FEATURES OF INCREASING THE UKRAINIAN MEDIA’S COMPETITIVENESS THROUGH APPLYING VARIOUS PR CAMPAIGNS IN THE CONDITIONS OF MILITARY OPERATIONS

a Tetiana Shalman, b Nadiia Bilan, c All Bashuk, d Mariia Hurytska, e Tetiana Sashchuk, f Tetiana Leontieva

ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of the research is to determine the standpoint of the Ukrainian media companies’ chief executives and scientists conducting studies in the direction of analyzing the Ukrainian media regarding the features of using various PR campaigns to increase the media market entities’ competitiveness under conditions of war.

Theoretical framework: Mass media and communication occupy the leading place in these processes as a link connecting the global information world with its consumers and involving them in exchanging information.

Design/methodology/approach: The analytical and bibliographic method was used during the research to study the scientific literature on applying various PR campaigns. Analysis, synthesis, induction, deduction was applied to process scientific information. A questionnaire survey and theoretical methods (systemic-structural, comparative, logical-linguistic, abstraction, idealization) were used to practically clarify certain aspects of multimedia tools in the field of visual communications and in design education in the conditions of military operations.

Findings: The analysis of the scientific literature on the issue under study and the questionnaire results showed that the concept of developing a strategy to increase the competitiveness of the media sector is based on the theory of strategic management.

Research, Practical & Social implications: It involves taking into account several factors when using various PR campaigns, the effective consideration of which is an important prerequisite for the competitiveness of media market entities.

Originality/value: The necessity for further investigations is related to increasing mass media’s competitiveness in the context of the crisis and challenges related to the Internet integration into everyday life.

---

a Associate Professor of the Department of Advertising and Public Relation, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Kyiv, Ukraine, E-mail: shalman.tanya@gmail.com, Orcid: https://orcid.org/0002-9854-1539
b Doctor of Social Communications, Professor, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Kyiv, Ukraine, E-mail: bilan_n@ukr.net, Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2793-5848
c Doctor of Social Communication, Associate Professor, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Kyiv, Ukraine, E-mail: gella_m@ukr.net, Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5535-8999
d Associate Professor, Taras Shevchenko Kyiv National University, Kyiv, Ukraine, E-mail: racta@ukr.net, Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2054-0405
e Assistant Professor, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Kyiv, Ukraine, E-mail: sashchuk@knu.ua, Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0758-2045
f Assistant, Department of Advertising and Public Relations of the Educational and Scientific Institute of Journalism, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Kyiv, Ukraine, E-mail: leontievatatiana@ukr.net, Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7240-0260
Keywords: competitiveness in the media environment, media trends in Ukraine, competitive business methods, public relations in media companies, trends in the media sector, military actions.

Mass media and communication occupy the leading place in these processes as a link connecting the global information world with its consumers and involving them in exchanging information (Wellbrock, Buschow & Arango Kure, 2020). The issue of the influence of public relations, that is, relations with the public, on the companies’ activities in the media sector of the economy is relevant for many countries and organizations in their spheres of influence. Undoubtedly, the impact of PR on the activities of media companies at the current stage of social development is significant. It is intensively discussed in scientific circles. The theoretical part of the present research substantiates the concept, factors and conditions of developing Ukraine’s media market in competitiveness conditions. The practical part of the research includes a description of the fundamental aspects on which the subjects of Ukraine’s media space compete. It determines the factors that have the greatest influence on the modern media market from the standpoint of forming a competitive environment. These factors determine the choice of types of PR campaigns for developing a media market entity, the most important goal of a PR campaign for a media organization, as well as the most effective types of PR campaigns from the viewpoint of increasing their competitiveness. Based on the research results, conclusions were drawn on the issues raised during the survey. In particular, it has been established that media space entities compete taking into account the basic aspects: the volume of income and the time allocated to them by the audience. In addition, the factors most influencing the modern media market in terms of forming a competitive environment are the impact of modern technologies, changing sources of media income, competition for free time and the transformation of subjective relations between the author and the content’s consumer. At the same time, the most important factors determining the choice of PR campaigns’ types for developing a media entity are the nomenclature and range of services of the media company, the presence of relevant scientific, technical and technological potential and the acceptability of the ways of implementing the PR campaign. The survey has shown that the most important goal of a PR campaign for a media organization is to advertise goods and services, create an image of the organization, company and management, manage public opinion, analyze and regulate public relations (economic, social, state, financial, international) using information methods. The most effective types of PR campaigns for a media organization in the context of increasing a media entity’s competitiveness are Internet promotions, coverage of contests, public events and mass cultural events, and Internet mailing.
2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The type of product characterizes the market. The media industry is an atypical field from this viewpoint, as it produces a product simultaneously offered on two markets—goods and services. Thus, the mass media operate in a dual market of goods and services, which is also called a dual market of media products. The dual market of goods and services is the most important feature of the media economy, distinguishing it from other branches of the modern economy (Amodu et al., 2019).

Numerous media companies are operating in the service market. They provide information services, organizing the access of such companies to the audience or creating audiences, which are then “sold” to advertisers.

The term “media markets” often includes the interaction of mass media with the people, public institutions (government, parliament, courts, antimonopoly bodies, trade unions) that influence the economic activity of mass media. It is a public space where the media presents ideas and concepts requested by the audience. The modern media market plays a significant role in behavioral education and formation of the population’s value system (Abeza, O’Reilly, Seguin, 2017), (Nyagadza, Mazurse & Borz, 2021).

Ukraine is an equal member of the world community. It actively participates in the creation, formation and development of the information society (Battaggion & Vaglio, 2018).

Currently, Ukraine’s media sphere has developed extremely rapidly. Trends in developing media companies are somehow associated with the profitability of subjects in this sphere. The mass media, like any other business, will try to save money by reducing the prices of advertising, production and distribution of information, which threatens to reduce the quality of information products (Shalman, 2020).

The modern trends in developing enterprises have revealed lack of a clear strategy for increasing competitiveness, targeted measures to ensure stability and use of potential advantages. Along with this, there isn’t sufficient opportunity for the gradual convergence of their competitive strategies and ways of achieving strategic goals in the conditions of changes in the relative competitive balance of the external and internal functional environment (Cagé, Hervé & Viaud, 2020), (Geradin, 2019).

There is a clear transition from using comparative advantages in the modern economy, obtained with the help of low labor costs and natural resources, to competitive advantages. They are based on a developed innovative environment, new organizational
and institutional forms, unique products and constantly developing technologies. This requires a strategy formation and developing appropriate tools for ensuring competitiveness (Graef, 2019), (Gesualdi, 2019), (Soriano & Torres Valdés, 2021).

The general approach to developing tools for increasing the companies’ competitiveness in the media market is that the factors for increasing the competitiveness of the company are justified from the viewpoint of the customer’s orientation. In other words, the transition in competition from using comparative characteristics formed around low labor costs and natural resources to competitive advantages based on competencies, values, innovation and customer orientation is considered (Jelínková, Lostakova & Machackova, 2020).

Not all mass media are active in the advertising market. The presence of a media company in the advertising market is an optional principle of activity. Some mass media units are financed only by the sale of content, the others are economically dependent on sponsorship, for instance, from public broadcasting or non-commercial media. Even companies that opt out of advertising compete with other companies in the content market. This circumstance complicates the competition’s conditions. Funds raised in the advertising market allow producing or buying quality resources, which forces non-profit enterprises to look for additional ways of non-market competition (Nyagadza, Mazuruse, G. & Borz, 2021).

The purpose of the research is to determine the standpoint of the Ukrainian media companies’ chief executives and scientists conducting studies in the direction of analyzing the Ukrainian media regarding the features of using various PR campaigns to increase the media market entities’ competitiveness.

3 MATERIALS AND METHODS

A practical study of the significance of applying various PR campaigns for Ukrainian media from the perspective of the possibility of increasing their competitiveness was conducted by surveying 211 chief executives of Ukrainian media companies and 62 scientists studying the Ukrainian media’s competitiveness. The study was conducted using the Survio service.
4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

At the beginning of the survey, the subject of media companies’ competitiveness in the Ukrainian market was clarified from the viewpoint of the chief executives of such companies and scholars working in the field of scientific studies of this market.

According to the survey participants’ standpoint, currently, in the conditions of rapid digitization and informatization of society in Ukraine, the main aspects on which media space entities compete are as follows (Figure 1):

![Figure 1. The main aspects on which the subjects of the media space in Ukraine compete, %](image)

As can be seen from Figure 1, the subjects of mass culture are connected by several connections. Still, they mainly compete with each other in such aspects as the amount of income and the time allocated to them by the audience.

During the survey, the respondents identified the following factors that have the greatest influence on the modern media market from the perspective of forming a competitive environment (Figure 2):
Figure 2. Factors that have the greatest influence on the modern media market from the perspective of forming a competitive environment, %

Therefore, the factors that have the most significant influence on the modern media market include the impact of modern technologies, changing sources of media income, competition for free time, and the transformation of subject relations between the author and the content consumer.

Respondents identified the most significant factors determining the choice of types of PR campaigns for the development of a media entity (Figure 3):

Figure 3. The most significant factors determining the choice of types of PR campaigns for the development of a media market entity, %

Source: compiled by the authors
Thus, the choice of a PR campaign for mass media should primarily be determined by the following specific factors: the nomenclature and range of services of the media company, the presence of relevant scientific, technical and technological potential, and the acceptability of the ways of implementing the PR campaign.

The topical issues to be studied during the survey are clarifying the most critical goal of the PR campaign for the media company (Figure 4).

![Figure 4. The most critical goal of the PR campaign for the media company, %](image)

Source: compiled by the authors

The survey results revealed that the most critical goals of a PR campaign for media companies are advertising of goods and services, creating the image of the organization, company and management, managing public opinion, analyzing and regulating social relations (economic, social, state, financial, international) using information methods.

The questionnaire conducted in the framework of the present research made it possible to establish the most effective types of PR campaigns for a media company from the perspective of increasing a media entity’s competitiveness (Figure 5).
The survey showed that Internet promotions, coverage of contests, public events and mass cultural events, and Internet mailing have the greatest effect in terms of increasing a media entity’s competitiveness.

The media sector of Ukraine, as well as the information market in general, has changed significantly over the past two decades. The existence of the advertising market, which is the most significant feature of the media economy, affects the entire media industry nowadays. Even companies that barely exploit it feel its indirect impact through competitiveness in the content market, thereby acknowledging the existence of an advertising market (Mihailidis, 2018).

Under modern conditions, the competitive environment on the media market is characterized by insufficient stability (Nyagadza, 2019).

Let’s analyze the current state of the print media industry. We can observe that every year it becomes increasingly difficult for print media distribution companies to survive in the market. This is influenced by several factors, namely, the economic crisis, which gradually leads to the population’s impoverishment, the increase in the price of mass media for consumers due to the rise in prices for printing materials, equipment, tariffs for communal services (Van Den Beemt, Thurlings, & Willems, 2019).

The sphere of mass media in Ukraine has changed significantly over the past two decades. As a result of the information market development, the structural component of this sector has changed significantly. In addition to radio and television, the Internet has begun to play an increasingly crucial role. Publishing products acquired a functional
meaning and became a commodity. The development of the industry takes place against the background of serious competition, primarily with foreign publishing products. The economic problems of publishers are becoming more and more acute. The quantitative and qualitative indicators of printed products have decreased. The cost of publishing products is increasing, the population’s purchasing power is decreasing, as well as interest in reading (Goldberg et al., 2022), (Pirio, 2019).

The transition of the business into the electronic sphere facilitates several communicative production processes, such as order fulfillment, customer service, establishing relations with business partners, exchanging customer data, and reaching a significant target audience with minimal advertising costs (Moathen & Almaktoom, 2023).

With the development of the digital age, and in particular, with the spread of the importance and role of digital networks in the economic sphere, new types and means of PR communications have emerged, which require the application of new methods and means of interaction with consumers (Joshi et al., 2023).

A large number of media companies operate in the service market. They provide services to advertisers by arranging their access to audiences or creating audiences that they then “sell” to advertisers. That is, advertisers are not sold a place in a newspaper or seconds on a TV show, but most importantly – access to the audience (Erdem et al., 2022).

Not all mass media are active in the advertising market. The presence of a media company in the advertising market is an optional principle of its activity. Some mass media entities are financed only by the sale of content, the others are economically dependent on sponsorship, for instance, from public broadcasting or non-commercial media. Even companies opting out of advertising compete with other companies in the content market. This circumstance complicates the competitiveness conditions, as the funds raised in the advertising market allow producing or purchasing quality resources. This forces non-profit enterprises to look for additional ways of non-market competitiveness (Kabonga, Zvokuomba & Nyagadza, 2021).

Under modern conditions, the competitive environment on the media market is characterized by insufficient stability. On the one hand, this field is undergoing radical changes as new market subjects appear. On the other hand, it is becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish between media and Internet markets.
If we analyze the current state of the print media industry, we can observe that it becomes more difficult every year for print media companies to survive in the market.

4 CONCLUSIONS

Therefore, this paper considered the theoretical and practical aspects of the prerequisites, main factors, and features of PR campaigns from the point of view of their application in increasing the competitiveness of Ukrainian media resources. The analysis of the scientific literature on the issue under study and the questionnaire results showed that the concept of developing a strategy to increase the competitiveness of the media sector is based on the theory of strategic management. It involves taking into account several factors when using various PR campaigns, the effective consideration of which is an important prerequisite for the competitiveness of media market entities. The limitations of the practical part of the research are associated with the peculiarities of the age and professional structure of the survey respondents and the limited number of proposed response options. The necessity for further investigations is related to increasing mass media’s competitiveness in the context of the crisis and challenges related to the Internet integration into everyday life.
REFERENCES


