

## Aspects of Social-Media Interaction and Society

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### Abstract

Social media has managed to revolutionise the whole world, not just the concept of public relations. How often have we felt the need to capture a beautiful holiday moment – a snapshot to share on social media accounts? How often have we wanted to share our best culinary experiences with friends or followers? The examples could go on and on, and whether we realize it or not, we end up influencing our followers by what we choose to post online.

We all use the internet to get the information we need almost every day. In this context, it's no wonder that the phrase "google it" is on everyone's lips.

Of course, the internet doesn't just serve us personally. Organisations are now aware that most of the population is online. For this reason, they work hard to have a strong digital image and to reach their target audience. Whether we are talking about public or private institutions, small or large organisations, it is almost impossible for their representatives not to embrace the concept of online communication and marketing.

**Keywords:** social media, Internet, society, followers, information

Any organisation can use social media platforms in their public relations plan. Whether we are talking about organic content or promoted posts, any company that wants to create a strong image and grow will need to think about a strategy in the first instance. It is an ongoing effort to understand the desires of the target audience but also the need for change, a need that constantly arises in consumer society.

When it comes to social media campaigns, there are plenty of ways in which organisations can achieve the much-desired results, but achieving success requires a well-established plan. This includes seven steps that can shape the story behind the strategy: conducting the audit, defining objectives, identifying audiences, choosing the right influencers, choosing social platforms, and measuring and testing.

### Conducting an audit

The first step in a social media marketing strategy is assessing the digital assets available. We are talking about the organisation's website, blog and social media accounts, abbreviated in the literature and SM. All of this evaluation should be done against the competitive environment. What content are competing organisations posting and on what platforms? What tone of voice are they using? Can we approach the subject so that we find our voice?

## **Defining objectives**

After analysing digital assets, competitors, and audiences, organisations need to set objectives for social media campaigns. Concretely, these can be establishing new contacts, increasing sales, brand loyalty, etc. Of course, all these objectives must follow the organisation's overall communication strategy and be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound).

## **Audience identification**

Every organisation wants its message to be delivered effectively. As a result, the target audience should be established at the outset. In practice, specialists build customer profiles in order to be able to implement a strong social media strategy. Examples of this can be conducting surveys and collecting web data.

## **Choosing the right influencers**

In modern society, the buying decision is influenced by the advice of online celebrities. Influencers thus play a particularly important role in public relations and marketing strategy on social media and this idea is supported even by researchers. Twitter, for example, claims that 49% of consumers rely on their advice. On the other hand, 2023 brings us face-to-face with a new phenomenon: de-influencing, which is the process of reducing the influence of public figures on key consumers. "De-influencing is important because it encourages us to be more critical of the information we receive and not to rely solely on the recommendations of influencers...On the other hand, the phenomenon can have a significant impact on marketing strategies. Companies should therefore be more careful in choosing the influencers they work with and ensure that they are genuine and credible.

## **Choosing social platforms**

Social platforms play an important role in delivering the desired message, and choosing the right ones is necessary for achieving the objectives. In this respect, testing and learning algorithms and knowing the main differences between social platforms are decisive factors in increasing the number of visitors with online promotion campaigns.

## **Measurement and testing**

Regardless of the strategies chosen, organisations will constantly track results. Such measurements can be:

- Cost per click;
- Conversion rates;
- Number of brand mentions;
- Number of followers;
- Number of comments and mentions;

- Impressions.

By analysing the seven steps, we can say that a strong digital marketing strategy cannot exist without social media. There are many types of communication, but the one that attracts our attention the most, but also takes up a large part of today's reality, is online communication. Reference is made here to that type of communication carried out through social media and various other virtual portals, such as forums, groups, comment sections, etc. This type of communication is preferred by most people, as it is a much quicker way of sending messages and reacting in a useful way.

Users use the internet to connect on social networks, making it much easier to communicate with loved ones, colleagues or other people, and share documents, images and videos at an astonishingly fast speed. We all use the internet to get the information we need almost every day. In this context, it's no wonder the phrase "google it" is on everyone's lips.

Of course, the internet doesn't just serve us personally. Organisations are now aware that most of the population is online and work hard to have a strong digital image and reach their target audience. Whether it is about public or private institutions, small or large organisations, it is almost impossible for their representatives not to embrace the concept of online communication and marketing. Even though the relationship between the internet and organisations in Romania started quite timidly, lagging far behind other countries, most managers or leaders firmly believe that developing a public relations office specialised in online communication will guarantee success in achieving their goals.

If we were to talk, for example, about a private company selling customized t-shirts, the presence on the internet, and therefore on social media, is extremely important for reaching the sales target. The recipe is simple enough to understand, but it can be complicated to put into practice if professionals are not called in. Specifically, the organisation needs new customers and we have already established that they are present online. But how can they become future customers? There are many ways in which organisations can substantially increase their sales, and we will focus on three of them:

### **Paid promotion**

This is the most effective and most often used way to attract new customers. As well as giving control over the content displayed to potential buyers, you can make accurate predictions for future ads. Consumer preferences, target audience typology, age, gender, etc. are taken into consideration here. Where is the paid promotion done? In social media – Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube. Google AdWords is another tool preferred by organisations, while some turn to various banners/articles inserted on other niche sites or specialised blogs with high traffic.

### **Informative articles posted on the website**

It goes without saying that in 2023 Romania, every organisation, no matter how small, should have a well-developed website. Those who have introduced online PR campaigns and tools know that

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informative articles are highly valued by consumers. Such articles can be placed on the organisation's website in the "Blog" section.

### **E-mail marketing**

Even if the most sceptical among us would say that e-mail promotion is on its way out or that the idea of a newsletter is a thing of the past, some companies manage to retain their customers precisely through these messages sent regularly. A good example is Bookzone, a publishing house that has reached the top of readers' preferences throughout the country, but also in the Republic of Moldova in just a few years. The public relations department is clearly made up of experienced people who know how to manage both internal and external activity – in relations with customers and promotion strategies. Even if at first glance, anyone would think that this company invests a considerable budget only in Google Adwords and Social Media, in reality, their email campaigns are all the rage among reading enthusiasts, even though they send a newsletter every day, which for some would seem annoying and tiresome.

Starting from the idea that the communication process is an essential element in the optimal functioning of every community, but also from the two public relations activities mentioned in the first sub-chapter, trade promotion and marketing, the development and promotion of a brand image, we can say that the evolution of the Internet has revolutionised what today means strategy and PR.

Today, everyone can have an account on Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, TikTok, Twitch, and YouTube. Many create perfect lives there, which often have nothing to do with reality. On the other hand, today's society sets the bar as high as possible and many people are becoming more and more careful about what they post on social media. Instagram, for example, allows users to add certain highlights to their profile – a kind of story that doesn't disappear after 24 hours, but rather outlines their personality and gives followers a little 'teaser' about the content they might find on that page. And so, people having nothing to do with the culinary arts end up creating their own "recipes", or people with no background in psychology post profound inspirational quotes that they believe will help others. The examples could go on and on, and there is one certainty: whether they are creating their perfect lives or posting their reality online, most people today have accounts on various social media platforms. The phone is part of our daily routine and more and more people start their morning by glancing at what's new on Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok.

Let's stop, for a moment, at the need for communication. Today, everyone is exposed to numerous messages every day. Whether it's our personal or professional lives, each of us is both a sender and a receiver on a daily basis. For this reason, communication is effective when impact and feedback are guaranteed. It is the sender who chooses to deliver the message and tailor it to the person in front of them. The receiver receives the message and decodes and understands it according to their beliefs and values. For this reason, reactions may differ from one receiver to another, and therefore from one person to another. So, we can talk about love at first click.

However, social media is more than just a photo and even more than the ability to keep in touch with loved ones. Social media is now a tool used in public relations strategies and perfectly outlines what we call digital marketing and is the first thing we think of when we talk about this

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phenomenon. It's not easy to use social media as a means of communicating with the right audience, but that's why there are specialists who have studied this field extensively and who can manage to bring organisations considerable profit precisely by being present on these platforms. Why profit? Because any organisation that wants to be seen by as many people as possible has only one interest: to make a profit. How is this profit measured with social media? It's simple: through conversions.

In conclusion, promotion is an important part of the work of institutions of all kinds. Whether we're talking about private or public institutions, institutions that choose to do various approaches at a professional or amateur level, social media advertising plays a key role in marketing strategy. Initially, people stepped into this world out of curiosity. Then they started to like being just a click away from friends. Later, they were fascinated by the idea that they could interact with their idols, public figures whose presence is much more dynamic than television appearances. Eventually, many realised that through these networks they could become stars themselves. That's how today's influencers came to be.

People spend more and more time online, as proven by numerous studies and research. For this reason, companies have realised that their advertising strategies need to focus on social media. Those who own these pages are constantly improving the user experience, as well as the promotion level and tracking of strategies and campaign results. The simplest and most eloquent example of this is Meta. What Meta Business is doing today, with its post-impact analysis tool, is fascinating. With just one click, you can see the right time to post on social media so that you can reach as many users as possible, people interested in the product or service you are promoting.

It's indeed quite hard to promote a state institution, where budgets are limited or perhaps even completely lacking for online campaigns. The discussion may become even more interesting as more and more private individuals are choosing to invest large sums in ADS and PPC campaigns. Competition is becoming fiercer by the day, and the cost per click is rising with the acute need for private individuals to rank high in the search rankings.

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