

New media as devices supporting Corporate Social Responsibility

Nowe media jako narzędzia wspierające Społeczną Odpowiedzialność Przedsiębiorstw

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Abstract: The main purpose of this article is a brief presentation of the conception of the new media in contrast to the traditional media, such as press, the radio and television. The author follows to show the advantages of the new media as devices in interpersonal communication, information distribution, shaping of viewpoints, entertainment. The new media are also a stimulus to take social actions. The article shortly presents the main ideas of Corporate Social Responsibility and its influence on business actions taken to contribute to increasing social awareness and benefits coming from such actions taken by companies and global corporations.

Streszczenie: Głównym celem poniższego artykułu jest ogólna charakterystyka nowych mediów oraz wymienienie cech, które odróżniają je od tzw. mediów tradycyjnych, wykazując obszary do których nowe media są w stanie dotrzeć skuteczniej. Autor stara się także zwięźle scharakteryzować wybrane zagadnienia CSR Corporate Social Responsibility, które są istotne dla budowania nowoczesnej gospodarki, polityki społecznej oraz polityki ekologicznej. Wskazuje także informacyjną oraz stymulującą rolę nowych mediów w wspieraniu działań polityki CSR oraz podaje wybrane działania w ramach CSR podejmowane przez firmy i globalne korporacje.

Key words: media, new media, Internet, Corporate Social Responsibility

Słowa kluczowe: media, nowe media, Internet, Corporate Social Responsibility

1. Media and new media

Contemporary reality is impossible to be conceived without media. Their influence is so strong that they are an integral part of all societies and their role seems to be difficult to underappreciate. Everybody is able to answer the question „What are media?”, because they are pervasive and we meet them all the time. To precise the understanding of the term „media”, it is significant to present the main human relationship, namely, interpersonal communication and media are located within this process. The first role of media is to distribute information to as many people as it is possible, therefore the device looms large, because its capacity to spread some information is desirable by authors in order to reach communication receivers. As media distribute various information to numerous receivers, the content is diversified and matched to receivers' inclinations, thus each person expects particular pieces of information. Besides, media throughout their information functions simultaneously shape viewpoint of their audience, therefore their functions are significant for education and shaping social consciousness. Additionally, media amuse people with a large number of entertaining forms depending on the preferences of an audience. One of the most significant roles of media is to stimulate and inspire people to create their own ideas and projects and share with the others.

As we delve into the theory of media, we may come across numerous types and distinctions of this concept, but one of them seems to be important for contemporary analyses of global reality and mechanisms shaping all relations in social reality. The main media are the press, the radio, television and the Internet and they fulfill basic roles of media communication, however, the diversity of communication forms force researchers to distinguish between different types of media. Actually we may differentiate between the traditional media and the new media. The first group includes the press, the radio and television, and the Internet is classified as the new medium. Lev Manovich in *The Language of New Media* proposes the principles of the new media, as: numerical representation, modularity, automation, variability and transcoding [1]. However, the above factors seem to be vague for some people, therefore, the main factor which differs the traditional media from the new media is the interactivity, which means that receivers may influence the content and interact with the information [1]. In the case of traditional media, the receiver is passive, because the content of a TV programme or a radio show is top-down planned and constant, and listeners or viewers are not able to add anything to the content. Every Internet user is able to add their comment to the article and indirectly influence the way how it is perceived and by other users. Moreover, every Internet user can be an author of the information content and their subject is limited, press articles, radio

show sand TV programmes are self-censored by editors. This is the most significant advantage of the new media, because quiet users may be creators and publishers of the information content, which aids development and variety of the information flow.

The characteristic of the traditional media has changed and publishers perceive that their media should have been reorganized and adjusted to new digital circumstances, therefore the forms of the press, the radio and television have evolved into digital forms and their information, except a particular form of transmission, so that be still accessible for users. The mediabox has become such an important device that the traditional media follow to alter their character[2]. It is worth to mention the media reach which was limited to reading skills in the case of the press', a broad-radio receiver for radio listeners and a television set for TV audience. Accessibility is the key for every media and the openness of the Internet is much more advanced, which is presented below in the diagram (Fig. 1).

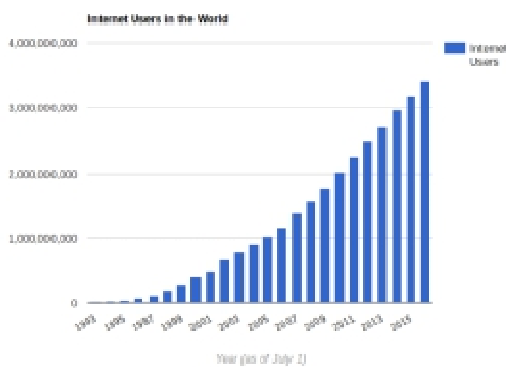


Fig. 1. Number of Internet Users in the World [3]

The growth of the number of Internet users is rapid, because the proportion of them has increased from 414,794,957 (6,8% of the world population) in 2000 to 3,424,971,237 (46,1%) in 2016. This state is going to increase systematically and an extended forecast shows that this tendency will be maintained [3].

New trends in communication, information distribution and entertainment are correlated with the development of the Internet, which means that this medium has become the public space where more and more people are able to interact with the information content and authors of media information are obliged to bear in mind the pervasiveness and power of this medium.

2. Corporate Social Responsibility and new media

The 21st century has brought many changes in the management on many levels and different ways, and the leading role of the Internet enabled numerous ways to create and develop assignments for all types of companies and corporations. The flow of the information leads managers to open new directions of their efforts, financial institutions are able to work more efficiently, which is the manifestation of new level in entrepreneurship. Such conditions are conducive to innovate new enterprises.

However, new enterprises and directions demand new solutions and regulations, which are necessary to exist and bring dividends to their authors. In reference to innovations, companies make efforts to change their characteristics and take non-profit actions. Ethics and prosocial actions are becoming more and more important because for past years they have not been taken and have led to

many disruptions in social reality, environment and business world. Many organizations, foundations and communities encourage enterprises to change some elements in their strategy in order to improve ethical standards, charity or environmentally friendly actions. CRS may be called “corporate citizenship”, which means that corporates are also responsible for the environment and social issues, thus they are encouraged to take many different actions non-connected with their main business strategies. The European Union took steps to formalize CSR as strategy for its policy and on the conference in Brussels on 3-4 February 2015, it encompassed some of many areas as [4]:

- Financial Institutions,
- Responsible Investment,
- Innovation, Competitiveness and Growth,
- Public Procurement,
- Business and Human Rights,
- Education and Human Capital,
- International Market Access.

Such view shows that CSR actions are widely planned and directed to many aspects of economy, finances and social policy. The European Union covenanted to support all actions taken within CSR, such efforts aid integration of international corporations, tracking levels of trust in business, ethical labor practices, volunteering and promotion of positive social and environment changes and raise their image [5].

For every action to be successful, it should be promoted expansively in order to reach as many receivers as it is possible, Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives often transcend national borders and are addressed at global communities and to achieve this goal it is fundamental to find the best medium. Only the Internet and social networks (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) enable widespread ideas and reach out to potentially interested corporations. The disadvantage of the traditional media is the limit to national receivers, thus the new media are the only ways to promulgate CSR efforts.

The role of the new media is not only to promote efforts, but also to enable to come true such actions what means that most of enterprises take place online, but results are discernible in the real life. One of many actions of this characteristic is Do Good Buy Us[6] which changes consumerism by selling products on-line, another one is PopNod [7] which also sells products on-line and donates many needy people. Global corporations are also involved in CSR efforts, for example Siemens works in many different areas and follows to expand its actions [8]. Commercial corporations also financial institutions and banks, one of them is Deutsche Bank which supports to reduce CO²-emission [9]. There are many more examples of corporation and institution efforts within Corporate Social Responsibility and the common denominator for their activities is the growth of awareness of their participation in care of the social issues and the environment.

3. Conclusion

The new media are the way to gain the information for many companies, but their role is crucial, we may treat the information distributed by Internet as the first step to take actions. The information about possible actions is an incentive to make move for corporations, without opportunities to unlimited information distribution any actions within the framework of CSR would not be taken or results would be less discernible.

Literature

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