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Socially Responsible Digital Marketing in the Experience Economy

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Abstract

Purpose: The aim of the study is to develop practical recommendations for increasing social responsibility of enterprises when developing digital content in the field of digital marketing in the impression economy.

Findings: As a result of the study, the necessity of managing the social responsibility of an enterprise through the reasonable creation of digital content, taking into account the possible risks of negative impact, is substantiated. Methodological recommendations for the formation of socially responsible digital marketing in the impression economy are proposed. The necessity of cross-cultural analysis of content when entering foreign markets is substantiated.

Research and practical limitations/implications: The practical consequences of the application of the proposed recommendations are manifested in the long-term period. High-quality content, from the point of view of social responsibility to society, forms worthy values of a modern person, avoiding deformation of public consciousness by transforming values into a negative direction. The content development process should take into account the cross-cultural differences of the markets which a company intends to enter into.

Originality/value: The novelty of the conducted research lies in the application of the deduction method when analyzing the content of an enterprise in order to enhance social responsibility. First, all digital content is analyzed by SWOT analysis, and then each individual existing or newly created content is analyzed using a filter system in modified content analysis.

Paper type: Conceptual paper.

Keywords: social responsibility, digital marketing, impression economy, digital content, international business, multimedia publishing.

1. Introduction

The importance of social responsibility in the process of creating content is explained by the fact that content affects the mental and emotional background of users, can change their consciousness and behavior, thoughts and desires. If we consider the large-scale effect of social responsibility in the development of content, then we can say that the developer forms the culture, values and needs of society. The concept of socially ethical digital marketing implies a shift in focus from the product itself and its production to customer satisfaction, ethics and social benefit.

As Kotler et al. (2011) note, “over the past more than six decades, marketing has evolved from product leadership to consumer priority”. In modern conditions, digital marketing is being transformed in response to global changes in the environment, and begins to focus not just on the consumer, but on the person with his/her thoughts, feelings, soul (Dolgova, 2018). Having employed the potential of the concept of “meeting needs and superiority over competitors” (Kotler et al., 2011), marketing is transformed into new marketing of impression image. Companies are coming to realize that today’s consumers need not only goods and services, but also impressions that affect their spiritual side.

The scientific problem is that businesses do not think about the negative impact their advertising can have on the public. Enterprises strive to impress and surprise users so they can use destructive incentives (fear, violence, etc.). A lot of impressions are generated in the digital environment. According to the latest statistics as of 2020, over 4.5 billion people use the Internet (Sergeeva, 2020). Almost 60% of the world's population is online, and there is every reason to believe that by mid-2021, half of all people in the world will interact with digital content (Sergeeva, 2020). Businesses have moved to a new format of customer interaction, developing digital marketing as the primary tool for establishing user interaction with a brand. In such an environment, there is a high degree of social impact of digital marketing in the impression economy. Digital media are decisive in shaping value. As Sinyaeva (2018) notes, a key component in the structure of an intellectual product, including a digital one, is a component of corporate social responsibility using marketing technology tools, which allows satisfying the aggregate needs of society, influencing the harmony of its development and improving the quality of life on the Earth. According to this, an urgent task for enterprises is to ensure social responsibility while developing the digital content. This study contextualizes social responsibility in the digital economy and can be used to build a theoretical framework for the digital content development process in contemporary environment. The assumption in our study is that managing corporate social responsibility through sound digital content creation will minimize the negative impact on the public and generate greater customer loyalty. Thus, the aim of the study is to develop practical recommendations for increasing social responsibility of enterprises when developing digital content in the field of digital marketing in the impression economy.

2. Social responsibility in digital marketing

The issue of social responsibility of marketing activities is discussed among others in the works of Guzenko and Krivosheeva (2019), Danilova (2019), Dolgova (2018), Kotler et al. (2011), Orlov (2014), Oklander and Botushan (2011), Sinyaeva (2018) and other authors. However, some aspects of this multifaceted problem require further development.

Digital marketing is not only a tool for selling goods and services, but also impressions. The market is the theater, and the seller is the director who creates the show and the impressions. Consumer attention is becoming the new currency of the advertising market, so now there are no ready-made and easily scalable solutions. Everyone is trying everything in order to involve, give special emotions and impressions (Shukalova et al., 2019). Digital content has a significant impact on the formation of the inner world of the viewer (buyer) and his/her relationship to the outside world. Social responsibility management in digital marketing is especially relevant in the new environment. A person in the modern digital space is, in fact, a new subject, not the one that was, for example, 10 years ago. These changes are particularly visible among the youngest i.e. generation Z and centenarians, the so-called 'digital natives', for whom the virtual and real worlds are equal, in any case, and they do not make any distinctions, easily passing from one to another. Essentially, digital content shapes the personality of a modern person (Tapscott, 2019). Social responsibility in the process of creating digital content will be a responsible process, according to which developers take into account the interests of society, taking responsibility for influencing consumer value and the quality of life of society. As noted by Danilova (2019), the social impact of content on society consists of the ability to influence people's lifestyle, setting priorities, behavior patterns, tastes, and preferences. Socio-economic processes that arise under the influence of interaction with digital content require awareness of the subjects of advertising activities measures of their social responsibility. Multimedia publishers are beginning to play a key role in creating the information field, producing digital content for enterprises that deliver products and services.

It is necessary to clarify how enterprises influence the psyche of the modern consumer, his/her values, attitudes, preferences and the culture of society as a whole. The influence on the formation of values occurs through digital channels: social networks, instant messengers, sites, you tube, etc. The peculiarity of transferring the digital content is its saturation: in a short time period, an enterprise seeks transmitting the material that can simultaneously affect several channels of perception (auditory and visual). The impact of content can occur at different stages of the user's readiness to purchase (Figure 1).

Figure 1 shows the dependence of a user's interest in digital content on his/her willingness to make a purchase. So, for example, in phase 1,

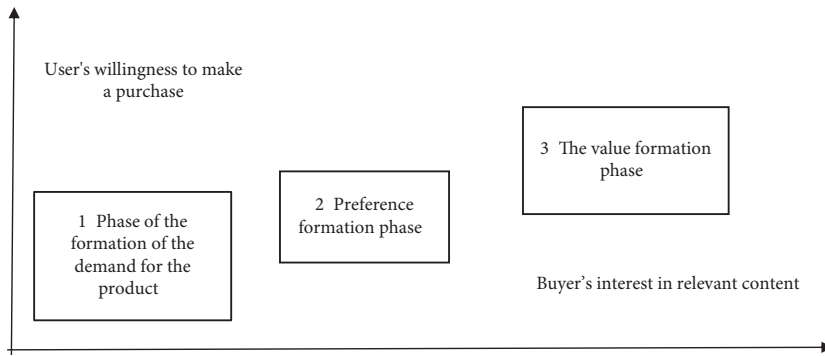


Figure 1. The relationship of interest in content and desire to make a purchase
Source: Authors' development.

the user does not have a need for some products, so his/her interest in the accompanying descriptive content will be low. In this case, content developers have the task of not only explaining the benefits of the product to the user, but also, first of all, of attracting attention, and secondly, of forming a need for a specific product. The oversaturation of the information space leads to a decrease in susceptibility, and often to a complete rejection of any information by a person. In this phase, the content will be as primitive as possible, that is, simple and understandable. In this phase, it will be inappropriate to tell long stories or promote ambiguous content that requires imagination to perceive it. The developer needs to explain to the user that this product is necessary for him/her to use, to form a need for purchase. As Shukalova et al. (2019) note, users are in contact with the main digital advertising formats (advertising in the news feed of social networks, banner advertising and out-stream video advertising) for a very short time: on average, no longer than two seconds. In 60% of cases, contact lasts one second. The exception is in-stream video ads, which users have been in contact with for more than two seconds. The gaze no longer lingers on standard banners. Young people are so used to ads, commercials and spam that their brains can easily filter out unnecessary information. As Overchenko notes (Shukalova et al., 2019), the brain works in such a way that it chooses those tasks that are simpler. The media sector understands this well, so we are watching an escalation of primitive content.

In the second and third phases, when the content is already of interest to the user, the developer can give more detailed and complete

information about the product, use more emotions, tell stories, create impressions, which is a more complex form of digital content. This is due to the fact that the user has already had the desire and willingness to interact with the content describing the product, because in order to make a purchase, he/she wants to get acquainted with its characteristics in more detail or make a comparison with similar products. Keeping attention on content happens automatically. The difference between phases 2 and 3 is explained by the fact that in phase 2 the consumer has not yet decided on the method of consuming goods, brand, delivery method, etc. He/she has needs, but he/she has not yet formed a preference for the product for one or another characteristic. In the 3rd phase, the user has finally decided on the choice in favor of a proposal and studies the content proposed by the developers. Characteristics of the phases of interest in the product are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of the phases of interest in the product

No	Developer’s primary goals	Desire to purchase a product and interact with content	Content
Phase 1	Capturing attention Formation of the need for the purchase of goods / services	Undefined or missing	Primitive, understandable, catchy
Phase 2	Maintaining attention Formation of preferences for a specific brand of goods / services	Undefined	Explaining, understandable, catchy
Phase 3	Holding attention Forming impressions	Definitely present	Deep, imaginative, detailed

Source: Authors’ development.

It should be noted that in the phases 1 and 2, the developer’s desire to attract the user’s attention may be based on the lowest human needs and fears. For example, a digital advertisement product may contain micro-scenes of violence against which a hero overcomes obstacles. Even minor infusions of inappropriate content can be vividly perceived by users, and such information can transform the perception of the world and values of users in a negative way. In this regard, the developer should be socially responsible when developing digital

content. Globally, we can say that low-quality content, from the point of view of social responsibility, can deform public consciousness by transforming values in a negative direction.

3. Methods of social responsibility management in the development of digital content

As methods of social responsibility management in the development of digital content, it is proposed to use the deductive method of moving from a general analysis of enterprise content to a private analysis of a specific multimedia product. We propose to carry out general analysis of content using the SWOT analysis method, and to carry out private analysis using content analysis.

SWOT analysis allows to evaluate comprehensively all the digital content produced by an enterprise, assess its strengths and weaknesses, and identify threats and opportunities from the point of view of social responsibility. Weaknesses and threats are of increased concern to management, the impact of which should be minimized. Strengths and capabilities should be maintained and developed. An example of the SWOT analysis performed is presented in Table 2.

When talking about weaknesses, it is necessary to emphasize the necessity to be honest with users. Now, when the information spreads almost instantly, if a brand finds itself outside the philosophy and values it declares, its audience immediately becomes aware of it. In this case, it will be very difficult to maintain its loyalty, given the saturation of the market. Correcting the situation will require significant efforts on the part of the marketing team. Today the audience values, first of all, frankness and sincerity. An enterprise can be imperfect and vulnerable, and consumers are willing to forgive this if they do not try to resort to deception.

According to statistics, 40% of consumers will belong to Generation Z and Centennials already in 2020 (Borzakov, 2018). These people are interested in companies that address global poverty and hunger, the environment and climate change, human rights and other social issues (Borzakov, 2018). This is important to understand when shaping digital content. The user's perception of advertising in the media is also changing. Native content will work no longer, so there is need for high-quality native content. Native content is understood as natural

Table 2. SWOT analysis of content from a social responsibility perspective

Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Component for the disclosure of human potential (self-development) • Entertainment bias (humor, etc.) • Aesthetic component • Creative component (self-expression, creativity) • Intellectual component (education, scientific activity, analytics) • Communicative component (content promoting interaction, communication) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formation of moral outlooks on life and values • Motivating to realize dreams, plans and desires • Personal development, the formation of goals, desires, aspirations • Formation of aesthetic tastes, musical and artistic preferences • The therapeutic effect of the content • Improving self-esteem and self-confidence
Weaknesses	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Component of immorality • Component of aggression, violence • The component of lack of will (achieving quick results without effort, fear of new things) • Component of unjustified risk (presentation of a challenge to a person incomparable with life or with high material and physiological waste) • Fake components (false information) • Components of human vices (lies, deception, gluttony, adultery, etc.) • Components of extremist content and racial, gender and other types of confrontation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative transformation of the values of young people in the phase of formation and growth (for example, distortion of ideas about love, friendship, moral qualities of a person) • Formation of radical political and extremist views • Deformation of aspirations for self-development, passivity due to the loss of time for interaction with content • Propaganda of bad habits and degradation of personality, health • Ambiguous content from influencers (ambiguous interpretation of content coming from people who inspire trust)

Source: Authors' development.

information that is not perceived as imposed advertising, but serves the interests of the user. Such content has a socially useful function. For Generation Z, digital content is valuable for their ability to help and support them in self-realization, the ability to engage and tell stories.

Content analysis is the analysis and interpretation of the content of the text (Pashinyan, 2012). Interpretation of the results is obtained in accordance with the goals and objectives of a particular study. As a result of the analysis, such characteristics of the textual material are identified and evaluated, which allow one to draw conclusions about what the author wanted to emphasize or hide. It is possible to identify

the percentage of prevalence in society of the subjective meanings of an object or phenomenon. Content analysis is based on the study of words, topics and messages, focusing on the content of the message. Quantitative content analysis involves answering the question: “What is being said?” (studying the intricacies of the content). Quality content analysis answers the question: “How do they say?” (exploring ways to present a message). Qualitative content analysis pays attention to the following aspects: is the photo provided to the text, what are the dimensions of the heading, readability, the presence of hyperlinks, design, compliance with the heading, errors, etc.

According to the authors, for social responsibility management in the development of social content, a qualitative analysis is of interest, which makes it possible to clarify the key categories of content, based on the calculation of the frequency of words used in the text (similar calculations are made for video materials). The identified units of text are grouped into categories, for example, the category ‘family’ can be classified as units of text: child, father, mother, relatives, etc. Categories allow to enlarge the understanding of the meaning of the message.

In addition to the classical high-quality content analysis, it is proposed at the final stage to use a system of social responsibility filters of digital content. The selected words that make up the semantic core of the main text are analyzed according to two proposed filters: the filter for the presence of positive and the filter for the absence of negative (cf. Table 3).

It is proposed to compare the highlighted words with the emotions they evoke. If it is revealed that the analyzed words are held by the second filter, it is necessary to remove them from the content or revise the essence of the message, since the exclusion of these words may not

Table 3. Social responsibility filters of digital content

Positive presence filter	No negative filter
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calming, pacification • Improved mood • Excitement, elation • Safety, comfort • Self-respect, self-confidence • Love, acceptance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anxiety, restlessness • Aggressiveness • Self-doubt, fear of the new • Depression, destructive states; • Isolation, asociality

Source: Authors’ development.

change the negative content. By negative content, we mean content that negatively affects the user and society as a whole, transforms values in a destructive direction. The use of modified content analysis will reduce the risks of negative impact of content and strengthen aspects of social responsibility.

Internet business makes it easy to enter international markets by offering products through websites. In our opinion, special attention should be paid to cross-cultural analysis of content in foreign markets and the emerging social responsibility towards foreign users. Cross-cultural analysis involves a comparison of the content of a particular target audience: its culture, traditions, perception of reality, etc. The mentality of a nation determines the preferences and values of a particular consumer audience. Each country, each nation has its own national unique features of the perception of the world, which in turn is reflected in the features of digital content (Table 4).

Table 4. Features of digital content in the world

Country	Features of digital content
Japan	Sensuality, imagery, emotional message; a high load falls on the sensory channel of perception, there is a lot of positively colored vocabulary.
Ukraine	Texts less often appeal to emotions, more often refer to images of group activity, success and power. They are more rational, explain the merits of the product, as a cognitive attitude they often contain the image of an ill-wisher, an ‘enemy’ who must be defeated.
United States	Group orientation, success and power, straightforward, obtrusive ‘head-on’ advertising is well received. Actors in 70% of commercials look directly into the eyes of the consumer from the screen.
United Kingdom	Emphasis on creativity and subtle humor, traditions, customs, etiquette, good taste. Ordinary advertising messages are perceived as banal, primitive and annoying.
Germany	Fact-oriented, ultimate reliability. Responsibility, convincing and rigorous argumentation, ease of presentation.
France	The French do not trust advertising, so straightforward advertising does not take root here. Therefore, advertising here is restrained, devious, with indirect arguments. The advertising appeal is based on a strong, beautiful, sophisticated idea, which should ‘tempt’ the French to buy. The reason for the purchase is the pleasure of beautiful advertising.

Source: Authors’ development based on Guzenko and Krivosheeva (2019) and Vugman (2005).

When speaking about the analysis of content at the international level, it is necessary to take into account the symbolism of flowers, facial expressions and gestures, the peculiarities of translation, traditions and values of the people (Burnet, 2011). Each country has its own advertising law, some provisions of which may conflict with the laws of other countries (Vugman, 2005). For instance, Saudi Arabia has banned advertisements featuring women, and Iraq has banned advertisements for imported goods. The use of certain elements or forms of advertising may be prohibited e.g.: the use of the expressions ‘guarantee’, ‘vouch for’, etc. in advertising (England), the use of a combination of national colors in advertising (Italy – white and green); the image of the state emblem (Brazil). The legislation of some countries prohibits the distribution of prizes, souvenirs, coupons, and promotional offers like “two for the price of one”. Ban on comparative advertising (UK, Germany, France, Sweden, Italy) is another example. Prohibitions and restrictions regarding children in advertising should be also mentioned, e.g. showing children at food (Italy); children in dangerous situations (Sweden); advertising for children (Belgium); direct appeal to children in advertising messages (Austria); the need for special permission for such advertising (France). There are as well bans and restrictions on advertising of alcoholic beverages (e.g. in Switzerland). As Guzenko and Krivosheeva (2019) note the main standard of China’s advertising is that it should serve the spiritual and physical health of the people, help improve the quality of goods and services.

4. Conclusions

The ubiquitous distribution of digital content, as well as the introduction of new technologies, will continue to occur, which will only increase the necessity for social responsibility of enterprises to the user in particular and society in general. Thus, the added value of this study is to propose methods of social responsibility management in the development of digital content. The recommended methodology is based on classical methods of SWOT analysis, content analysis, and also includes authors’ developments. At the first stage, the content developer needs to determine what phase of interaction the brand and the user are in. The sequence of further actions will be different, since the developer will have different goals e.g., to grab the user’s attention

or to keep the attention and support the existing interest. The authors offer a model that describes the phases of user interest in the product and recommendations for the formation of appropriate digital content. Having decided on the tasks of digital content, in the second stage, the developer is recommended to analyze the newly developed and existing digital content using the SWOT analysis method. The purpose of the audit is to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of digital content in terms of social responsibility. It is necessary to determine the understanding of how much the created content is socially useful. The third stage involves a more thorough clarification of the meaning of the created content through content analysis. This method allows to identify the most frequently encountered words in the message and correlate them with larger semantic categories. The identified units of text are grouped into categories, for example, the category 'family' can be classified as units of the text: child, father, mother, relatives, etc. Categories allow to enlarge the understanding of the meaning of the message. The method of content analysis has been modified by creating filters that catch unwanted content to manage the social responsibility of the developer in the process of preparing digital content. The cross-cultural features of content creation in the international environment have been also summarized. The necessity of using cross-cultural content analysis for the infusion of the created content into the intercultural space is substantiated.

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