands can use Internet and online tools in order to influence Generation Z's decisions regarding their career or buying habits.*

Keywords: *career planning, content creators, digital natives, generation Z, social media*

1. Introduction

The main purpose of this research is to understand and shape the image of a person belonging to Generation Z, as well as, to describe the personality of the digital native in interaction with the online environment. Through this paper we would like to discover how the mind of a digital native functions and which are the aspects he considers most when making a decision. As it was mentioned before, we have decided to study two main aspects that help define the personality of Generation Z, setting out the following two goals: establishing how the purchasing habits of Generation Z can be influenced and discovering the issues that digital natives take into consideration when they choose a job. The hypothesis from which we started writing this paper was that the Internet plays an essential role in the life of young people, having the "power" to influence the decisions of the digital natives. The objectives of this study were the following: discovering the 5 main aspects that employers should take into consideration when recruiting digital natives, discovering at least 3 advantages/disadvantages of using the Internet as a way of promoting, determining how brands can use Social Media in order to persuade digital natives to purchase a product or service and also determining how digital natives can be influenced through online tools.

2. Methodology

In order to accomplish our goals, we have applied several research methods, both quantitative (opinion poll) and qualitative (focus group), within the applicative section. Initially, we started researching by creating a questionnaire through which we wanted to find out how important is the role that the Internet plays in Generation Z's decision to purchase a product/service, and then, based on the results, we created an infographic with some tips that brands should take into account when promoting their products/services among digital natives. Some of the questions used in this questionnaire were:

Q1. Which do you consider to be the optimal ways of promoting a product or service in the online environment?

1. *Creating a promotional video and posting it on the official account of a brand;*
2. *Collaborating with a content creator (blogger, vlogger, etc.);*
3. *Collaborating with an artist;*
4. *Organizing a giveaway through which the new product or service can be tried by the followers;*
5. *Others. Which? .....*

Q2. Do you use to follow the online activity of content creators?

1. *To a great extent;*
2. *To a large extent;*
3. *To the right extent;*
4. *To a lesser extent;*
5. *To very small extent.*

Q3. To what extent are you willing to try a product or service when your favorite content creator promotes it?

1. *To a great extent;*
2. *To a large extent;*
3. *To the right extent;*
4. *To a lesser extent;*
5. *To very small extent.*

After completing this stage, we moved on to research the second aspect that interested us about Generation Z, more precisely, the factors that they take into consideration when choosing a job. Therefore, we created a second questionnaire. Both questionnaires have been applied online to about 100 digital natives. Some of the questions used in the second questionnaire were:

Q1. Would you be willing to relocate if you encounter a job opportunity?

1. *To a great extent;*
2. *To a large extent;*
3. *To the right extent;*
4. *To a lesser extent;*
5. *To a very small extent.*

Q2. Which are the main aspects you take into consideration when a choosing a job?

1. *Flexibility of the schedule;*
2. *Salary;*
3. *Stability;*
4. *Benefits offered (for example, health inssurance);*
5. *Learning opportunities;*
6. *Work environment;*
7. *Others.* *Which?* .....

Q3. To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

	To a great extent	*To a large extent*	*To the right extent*	*To a lesser extent*	*To a very small extent*
I want to work in a private company;					
I want to work in the public sector;					
I wish to start my own business.					

The results obtained after applying this questionnaire were debated in a focus group of professional recruiters. The conclusions that we have formed after moderating the focus group have been written in a brochure which contains tips that employers can consult when recruiting digital natives.

3. Results

After applying the questionnaire regarding the importance of the Internet in Generation Z's decision to purchase a product/service, we obtained the following results:

1. Instagram is the most commonly used social media platform by Generation Z; Youtube is the most used platform;
2. 45.4% of respondents use the Internet and Social Media platforms to follow the online activity of their favorite brands;

3. 40.7% of respondents search for online reviews before purchasing a product or service;
4. 85.2% of respondents consider the Internet to be the best way to promote a product or service;
5. 71.3% of respondents believe that the best way to promote a product or service in the online environment is to collaborate with a content creator (vlogger, blogger, etc.);
6. 35.2% of respondents said they are willing to try to a large extent a product or service promoted by their favorite content creator;
7. Most respondents said they would spend about 60 seconds watching a promotional video;
8. Most respondents said they prefer images or videos instead of texts;
9. According to the people surveyed, a brand must have the following characteristics to be successful in the online environment: to be authentic, to be communicative (to answer questions, comments, etc.), to post content constantly and to make consumers known in the online environment.

Based on the results obtained in the first questionnaire, we created the following infographic in which we outlined some aspects that brands should take into consideration when promoting themselves online and want to influence Generation Z to purchase a product or service.

Some of the results obtained after applying the second questionnaire and moderated the focus group:

1. 38 out of 89 respondents consider that they can prepare by themselves for a job;
2. 47.2% of respondents are willing to relocate if a career opportunity arises;
3. Online platforms (bestjobs, e-jobs, hipo, etc.) are the main channel Generation Z calls when looking for a job;
4. Marketing, Social Media, IT, HR, PR, the entertainment industry are the main areas of activity that digital natives prefer;

Fig. 1 Infografic

5. The main benefits that the native digital requires at the workplace are: schedule flexibility, the ability to work from home a few days a month, medical insurance, discounts on various services and sports activities, increasing the number of holiday days from one year to the next, courses and trainings offered by the employer, the 13th salary, performance bonuses etc.
6. It's very important for the digital natives to have opportunities to learn and improve at work because this generation does not want to plunge, stagnate at a certain point, they want to gain as much knowledge about a certain field of activity as they can;
7. Digital natives design their career as a portfolio of diverse and complex projects that highlight the passion they have for a particular field and their ability to adapt their knowledge to different situations and requirements.

Based on the results obtained in the second questionnaire and after moderating the focus group, we created the following brochure which contains 5 tips that employers should take into consideration when recuiting digital natives:

Fig. 2 How to recruit Gen Zers
The front of the brochure

Fig. 3 How to recruit Gen Zers
The back of the brochure

4. Conclusions

The hypothesis from which we started writing this paper has proven to be true: The Internet plays an essential role in the lives of young people, having the "power" to influence digital decisions (regardless of their nature); all their activities are all done through new technologies. At the beginning of the paper we also set some goals, namely: to discover the 5 main aspects that employers should take into considerations when recruiting young Generation Z - after our research we discovered that in order to successfully integrate the digital native into the workforce and to capture his interest, companies must ensure that they offer a stress-free, relaxed work environment, that they provide flexible work schedules, the ability to learn new things and not

to stagnate, engage him in as many different projects as possible and, most importantly, the employer must always show trust and give credit to the digital native; another goal was to determine how brands can use Social Media to persuade digital natives to buy a product or service - as a result of the research, we can say that the best recipe through which brands can be promoted in Social Media is the collaboration with a content creator, the creation of images or videos (focus on the text as little as possible) and their posting on Instagram or Youtube, the organization of giveaways, etc. The third objective was the discovery of 3 advantages and disadvantages of using the Internet as a means of promotion - advantages: it is fast, it is the "place" where the audience can be easily targeted and it has a huge impact; disadvantages: fierce competition, difficulties with the originality of the product or service promotion (given the fact that there are thousands of ads on the Internet, it is hard to create something innovative) and the fact that there is a risk that advertisements promoted in the online environment might be blocked by users.

So how can digital natives be influenced through online tools? Well, at the end of the paper we came to an answer. It is clear that the online environment is a source of strong influence on the personality of these individuals and that using online tools such as Social Media one can easily influence them, however, the aspects that digital natives take the most into consideration are authenticity and human factor. Given the fact that Generation Z has been surrounded by technology since forever, they are not easily impressed by a promotional video made with the most performing effects or a perfectly edited image or by the fact that they can apply online for a job, for example, what interests them is the message behind the materials created by online tools. Regardless of your field or topic, if you want to influence Generation Z through online tools, make sure you are real, empathetic, human. Generation Z knows very well what technology is capable of, they are interested in discovering what people are able to convey through it and how authentic these sensations can be transmitted.

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Digital Citizenship in Education

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Abstract: *The article presents the concept of digital citizenship, as well as an examination of the need and the steps to integrate it into the governmental policies and curricula of the educational institutions at European level. Since the 21st century continues to introduce a high level of technological improvements throughout the culture we live in, this leads to an awareness of the need to address the integration of these technological developments from a legal point of view and to define how they can be assimilated and used in the current education system. The term Digital Citizenship is a concept that helps teachers, and beyond, understand how students / students / technology users in general should use technology appropriately. The digital citizenship implemented in the educational system is thus more than a didactic tool; is a way to prepare students for a technology-rich society.*

Keywords: *digital citizenship, digital competency, educational system, technology*

Introduction

Our world is changing, we must recognize in a vertiginous way and schools need to adapt to the new realities of knowledge, society and education. Technology has fundamentally changed the idea of the community and the ways we interact with each other so that building

individual learning and support networks is more important than ever. The Internet has also lowered many barriers to space and time, allowing us to rethink the way we work and connect. (Janna Quitney Anderson et al., 2010). We are no longer linked only to those in our immediate physical presence, but we are now operating in a more fluid and complex network of people around the world thanks to social networks and mobile technologies. This means today's schools and their curricula need updating to prepare students to succeed in this new type of citizenship, namely digital.

What is Digital Citizenship?

In order to understand the concept of digital citizenship, it is useful to start with the idea of citizenship, meaning "the status of being a citizen of a particular social, political or national community that bears both rights and responsibilities" (Alberta Education, 2012). Thus, citizenship in its traditional sense is linked to a limited space and / or a group of individuals and involves both the benefits of rights and responsibilities.

Given the changing situation of communities, knowledge and education, citizenship is no longer limited by physical location, so the definition of citizenship needs to be expanded to reflect who we are as members of online global communities where we now find ourselves. Digital citizenship asks us to consider how we act as members of a social network that includes both our close neighbours, acquaintances and individuals on the other side of the planet, and requires awareness of how technology mediates our participation in this network . It can be defined as "the rules of adequate and responsible online behaviour" (Mike Ribble, 2014) or "the quality of habits, actions and consumption patterns that affect the ecology of digital content and communities" (Terry Heick, 2013).

Digital citizenship encompasses and extends the more traditional definition of citizenship. If citizenship requires participation

in a given community, we need to consider how participation in the digital world is. In addition to the traditional aspects of citizenship, the digital one also raises some other key issues: these include balance, which develops an understanding of the effects of technology and balances the potential benefits and risks; security and security with regard to online spaces, including issues such as inappropriate content and cyberbullying, as well as ethical issues such as copyright and plagiarism (Jason Ohler, 2012).

Technology: Good or bad?

The Internet offers cheaper, more free access to an enormous amount of information and educational content. Ken Robbinson says, "Our children live in the most intense period of stimulation in the history of mankind." (Ken Robbinson, 2010). If we accept that most people embrace technology without fully examining the consequences of using it in an inappropriate way, then it is a good time to talk about its implementation and use in a constructive and educational way.

Students are generally competent to use the basic technology but are not necessarily critical users and many of them do not have the skills to be safe and responsible on the Internet. Students start using the Internet at an early age and use it regularly.

If we want students to be lifelong learners, they should see learning as something that can happen at any given time but keeping technology outside the classroom sends the message that school is separate from "real life."

Indeed, in general, the current educational system has been conceived and structured for another age. Education is no longer about centralized training but rather is the process of establishing itself as a knot in a vast network of distributed creativity "(Joichi Ito, 2011). This means that the idea of schooling must probably be rethought that students are endowed with the ability to safely and intelligently explore this abundance of information and to navigate online in a way

that contributes to their learning. Teaching the use of technology in the classroom and the opening of school walls offers a way to reduce the gap between the traditional school system and those that give pupils the necessary skills for the present and the future. However, these kinds of changes cannot happen overnight Institutions and teachers need to think about the potential challenges of bringing and teaching technology in class, to ensure that pupils attend positive responsible, safe and secure online spaces. This means that digital citizenship must be planned and adopted both in legislation and policy at the level of institutions or school division.

Teaching and learning opportunities for digital citizenship occur formally, informally and non-formal contexts. However, given the crucial role of formal education in terms of empowering citizens, the challenge for policy-makers is to develop an approach to an adequate educational framework that sets out a comprehensive Digital Citizenship Education (DCE) approach and its structured integration into school curricula for its effective implementation (Jones 2010).

Digital citizenship frameworks EU overview

Digital (digital) skills are a path to employment and prosperity. With the right skills, people are equipped for high-quality jobs where they can fulfil their potential as confident and active citizens. In a rapidly changing global economy, skills will largely determine competitiveness and the ability to drive innovation. They are an attraction factor for investment and a catalyst in the virtuous circle of creating and growing jobs. These are the key to social cohesion. The situation in Europe requires action.

The Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) indicates that almost half (45%) of Europeans (European Commission, 2016) still do not have basic digital skills. This is measured in the index as an ability to use an email, use software, or install and use new devices. As a result of these studies and observations, in several European countries

and beyond, schools have begun to introduce "Digital Citizenship Education" to encourage young people to develop their skills, engagement and creativity online, as well as awareness of legal implications of their online activity.

In 2006, following the integration of digital competence as one of the eight key competences for lifelong learning, the European Commission created a "DigComp" framework through the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies. Its conceptual model has been updated in response to digitization challenges (Carretero et al., 2017).

DigComp 2.1: "Digital Competence, Framework for Citizens" aims to be descriptive and non-prescriptive and can be used in education, training and employment at different levels, namely: policy formulation and support; training planning; as well as evaluation and certification. Five areas of competence are included: information and literacy; communication and collaboration; digital content creation, security and problem solving.

Later, In 2015, UNESCO created a framework for global citizenship education based on three learning areas with key learning outcomes. These consist of: cognitive results (knowledge and understanding, critical thinking); socio-emotional consequences (feeling of belonging, values, empathy, solidarity, respect) and behavioural results (responsibility, motivation, availability). The Framework also sets out the main attributes and subjects of the learners in the field, as well as the learning objectives by age / level of education (5-9 years, 9-12 years, 12-15 and 15-18 years) (UNESCO, 2015) . The framework was developed to be used by educators, curriculum developers, trainers, policy makers and other educational entities working in non-formal and professional institutions.

Examples of implementation in Europe

The Finnish Ministry of Education initiated the project "As a Global Citizen in Finland" (2010-11). The aim of the project was "to bring

together a vision of the key premises, challenges and opportunities in terms of education for global citizenship in a globalized world" (Jääskeläinen and Repo, 2011), also preparing the Core Curriculum 2014 , which was approved in 2016 and introduced in all classes at the beginning of the autumn term.

In the UK, the Childnet International civil society organization seeks to ensure that all children and young people "are equipped with knowledge, skills and abilities to navigate the online environment safely and responsibly" and help model and influence "policies and programs that prioritize children's rights so that their interests are promoted and protected "(Childnet International 1995) through lobbying decision makers, regulators and the internet industry.

Its educational framework provides a set of resources for primary school pupils (eg, tips, videos, questionnaires and games) and gymnasium students (tips, videos and information about hot topics such as cyberbullying, digital citizenship: analyzing definitions, cadres and actors, sexting, social networks, applications and security) as well as for teachers and professionals (for example, the Childnet Digital Leaders program) and for parents and carers (for example, tips on how to handle children and a helpline).

In 2015, the French Ministry of Education made a major effort to reshape the education system with the publication of Le Parcours Citoyen, a set of five initiatives to be developed from pre-school and secondary to to encourage young people to become active citizens. In the same year, the Minister of Education published a new one

(Décret 2015-372 2015) at the compulsory schooling period (between 6 and 16 years). Its main objective is to give pupils a "common culture" and the tools needed to thrive succeed academically and integrate into society as participating citizens.

Conclusions

Digital literacy and digital citizenship are important discussions for educational institutions, and should be at the forefront of educational planning, policy development and curriculum development.

Although there is no single definition of digital citizenship, there is a tendency for a consensus on the idea that in an educational context digital citizenship is a dimension that involves the values, abilities, attitudes, knowledge and critical understanding citizens have need in the digital age. There is also a consensus that the education of digital citizenship is necessary in formal, non-formal and informal educational contexts, with the involvement of children and young people, families, teachers and professionals as well as other community members to support digital citizenship. At present, the focus is primarily in the formal educational context.

In a globalized, multilingual and multicultural world, the implementation and education of digital citizenship must be supported by research to be inclusive and evidence based. For this reason, most international cadres (e.g. "learning areas" of UNESCO and DIGCOMP of the European Union) are rather descriptive than prescriptive. Firstly, digital citizenship deals with values, and values differ from one place to another. Secondly, digital citizenship is for all, regardless of skills, attitudes or knowledge, and initiatives to support its implementation need to be developed in this context.

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Visual Rebranding in the Cake Design Industry

Flavia Mezzetti

Abstract: *In the confectionery industry, sugarcraft and cake design are intensely visual branches which rely on the aesthetics of their products in making a first impression and attracting new customers. Unfortunately, displaying the products themselves is not always a viable option and it is certainly not always advised. A cake shop cannot just replace a store sign above its store-front or a business card with a dessert, right? Therefore, branding is the next best option for a confectionery to exhibit its personality and to communicate its desired image to the target audience. This paper aims at analysing some successful brands in the industry, by comparing the visual means they use to communicate their identities in the digital medium and, subsequently, by proposing a graphic package for a small local cake boutique in need of a fresh identity.*

Keywords: *graphic design, visual identity, branding, rebranding, confectionery, cake design.*

Introduction

Visual identity is a brand's pillar of strength. If it weren't for visual identity, brands could not succeed, and branding processes would not be what they are today, because there is no better way of conveying

meaning than through visual communication/immersion. Graphic design elements, such as colour, shape and style, define a brand's personality and play a major role in the way it is perceived by both the target and potential audiences. In the confectionery world, branding did not use to be a very popular tool, many cake shops using exclusively direct marketing to conduct sales, especially in Romania. However, with the rising market of sugarcraft and cake design, but also the ever-increasing use of social media and digital marketing tools in any business model, the industry finds itself at a turning point where the businesses either embrace branding as a very helpful friend, or linger into mainstream, facing the risk of becoming irrelevant.

In this paper I have chosen to conduct a comparative research on a few successful brands in the industry in order to discover the ways in which they communicate their identities in the digital medium. Thus, in the following pages I will analyse 15, of which I will present 9, impactful brands from a visual standpoint, studying the colour schemes and fonts they use, their websites and social media presence, their advertising or collateral graphic elements they may display online, and their over-all online visual identity.

The purpose of this paper is to help a small local business reach its desired potential, by designing a new visual identity as part of their rebranding process, for it to resume activity in a profitable way after a year-long break. Even if the products they offer are high-quality, premium desserts, as a small and young cake shop, The Cupcake Boutique stands alone in front of mature and well-established local brands of Timisoara. With my design proposal, I hope to communicate the brands' personality in a way that is relevant to the industry and target audience, but also to differentiate the business from the competition.

The key concepts

Branding

The term branding represents, in short, the process of creating and maintaining a brand, the brand being a combination of the visual

identity and public image or reputation of a company. Efficient branding should facilitate immediate recognition of the brand in the consumer's mind and should be able to develop a positive image, triggering the feelings of trust, safety and loyalty. This is a strong marketing instrument, used by companies to distinguish their own products or services from their competitors, but at the same time, to communicate value in order to relate to their own audiences (Grosseck, 2006: 341).

In other words, branding represents the efforts of a company to build and maintain sturdy values that the customers can relate to, the final scope being sales maximisation (Neumeier, 2007: 19).

In today's world, the Internet is the most efficient medium for implementing a branding process. In this case, the sum of all the brand-related marketing activities unfolded in the digital medium fall under the label of *online branding* (Grosseck, 2006: 341).

Rebranding

Often, the term is used to describe a change of name or logo, of visual identity, of packaging, of graphic elements such as brochures and posters or even promotional campaigns. In other words, the rebranding process is usually seen as a makeover at the visual or image level. Although, these are all important parts of rebranding, the process can involve all the levels of the company, from strategies and management, to vision and public image (Grosseck, 2006: 352-353).

Therefore, rebranding could describe a combination of rejuvenating and repositioning a brand, sometimes even a complete rebirth. But, in general, the concept represents the update or change of a brand's identity in the mind of the various audiences involved (Muzellec, 2003: 31-32).

It is of great importance that a company recognises the correct time and place where the rebranding process is indeed needed. Therefore, Schmitt and Simonson (2002) give us the determining

factors which lead to the imperative necessity of a company's rebranding:

1. Reduced loyalty or market share;
2. Outdated identity;
3. Inconsistent identity;
4. The introduction of new services or products;
5. Changes in the competitional field;
6. Changes in the consumer's characteristics;
7. Penetration of a new market or expansion of the activity field;
8. Increase in personal resources (Schmitt, Simonson, 2002: 38).

The rebranding process can take place at different levels of the company and can target various aspects. Rebranding can happen on a small scale, at a superficial level, or on a big scale, at a deeper level. The typology of changes that could happen to a brand are divided into three categories. Even if the speciality literature gives them various labels, the classification mainly shares the same characteristics. Thus, Millman (2008), but also Daly and Moloney (2004), give us three types of identity changes during rebranding:

1. *Refresh*, or *minor changes*: a slight change of the graphic design, the colour scheme, the fonts used, an update of an old-looking aesthetic;
2. *Evolution*, or *intermediate changes*: design changes about the current or heritage name or elements, changes of the brand's positioning using marketing, communication and public relation tools;
3. *Revolution*, or *complete changes*: major changes represented by a new name, logo, new marketing and communication strategies and sometimes even a completely new identity (Millman, 2008: 120; Daly, Moloney, 2004: 31).

Designing identity

Visual identity is a part of brand identity which, at its turn, represents a small part of a brand. Visual identity is defined as a set of elements

which determine the brand's general direction. It integrates all the visual representations of the brand and also, the morphological elements which ensure the perception, identification and immediate recognition of the brand (Joannès, 2009: 43; Petcu, 2014: 244). Of course, there are many other marketing and communication activities that contribute to a brand's architecture, such as sponsorships, PR, crisis management, which all influence the image, reputation and value of the company in the eyes of the stakeholders, but identity management focuses on visual, aesthetic and sensorial aspects. The aesthetic plays a substantial role in the audience's perceptions, representing the starting point in building a brand and having the purpose of attracting and maintaining customers (Schmitt, Simonson, 2002: 42).

Basics and principles

A successful design may reach the objectives set in the brief, but a truly iconic and impactful design should always touch upon a few characteristics, all at the same time:

1. *Simplicity:* a design must always be versatile in order to be easily used in various media;
2. *Relevance:* the design must be relevant to the industry it belongs to, the target audience, employees and any other parts involved;
3. *Tradition:* incorporating tradition or heritage in design is recommended, considering how quickly trends change in today's era;
4. *Distinction:* a distinct design is one that can easily be differentiated from the competition, has a unique style which portrays the company's personality;
5. *Memorability:* an iconic design is one that can be remembered after just one glimpse;
6. *Adaptability:* the brand's visual identity will be displayed in various media, which is why the design should be easily resized, without any loss of detail or quality;

7. *Singularity:* focusing on a single distinct characteristic, rather than including a bunch of elements, makes for a more memorable and recognisable design (Airey, 2015: 40-60).

Colours and fonts

The most used aesthetic elements in web design are the chromatic elements. Colour holds great aesthetic significance, as well as semantic and affective value. It is used to trigger emotion, stimulate association and differentiate the brand from the competition.

In the visual perception sequence, the human brain interprets colour only after registering shapes and before reading content (Wheeler, 2009: 128). The human eye can distinguish between 100 thousand hues and 3 main dimensions: luminance, saturation and hue. Luminance refers to the colour intensity, saturation to the purity of the colour, and hue to the variation of the colour components (Schmitt, Simonson, 2002: 86-87).

Every colour or colour dimension evokes a specific cognitive, affective or behavioural reaction. Thus, keeping all the characteristics into consideration, the distinct categories of colours and their triggered affective and behavioural reactions are:

1. *Saturated colours:* influence the perception that the object is moving;
2. *Bright colours:* influence the perception that the object is closer than it is in reality;
3. *Colours from both ends of the spectrum:*
    a. *Cold colours:* are perceived as calm and introverted;
    b. *Warm colours:* are perceived as energetic and extroverted;
4. *Black and white:* communicate elegance and prestige, sobriety (black) and purity (white);
5. *Metallic colours:* suggest high quality, luxury and elegance (Schmitt, Simonson, 2002: 87-88).

The font is an aesthetic element consisting of several other main aesthetic elements. It has two fundamental characteristics: the shape and the colour, both holding great importance to the design individually and together (Schmitt, Simonson, 2002:89). Choosing a font family is a stylistic decision, and so, the aesthetic of the font has to bring value to the text and to the message. Therefore, the shape of the font is associated with several perceptions:

1. *Tall characters, with serifs:* elegance and refinement;
2. *Rounded characters, without serifs:* playfulness and friendliness;
3. *Script characters:* humanity, personal touch, caring;
4. *Cursive characters:* sophisticated and even festive (Schmitt, Simonson, 2002:89).

A cohesive identity cannot be achieved without a unique font, but after all, legibility and clarity are key. Any chosen font should be a perfect balance between technical performance and style (Wheeler, 2009:132; Millman, 2008:156).

The research

In order to have a better understanding of the way in which brands communicate their online visual identity, and also collect inspiration and examples for my own design proposal, in this study I have chosen to closely analyse the most impactful brands in the confectionery industry at local, national and international level. At the same time, in order to create the most relevant design for the brand, I have also carried out an analysis on the target audiences and their perceptions and shopping behaviour.

The Competition

In the following pages, I am going to present the cake design brands I have chosen to compare and contrast, analysing their online visual identity through their colour schemes, the fonts they use, their website,

the social media presence and other advertising and collateral graphic elements they might present online.

The brands have been selected through speciality websites and blogs, such as dandelionchandelier.com and worldofwanderlust.com, the review platform, tripadvisor.com and the social media platform, Facebook. The criteria used for selection were reviews, social media following, online presence, products and services offered, the existence of a visual identity, and the property of being a possible competitor for The Cupcake Boutique, meaning sugarcraft or cake design is part of their offer.

The Cupcake Shop: cupcake shop, event catering, workshops (Timisoara)
Logo: logotype
Motto: Home Made
Fonts: Segoe UI
Colour scheme: #474048, RGB (71, 64, 72), HSL (293, 6%, 27%)
#F0A3B7, RGB (240, 163, 183), HSL (344, 72%, 79%)
#FFFFFF, RGB (255, 255, 255), HSL (0, 0%, 1%)
Website: https://thecupcakeshop.ro/
Social Media: https://www.facebook.com/Thecupcakeshop.tm/
Advertising: https://bit.ly/2GQgJ5H, https://bit.ly/2W5Xbzq, https://bit.ly/2GFdP2k, https://bit.ly/2GQgM1n
Collateral: https://bit.ly/2V0Q6Uf

Seneville / Seneville Dulce Dulce: confectionery, bakery, cake design, event catering, candy bars (Timisoara)
Logo #1: symbol or logotype & symbol, different colour variations
Logo #2: logotype & symbol, light background and dark background variation
Motto #1: Când viața îți oferă o prăjitură, fii sigur că e cea mai bună.
Motto #2: Bucuria unui eveniment cu gust. Bun gust.
Fonts: Playfair Display
Colour scheme: #C85789, RGB (200, 87, 137), HSL (333, 51%, 56%)
#6C3366, RGB (108, 51, 102), HSL (306, 36%, 31%)
Website: https://senneville.ro/
Social Media #1: https://www.facebook.com/senneville.ro/

Social Media #2: https://www.facebook.com/sennevilledulcedulce/
Advertising: https://bit.ly/2GCASLc, https://bit.ly/2UZ294w, https://bit.ly/2XPR42y
Collateral: https://bit.ly/2vpvp4W

Cofetăria La Naomi: confectionery, cake design, event catering, candy bars (Timisoara)
Logo: logotype & symbol, light background and dark background variation
Motto: Regina prăjiturilor
Fonts: Muli
Colour scheme: #ED5482, RGB (237, 84, 130), HSL (342, 81%, 63%)
#F6CB53, RGB (246, 203, 83), HSL (44, 90%, 65%)
#FFFFFF, RGB (255, 255, 255), HSL (0, 0%, 1%)
Website: https://cofetarialanaomi.ro/
Social Media: https://www.facebook.com/cofetarialanaomi/
Advertising: https://bit.ly/2WdkuYa, https://bit.ly/2UL2qD9, https://bit.ly/2IK6B0p, https://bit.ly/2GD7Yug
Collateral: -

Grace Couture Cakes: confectionery, cake design, thematic eclairs, event catering, candy bars (Bucharest)
Logo: logotype or logotype & symbol
Motto: -
Fonts: Roboto, Open Sans
Colour scheme: #1D1D1B, RGB (29, 29, 27), HSL (60, 4%, 11%)
#FFFFFF, RGB (255, 255, 255), HSL (0, 0%, 1%)
Website: https://www.gracecc.ro/
Social Media: https://www.facebook.com/GraceCoutureCakes/
Advertising: -
Collateral: https://bit.ly/2WcXOaq, https://bit.ly/2UZOme0, https://bit.ly/2XQvc UE

Zoomserie: confectionery, cake design, thematic cupcakes, event catering, candy bars (5 location Frachise)
Logo: logotype & symbol
Motto: -
Fonts: Varela Round, Libre Baskerville, Pacifico
Colour scheme: #502A21, RGB (80, 42, 33), HSL (11, 42%, 22%)
#EE5602, RGB (238, 86, 2), HSL (21, 98%, 47%)

#F1F9FB, RGB (241, 249, 251), HSL (192, 56%, 96%)
Website: https://www.zoomserie.ro/
Social Media: https://www.facebook.com/zoomseries/
Advertising: https://bit.ly/2DDs6fb, https://bit.ly/2ZDn0ZG
Collateral: https://bit.ly/2VCWFfm

Cupcake Philosophy: confectionery, cake design, thematic desserts, event catering, candy bars (Bucharest)
Logo: logotype & symbol
Motto: Răsfățăm gusturi cu deserturi elegante
Fonts: Noto Serif, Muller
Colour scheme: #E27B76, RGB (226, 123, 118), HSL (3, 65%, 67%)
#FFFFFF, RGB (255, 255, 255), HSL (0, 0%, 1%)
#000000, RGB (0, 0, 0), HSL (0, 0%, 0%)
Website: https://www.cupcakephilosophy.ro/
Social Media: https://www.facebook.com/cupcakephilosophy
Advertising: -
Collateral: https://bit.ly/2GQUywe, https://bit.ly/2IO4rg6, https://bit.ly/2GEeNfb

Fiona Cairns: confectionery, cake design, thematic cupcakes, event catering, online shop (Leicestershire, UK)
Logo: logotype & symbol
Motto: Gorgeous show-stopping cakes to delight on the most special of days
Fonts: Baskerville, Novecento Sans Wide
Colour scheme: #C3A583, RGB (195, 165, 131), HSL (32, 35%, 64%)
#FFFFFF, RGB (255, 255, 255), HSL (0, 0%, 1%)
#FCF1F5, RGB (252, 241, 245), HSL (338, 65%, 97%)
Website: https://www.fionacairns.com/
Social Media: https://www.facebook.com/fionacairnscakes/
Advertising: https://bit.ly/2ZDwRyR, https://bit.ly/2UKRo0L, https://bit.ly/2GF r96U
Collateral: https://bit.ly/2XSTGNe, https://bit.ly/2DBhpd2, https://bit.ly/2DO4BAj,

Carlo's Bakery: confectionery, cake design, event catering, online shop, classes, cake kits (Hoboken, New Jersey)
Logo: logotype, light background and dark background variation
Fonts: Raleway

Colour scheme: #9F0933, RGB (159, 9, 51), HSL (343, 89%, 33%)
#FFFFFF, RGB (255, 255, 255), HSL (0, 0%, 1%)
Website: https://www.carlosbakery.com/
Social Media: https://www.facebook.com/carlosbakery
Advertising: https://bit.ly/2XWuV2L, https://bit.ly/2GOftjb, https://bit.ly/2UHgSMp, https://bit.ly /2IPF7X1, https://bit.ly/2IMtu39
Collateral: https://bit.ly/2ZICvQc, https://bit.ly/2PCzYm4

Peggy Porschen Cakes: confectionery, cake design, thematic cupcakes, event catering, online shop, classes, utensils, gifts (London, UK)
Logo: symbol or logotype & symbol
Motto: -
Fonts: Avenir Next, Playfair Display
Colour scheme: #F7C5D4, RGB (247, 197, 212), HSL (342, 76%, 87%)
#A59769, RGB (165, 151, 105), HSL (46, 25%, 53%)
Website: https://www.peggyporschen.com/
Social Media: https://www.facebook.com/PeggyPorschenCakes/
Advertising: https://bit.ly/2IKFdiZ, https://bit.ly/2L9JjDa, https://bit.ly/2LarmV8, https://bit.ly/2v rlVGA
Collateral: https://bit.ly/2IKFcLX, https://bit.ly/2GR4Xb6, https://bit.ly/2WeDLse

As the case study reveals, the visual identities have very different takes depending on where they are located. The local confectioneries have mainly strong identities with some branding elements, such as multiple variations of the logo and advertising and collateral materials. They generally have unified visual identities across media, attractive websites and they all use the colour pink as part of their identity.

On a national level, the cake shops have rather serious or neutral visual identities, with less visible branding elements. During this stage, I have also discovered that most of the businesses in the industry do not have a brand presence at all, at least not online. As far as the international brands communicate, they usually take one of two routes. They either base their visual identity on elegance and refinement using colours such as gold or deep red with cursive fonts, or, on playfulness

and fun, using very colourful palettes and rounded capitalised fonts. Once again, most of the international cake shops do not display an online visual presence.

As the analysis shows, even if the confectionery industry is presented very differently across the 3 categories, there are some common grounds between the identities. Therefore, the most prominent trends in the cake industry are colour schemes containing pastel pink, colour schemes containing gold, cursive fonts, playful fonts without serifs, logos composed of only logotype and logos containing both a logotype and a symbol.

The target audience

It is a known fact that every specific audience group is held together by common priorities and shopping behaviours. Therefore, in order to create a design that will succeed among the targeted audience, I have conducted a research studying their needs and wishes.

Based on the tools provided by Facebook for Business, the software Audiences Insights, former ad campaign results and current existing clients, I have determined that The Cupcake Boutique's **main target audience** is made up of teenagers and young adults, ages 15-30, with a rather above average income. They are part generation Z, and part generation Y, which means they have better chances of having fewer siblings, and therefore, more financial resources for themselves. The younger half of the group values their peers' opinions in buying decisions and are mainly "cool-hunters", making packaging and brand aesthetics a big part of their life. If the design is cool or trendy, they are more likely to buy the product. The older half, the Millennials, is likely to be living in couples, but with no children yet, meaning they have a double income in a household. They are premium food consumers and luxury gift shoppers. Most likely, they appreciate neat, elegant and neutral designs, as long as it is not lacking personality (Hampshire, Stephenson, 2007:83).

The **secondary target audience** is represented by young mothers, under the age of 35, with small children and above average income. This group, consisting of exclusively females, has a few extra particularities. As more women embrace carrier lives, high independence and role shifting, brands must adapt in order to stay relevant. Thus, according to Data monitor, the key drivers for female buying behaviours are indulgence, convenience, performance and sociability. Pastel pinks, scripts, feminine graphics communicate the indulgence they crave, and contemporary fonts and bright palettes convey friendship and approachability (Hampshire, Stephenson, 2007: 141-166).

The visual rebranding

The Cupcake Boutique is a local cupcake shop founded in 2017, that takes all of their branding and marketing activities exclusively online. The business creates and sells handmade thematic cupcakes, personalised for the client's preference. The products are all home-baked and individually and manually decorated making every piece completely unique.

Current branding

The current branding and visual identity are minimal, consisting of a logo with logotype and a mixed logo, a social media cover, a menu and graphic element for packaging. The font families the brand uses are Embassy BT and a modified version of Rosewood Std, and the colour scheme consists of light pink #EA6C83, dark pink #54CBAA, turquoise #359C88 and white #FFFFFF. Although the branding is humble, the online visual identity is very cohesive.

However, with time, the identity became slightly dull and outdated and it no longer portrays the current brand values and ideal image. Another contributing factor to the newly found need of rebranding are the changes in the competitive scenery. Therefore, The

Cupcake Boutique's rebranding process is one of refreshment of the brand, an update in the visual identity design.

The design proposal

Considering all of the above, the new visual identity of the shop is going to shift its childish, cluttered design to a more mature and elegant, but also contemporary style in order to better fit both the competitive market and the target audience's taste.

Thus, the proposed colour scheme consists of a pastel colour, pink, #FEE1F1, in order to communicate positivity and approachability, a metallic colour, gold, #D6AB44, as to suggest luxury, quality and refinement and a splash of dark grey, #4D4D4D, in order to convey elegance and provide contrast. As far as fonts come, I chose to preserve the same theme of elegance and femininity and go for a combination of a delicate script, Romantic Couple, and a louder, capitalised font, with a slightly square shape and no serifs, Agency FB. This also creates another pleasant contrast, prevents dullness and breaks the monotony.

Figure 1: The Cupcake Boutique Logo – logotype & symbol

The logo design has multiple variations, one with a logotype and symbol, one with just the logotype and an all-black variation.

In the future, the rest of the graphic elements will also be adapted accordingly, with a clean and elegant design, perfectly aligned with the image the brand wishes to convey.

Figure 2: The Cupcake Boutique Logo –

Figure 3: The Cupcake Boutique Logo –

Conclusion

As it happens with everything else, businesses in the confectionery industry have to adapt to this day and age in order to survive and thrive. Sugarcraft and cake design represent rather new takes in the field, and they serve as intensely visual branches. Therefore visual-based branding is the best route to take on for such a business.

In order to stay relevant, any kind of business must update their identity ever so often. This is where rebranding comes in and, sometimes, by simply implementing a visual refreshment or update from a graphic design standpoint, a significant difference can be achieved. Good design is the best way to stand out of the crowd and disseminate the business's personality in order to reach the audience that matters the most.

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Discursive strategies in communication of vulgarization of specialized information – communication of severe weather events

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Abstract: *Among the most frequent hazards in daily life are severe weather events. These phenomena have a short or medium time range, but they are very powerful and produce significant damage. Operational meteorology tries to foresee these phenomena as long as possible prior to their appearance, but sometimes there are communication disturbances in distribution of the meteorological information toward the competent authorities and the population. The goal of this paper is to present some forecast or communication errors concerning some severe weather events that occurred in the Western part of Romania between 2005 and 2017.*

Keywords: *operational meteorology, crisis communication, severe weather events, operational meteorology, communication strategies, emergency situations*

1. Introduction

Violent manifestation of certain weather phenomena, material and human damage resulting after these have led to the necessity of their real-time monitoring. Operational meteorology tries to limit the effects of dangerous weather phenomena by issuing weather alerts as accurate as possible concerning dangerous meteorological phenomenon or phenomena and their localization with a reasonable anticipation degree of at least ten to fifteen minutes before the appearance of the phenomenon. The interest for weather forecasts in general is emphasized by the high number of contracts concluded with media customers but natural persons also, who want to be informed accurately on the weather.

However, operational meteorology cannot include innovative communication methods of dangerous weather phenomena. For this reason, the alert coming from meteorologists must be processed by persons experienced in the field of communication but meteorology also so that they can issue correct alerts and the population to be informed correctly on the dangers that may arise. Unfortunately, the weather forecast in television broadcast are in general presented by persons not specialized in the field so that there are high risks in correct dissemination of the specialized information to the wide audience. This audience does not have the time to process the information and to search for other information sources, so they will not fully understand the transmitted information.

Scientist in the field claim that the most important part of crisis in the first place the management of information communication (internal and external) so that the crisis is some kind of rupture event that on one hand requires intense internal communication within an organization or an authority and the communication with external partners on the other hand (Chiciudean & David, 2011, p. 83).

2. Methods

In case of dangerous weather phenomena, it is very important to distinguish between what the forecast models show and what the

instruments for immediate analysis of the weather situation show (Doppler RADAR). Forecast models can offer a general view on certain phenomena that may occur in a geographical area and with the immediate forecast instruments corrections can be made or even new forecasts for a very short time period can be issued. (Marazan, 2017)

In order to simplify the research stage concerning meteorology I chose to use in the analysis of the meteorological factors as much as possible meteorological variables. The table below shows these variables and the measuring units used in operational meteorology in order to issue alerts for dangerous weather phenomena.

Another element taken into consideration is the instability indicators set. According to the intensity of the weather phenomenon, the analysis of these indicators will be used in order to show the intensity and type of the phenomenon. Thus, we try to gather data as accurate and real as possible in order to analyze the communication situation.

The data concerning instability indicators and the analysis of air measurements are used in a post-processed data model, in the sense that gross data would be too difficult to interpolate in a paper of this extend. So, data from the European Center for Medium Weather Forecast in Reading, UK are used.

Besides the analysis of the synoptic situation, the forecast of a convective situation is done by aid of instability indicators, too. These are determined by data obtained from air measurements of by numerical models. The data presented in Chapter IV are obtained by running the models ALADIN, ECMWF or ALARO. Instability indicators were ran the K Index (George Index), TTI (Total Totals Index), Boyden Index, SWEAT – Severe Weather Threat Index or Threat Score, the Lifted Index, Temperature-Humidity Index (ITU) and the CTI (Cross Totals Index) (Marazan, 2018, p. 29).

Compared to the communication models, these are relatively low researched in the operational meteorology. The analysis method I suggest is based on the alert time and the communication method of the weather alert. Another analysis criterion are the actions of the competent authorities (Emergency Situations Response Authority,

Prefect´s Office and the County Council) in order to limit the effects of dangerous weather phenomena.

Communication channels are the third evaluation criterion in the analysis of these phenomena. Although until 2010 only one official communication channel for such weather phenomena existed, we can say that these diversified in the past years, so that we have now more communication channels of these potential hazards of atmospheric origin. From these means we can count:

- official website of the National Meteorological Administration (www.meteoromania.ro);
- audio-visual communication channels (Radio, TV);
- alert apps of the Department of the Interior (RO-ALERT);
- other alert means using radio waves (only in army use);

Concerning language, we will analyze the vocabulary type used. Normally, in operational meteorology a specialized vocabulary and language with medium difficulty for the non-specialized population is used.

3. Results

After analyzing the five cases of severe weather phenomena we obtained concrete results concerning the monitoring system, forecast, alert, communication and diagnosis of such phenomena.

The five analyzed cases are as follows:

1. Mesoscale Convective System (MCS) from June 11th, 2009
2. Mesoscale Convective System (MCS) from July 7/8th, 2009
3. Convective system from de April 30th, 2009
4. Supercell convective system from July 14th, 2008
5. Derecho (pre-frontal storm line) from September 17th, 2017

The analysis of these phenomena has been presented detailed in another research, published within a conference indexed ISI-Thomson Reuters. From meteorological point of view, the analysis of these cases allowed the evaluation of the forecast, communication and diagnosis system of the atmospheric situation at the moment of the weather phenomena presented (Mircov, Okros, Cozma, Nicolin, & Marazan, 2018).

From operational point of view, weather alerts have been issued, so we cannot speak of fault of the meteorologists. From communication point of view, there have been cases that raised large question marks concerning the alert system for the population and the way these alerts have been communicated. The main problem that appears in case of an extreme weather phenomenon is in the first place the complexity of the inter-institutional alert system.

The second problem identified in the analysis is the steps that have to be followed in order to issue a weather alert. The elaboration scheme of the forecast is much too complicated and does not allow, as seen in case of the phenomenon from September 17th, 2017, to warn in time the population.

Furthermore, we observe the fact that the decisions to issue an orange and red code alert belongs completely to the National Forecast Center in Bucharest. The problem of centralization of the forecast system is extremely dangerous in case of dangerous weather phenomena due to the time lost with fulfilling all procedures stipulated in the forecast manual.

The third big problem identified is the unwillingness of meteorologists to issue a more severe alert in case of phenomena that can become even more severe. Together with the centralization of the forecast, this reluctance lead to the tragic consequences of the weather phenomenon form September 17th, 2017.

In the first place, the biggest problem identified is the use of a much too specialized language in the formulation of weather alerts. It is true that alerts in a specialized language are necessary, but generally the population cannot fully understand what alerts are issued in the information bulletins.

Furthermore, on a different note, the lack of an efficient alert and communication system in case of imminent dangerous weather phenomena is a large problem. The simple alert by website is not a viable solution and the televisions generally do not want to interrupt the broadcast in order to announce a weather phenomenon.

Another problem identified is the lack of compulsory protocols issued by government decisions concerning establishing online

information systems for the population. Alerts by electronic means are practically inexistent, what increases the risk in case of dangerous phenomena.

The complicated forecast scheme used at the moment can be replaced with another much simpler scheme and by use of modern technologies. Instead of meeting in the Prefect's Office, video conferences can be held. By this, it is not necessary that the decision factor from the locality to leave the locality and can maybe, together with persons in charge in the field, implement solutions to avoid calamities. Communication by means of data transfer systems is absolutely necessary in the era of speed, especially if a major risk is forecasted for a certain community.

On a different note, decentralization of decisions and allocation of more rights and freedoms to the Regional Weather Centers represent another potential solution to limit the alert time. Preparing of alerts could follow the scheme within the air traffic meteorology used by almost ten years in air traffic with good and very good results. Carrying out researches and marking on a map of interest area from severe phenomena point of view is another solution in order to reduce alert time. If areas are known as potentially dangerous areas, an early information can be issued so the authorities are informed concerning a potential hazard and have time to take measures to reduce the damages.

Finally, for the third problem, the reluctance to issue severe alerts and codes, it is recommended to analyze the phenomena by using both methods. After some practical experiences is to see that the issuance of a more severe alert leads to more thorough preparing so material damage and especially loss of human life can be prevented.

For the above problems, from the point of view of an efficient communication it is necessary to issue two alerts. One alert, prepared by using special terms is necessary for the authorities specialized in related fields and institutional and private partners as well. A second alert has to be sent to the population. This second alert has to be prepared in a common language with general vocabulary only, without alteration of the sense of the words. The population has to understand

the risks that will appear and that they have to seek cover. This proposal is not very hard to implement, given that meteorologists can prepare and issue two alerts. Thus, the population has more time for possible preparations in case of dangerous phenomena.

The second problem that has been emphasized is the problem of the alert systems. We are in the speed age, internet age and yet, we do not have functional apps in the field of weather alerts. The RO-Alert system, commissioned after the events in Timişoara from September 17th, 2017 is functioning most of the time, but unfortunately it is not optimized for selective and automatic alert of the population. In the Emergency Response Department, there is a group working of re-transmission of alerts through the Ro-Alert system. But the problem persists because this system is working only with internet connection. A suggestion to overcome this problem is the announcement by SMS of the population and by radio broadcast methods.

Thus, the alert system used by the National Weather Service in the United States can be taken over. In case of imminent dangerous phenomena, all broadcasting is interrupted both on television and radio by a tone for 15 seconds. After that, a siren is heard and the automatic message is broadcasted. This message includes the forecasted phenomenon in a common language and is simple and short. Furthermore, instructions are broadcasted concerning protection actions. In the United States, this system had unexpected results, so the death toll of tornados decreasing by almost 40%. The implementation of this system requires major investments but these will be amortized in time. Another system that can be relatively easy implemented having an already functioning infrastructure is the alert system by military alarms. It is well known that the alarm exercises are carried out each first Wednesday of each month and are broadcasted by loudspeakers installed in special places, with different tones. The message mentioned above in the previous suggestion can be implemented into that system. From this point of view, the expenses would be much lower with similar results.

The lack cooperation protocols for calamity prevention can be solved by obligating commercial television stations to include in their

program talk-shows, documentaries etc. on natural calamities at prime time. This suggestion is viable, but certain broadcasting rules have to be set out in order to inform correctly the population and so they not fall into the trap of „fake news".

Implementation of the above methods can significantly increase the receptivity of the population toward measures that have to be taken in order to protect goods and life in care of dangerous weather phenomena. These methods are already applied on experimental level in some systems in the air traffic with promising results.

4. Conclusions

I tried to underline the utility of radar information in the management of imminent dangerous weather phenomena by presenting specific cases. In this sense, I focused on mid-scale convective systems. These influence a larger area and generally are accompanied by a wide range of weather phenomena with destruction potential. Even if they are not organized in mid-scale level, convective storms can produce individually by a single phenomenon significant damage (for instance hail in agriculture, storms and strong winds or fast floods in power supply, transportation, agriculture etc.) and in extreme cases even loss of human life. I showed such cases also, more or less singular concerning manifestation of weather phenomena.

From communication point of view, a first step has to be taken in creating an easier way to transmit weather forecasts to the population is the issuance of weather alerts (yellow code, orange code and red code) through a single central alert system connected to the majority of information methods. Further, the alert has to be in two versions; one version in specialized language for authorities and state security and meteorology personnel only. The second alert has to be prepared in a common language, which is simple to understand. This second alert has to be broadcasted through media communication channels, mobile phone apps and SMS.

Introduction of a similar system to the United States, where television and radio broadcast is interrupted and an alert is broad-

casted in a common language accompanied by recommendations, is recommendable and relatively easy to implement.

The RO-Alert system has to be optimized in order to be able to send alerts not only via internet but by SMS also. Alarms in cities used for alarms in war cases must be equipped with a voice transmission system for alerts for imminent dangerous weather phenomena.

Further, the implementation of a simplified forecast scheme by de-centralization of the forecast systems, introduction of interest areas concerning appearance of dangerous weather phenomena and issuance of alerts oriented to extreme situations can increase the success rate of forecasts.

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