THE POTENTIAL OF THE EXPERIENCE ECONOMY IN DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS IN CIVIL SOCIETY*

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Abstract. In the conditions of war, economic, social, cultural and artistic institutions should promote the Ukrainian strategic narrative through the so-called "soft power", project activities, economic proposals, as this means strengthening the national identification of civil society, which is so important in the context of national liberation struggle. In fact, the demand for the experience economy can activate the cognitive factor that produces patriotic, socially significant values, feelings and emotions. Therefore, the subject of the study is the effective communication proposals of the impression economy in the context of civil society development. The purpose of the research is to analyse a package of economic proposals and strategies for achieving the progress of economic value, i.e., the implementation of the concept of experience economy, which in the context of war becomes a means of effective communication in the context of the request of responsible business of civil society to actualise the value of national economic identification. The research methodology is based on a combination of systemic and value-based approaches, discourse analysis, which help to reveal the drama and strategies of Ukrainian experience economy cases, their correlation with the specifics of civil society's demands at the national level and the identification of proposals in the context of war; synchronous method (focusing on the conditions of the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine) and the use of the monitoring software Similarweb, which allowed to track the recognition of certain projects among customers and the phases of "dramatic development" of the economic offer. According to J. B. Pine II and J. G. Gilmore, the leading role in generating the progression of the economic value of business is played by the understanding of business as theatre (dynamic or stable), unfolding through drama (=strategy), script (=processes), theatre (=work techniques), performance (=proposal), which always has a context (within the limits of intelligence – national identification, patriotic), value markers (support for civil society in war conditions) and a field of interpretation. Thus, the conclusion of the research is the thesis about the evolution from the experience economy to the transformation economy, when the transformation of a customer or company is the ultimate economic offer of the initiator: in the case of the Silpo chain, thanks to the effective communication channels involved, there is such a concept of offer as change, which is a transformation that leads to the so-called "economic pyramid". The educational project "Instoryky" is about prominent historical figures, cases of psychological support for clients through the hotline, engaging clients in the practice of donation through hashtag activism and offers to support animals in wartime in exchange for "psychological support from animals" on the hotline, and educational activities for war veterans. The involvement of food entrepreneurs and their subsequent support through the special project "Lavka tradytsii" is also a good example of effective communication channels.

Key words: impression economy, transformation economy, effective communications, Ukrainian strategic narrative, growth of economic value, wartime.

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“The art of the storyteller is the art of the new economy”
Harriet Rubin "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the New Economy"

1. Introduction
During the Russian-Ukrainian war, civil society became convinced that its task was to protect national identity by means of "soft power" (according to D. Nye). Identity encompasses education, culture, art, ge-branding, and all areas of civic space, which should convey worldview positions, value orientations, support a sense of patriotism, "enlighten" the importance of social activity of citizens (such as volunteering, charity, implementation of decolonisation practices), and intensify interest in the state-building experience of national liberation struggles of different historical and political periods, cultural achievements of previous generations, etc. In fact, the concept of national identity, according to the Encyclopaedia of Modern Ukraine, can be interpreted as “conscious belonging to the national community on the basis of a stable emotional bond created as a result of a formed system of ideas about traditions, culture, language, politics, as well as the adoption of group norms and values, that is, in terms of content, the sphere of ideas, values and meanings of culture perceived and articulated by the majority of citizens of the country. It has its own principles in the construction of the individual’s identity” (Stegnii, 2020).

Thus, structurally, national identity is based on cognitive (categorisation of oneself as a member of a national group based on knowledge of national territories, state symbols, customs, traditions, etc.), affective (subjective relevance of identification and commitment to it) and connotative (ability of an individual to choose behavioural patterns in accordance with the values and beliefs of the national community) components (Zolotukhin, 2019). Therefore, it is critically important that institutions that interact with civil society rely on these positions – economic, social, and cultural. This is necessary to promote Ukraine’s strategic narrative in times of war, which "works" as "a non-public instruction manual on how to create a mechanism for producing successful, self-replicating stories that will be positively received by Ukrainian target audiences from the existing constructor of historical myths, marketing approaches, popular ideas, public sentiment, and much more" (Zolotukhin, 2019).

For example, the article "Creative Industries as a Mechanism for the Development of the Creative Economy and Strategic Communications" shows and analyses "successful cases of the Ukrainian creative economy sector using monetisation of hobbies, innovative entrepreneurship, business clustering of creative industries, brand collaborations, craft production, creation of cultural products such as books, grant/fund support, donations to support the humanitarian and military needs of Ukrainian society despite the destructive processes caused by Russia's aggression" (Kovpak, Lebid, 2022, p. 108).

Essentially, during the war, these cases proved the relevance of the emotional and cognitive factor in interacting with a potentially interested audience, which was reflected in the UN report on the future of the global economy after the previous crisis (corona crisis), prepared at the request of the United Arab Emirates, which outlined six models of economic development for the next five to ten years, including the concept of an economy focused on the emotional factor. These models include the following:

Exabyte Economy – the exabyte economy (the context of devices, digital technologies and people, i.e., digitisation and automation), 8 trillion USD.
Wellbeing Economy – the economy of well-being (rethinking approaches to physical and mental health, and thus expanding the global healthcare market), 7 trillion USD.
NetZero Economy – a carbon-neutral economy (the context of innovation, technology and investment models in markets with the possibility of the world’s transition to reducing CO₂ emissions), 2.3 trillion USD.
Circular Economy is a closed-loop economy (about conscious consumption and prolongation of the service life of goods, i.e., development of a system to reduce environmental impact, etc.), 4.5 trillion USD.
BioGrowth Economy – the economy of biological growth (about innovative types of agricultural production, food security policy), 1 trillion USD.
Experience Economy – the economy of impressions (the concept of focusing a solvent customer on emotions rather than products, taking into a account technological "highlights"), 6.5 trillion USD (Ostrikova, 2020).

These data are consistent with the crisis situation (pandemic), and the crisis situation of war only reinforces expectations from previous experience related to relevant economic concepts. In particular, the national liberation struggle accumulates the need to express one's national and civic position, as well as national identification. For example, according to the observations of the Zaporizhzhia-based micro-media Sichemo regarding audience requests for patriotic clothing and accessories on the OLX platform before and after Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, it was emphasised that until February 2022, such requests were not very popular, so the number of offers was limited (in 2021, there were 53 offers of patriotic T-shirts; there was more interest in vyshyvankas – more than 6,000 users of the OLX platform). Since the start of the full-scale war, both the number of offers and the number of buyers in this sector have increased: in August 2022, there were more than 1,500 ads for the sale of patriotic T-shirts and...
906 people willing to buy them. In 2023, trident accessories were very popular – almost 1,000 offers, and the demand for embroidered clothing exceeded all expectations – almost 22,000 offers were published on the OLX platform, to which 17,200 consumers responded.

In general, the fashion industry immediately responded to the demands of society, with virtually all leading Ukrainian brands creating special patriotic lines. Here are a few examples as of April 2022, according to the monitoring data of the Nash Kyiv website (Figure 1).

Lilia Pustovit’s streetwear brand has created a limited-edition T-shirt with minimalist lettering in the colours of the Ukrainian flag. The T-shirt features one of the slogans of the war – "Freedom is blue" and "Energy is yellow". On the back is a flag with the inscription "Glory to the Heroes". The Odesa-based basic clothing brand BE OM Design has released several patriotic bestsellers: a long shirt with the inscription "What's your superpower? I am a Ukrainian" and a series of T-shirts with the inscriptions "Unbreakable", "Will", images of ears of grain and Shevchenko's "Kateryna". OLIZ, a brand whose clothes represent the cultural heritage of Ukrainians, has launched a line of T-shirts and sweatshirts with prints of Maria Prymachenko’s works, Ukrainian Cossacks and national symbols, while patriotic scarves Boundless and Free duplicate the motifs of Ukrainian embroidery, flowers and paintings by Ukrainian artists. Art For Ukraine became a brand that released a collection of T-shirts with memorable moments of the war: for example, a T-shirt depicting a defender of Mariupol or a witch from Konotop, a print of Chornobaivka, with a map of Russia that was "Ukrainised". The bright socks from Dodo Socks, namely the "To Victory!" collection, have become particularly popular. The collection includes six pairs of socks covering the events of the first days of the war with patriotic inscriptions such as "Palianytsia", "Glory to the AFU", "Russian
(Pine, 2021, p. 11). J. B. Pine II and J. G. Gilmore argue that the real "explosion" was the approach of the American fast food chain Chick-fil-A, which, in order to spend as much time as possible with its customers and get an unforgettable experience, organises a whole package of activities for them, such as: offsite events to celebrate the opening of new restaurants, father-daughter, mother-son evenings, Cow Appreciation Day, creative evenings for children with a newly introduced tradition of throwing toy cows at spectators during sports matches, a special tour of the company's headquarters in Atlanta, annual Leadercast partner leadership conferences and much more (Pine, 2021, p. 12). However, the transition to the stage of progression of economic value, i.e., to the economy of impressions, does not mean supplementing existing offers with an entertainment factor only, because the goal is to attract and retain attention, and the sphere of impressions is a multidimensional space.

The Four Spheres of Experience model, which defines four spheres of experience value: entertainment, cognitive, escapist and aesthetic, is most effective when it hits the intersection of these spheres and thus implements the concept of "flow", the so-called optimal experience – "full immersion in life" (according to Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi), so if this intersection is achieved, business becomes a means of mass effective communication with customers (Figure 2):

![Figure 2. Areas of experience in the theatre of business](source)

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Source: (Pine, 2021, p. 84)

For example, 25 Coffee Roasters, together with Garneselo and MadeinUkraine, presented a cultural and social project dedicated to Independence Day, which was dedicated to the most important place for everyone – home (the topic is very emotional in times of war, as many people have lost their homes, many were forced to leave their homes, etc.), and included a gift set that included a string bag, aromatic coffee with conceptual photos on the labels, and a cup. "The main message of the project is an attempt... to plunge into the warm embrace of cherished childhood memories, where every element has shades of our native village. This idea opens up an opportunity to reconnect with our roots, to remember those moments when we ran barefoot around the village, exploring every corner of this small world," the makers said (Bondar K. 25 Coffee Roasters, together with Garneselo and MadeinUkraine, launched a project that immerses people in childhood memories, 2023). Thus, the formula of eschatheism, according to J. B. Pine II and J. G. Gilmore, is achieved, which is equal to the combination = escapist + aesthetic spheres (affecting the state) (Figure 3).

![Figure 3. Coffee Roasters with Garneselo and MadeinUkraine launched a project that immerses people in childhood memories](source)

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Source: (Bondar K. 25 Coffee Roasters, together with Garneselo and MadeinUkraine, launched a project that immerses people in childhood memories, 2023)

Joint projects of the brands, each providing its own "experience sector", effectively achieve their goal in cooperation. For example, this year, on Independence Day, a series of artistic and gastronomic events, Independence Week, were held by Pure & Naive wine bar and bistro in partnership with Ukrainian Folks and Uklon. Vozianov’s studio presented an exhibition of contemporary Ukrainian artists, including WAONE Interesni Kazki, Artem Prut, BURENKO, Anna Vereshchaka, Etching Room, Sestry Feldman and ASSHA. The cognitive effect, the effect of presence (using the aesthetics of performance as a tool for public communications) was achieved through the SOCIA performance, a lecture on contemporary art by art curator Olga Balashova and a wine tasting experiment by Pure & Naive. During 21-27 August, Pure & Naive offered a special charity menu of modern Ukrainian cuisine and wine; a big Ukrainian charity dinner from chefs B. Lazorenko (Pure & Naive) and A. Kabulakhin, winner of the MasterChef show. The clients were offered a universal combination of impressions as a tool for creating memories of witnessing involvement in the nation...
In particular, a statue of the god Veles was placed at the entrance to the store, an installation of the tree of life, which in Ukrainian culture symbolises the unity of the three worlds (heaven, earth and the afterlife), the lightboxes of the cash registers are made in the form of Velesian totems, and the font of the inscriptions is designed in an ethnic style (Figure 5).

Thus, the technical presentation of this performance determined the context of the "theatre", i.e., the supermarket, which emphasises the value aspects of the performance and is a conceptual addition to the name of the shopping mall where it is located. This makes it possible to implement "a certain strategy, to operate with concepts and principles that are the territory of interpretation" (Pine, 2021, p. 276).

Moreover, the special Europe's Finest Store 2023 retail magazine features three impressive and innovative Silpo design concepts, including: a supermarket dedicated to emotions, opened in October 2022 in Rivne; a store dedicated to retro-futuristic helicopters, opened in December 2022 in Boryspil; and a store dedicated to geographical myths, opened in April 2023 in Kriukiv region (Bondar K. Silpo designer stores are among the best stores in Europe, 2023).
services that result from the progression of a business from drama (=strategy) through script (=processes) to the theatre (=technique of work) where the performance (=proposal) takes place" (Pine, 2021, p. 219). Thus, a "theatrical model" of business is formed, modified by J. B. Pine II and J. G. Gilmore in accordance with the theory of R. Schechner, presented in Schechner R. Performance Theory (New York: Routledge, 1988) (Figure 6):

![Theatrical business model](Figure 6. Theatrical business model
Source: (Pine, 2021, p. 219)

However, it is worth remembering that to ensure the integrity of the experience, brands must adhere to five basic principles ("THEME"): 1) choosing the theme of the experience; 2) harmonising the experience with positive signals; 3) eliminating negative signals; 4) using different ways to capture memories; 5) engaging all five senses (Pine, 2021, p. 14–15), with the effect enhanced by digital technologies such as photos, videos, and social media posts.

### 3. The Experience of the Silpo Supermarket Chain's Business Theatre in Implementing the National Identity Strategy: An Effective Means of Communication with the Audience

For example, using the example of the Silpo supermarket, it is clear that since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion in Ukraine, the chain has chosen to be consistent, develop and maintain a national identification strategy, in particular, this year, on the occasion of the Independence Day of Ukraine, they launched the #БірайАоЇаром initiative, in which Ukrainians had to choose a charity fundraiser, then make a gift donation to Ukraine and talk about #БірайАоЇаром on their social media (incidentally, the Silpo chain itself donated 3,000,000 UAH to Operation Unity) (Bondar, K. Silpo launches all-Ukrainian project #БірайАоЇаром for Independence Day, 2023). On Father’s Day, an initiative was launched to allow every Ukrainian to record words of support for fathers through a special chatbot @silpo_tato_bot, which was broadcast on Silpo radio from 17 to 19 June (Bondar, K. Silpo has launched an initiative to give every Ukrainian the opportunity to congratulate their father on the holiday, 2023). According to K. Oguryaeva, Marketing Director of Silpo supermarket chain: "On Father's Day, dear fathers will hear their voices in 60 cities of Ukraine where our markets operate. For our fathers, we always remain children, so everyone can write a greeting, regardless of age. Let this be our gratitude to all Ukrainian fathers for what they do for their children and for Ukraine. Let's show them our love together!” (Bondar, K. Silpo has launched an initiative to give every Ukrainian the opportunity to congratulate their father on the holiday, 2023)

In accordance with the scenario – the “basic code of events”, i.e., the national identity of the patriotic vision, Silpo created a line of "psychological support from animals" for Ukrainians during the war: by calling the Silpo hotline, customers can connect with Kisa, an AI that will allow them to hear soothing "therapeutic" animal sounds (purring kittens, barking puppies or playful tiger cubs), which should add positive emotions and draw attention to the volunteer movement to save animals from the effects of hostilities. Silpo’s hotline for customers has also formed an effective communication of professional assistance offers from the National Psychological Association (Danyliuk, 2022).

"Establishing a personal connection with the customer is the DNA of the experience economy... Customisation of a product automatically turns it into a service, and customisation of a service into an experience." (Pine, 2021, p. 16) For example, the element of collaborative customisation, when the company and the customer together determine the value that will be created when the company transfers part of the control over the process to the customer, is observed in the following scenario of the Silpo chain: with the support of the Ministry of Veterans, the campaign "We want to sell veteran goods" was launched, which aims to "make veteran businesses visible and the products recognisable and popular among consumers" (Bondar K. Silpo launches a campaign to promote veteran businesses in Ukraine, 2023). In addition to receiving craft products, customers will have the opportunity to realise their civic position by supporting soldiers in the new business. "All interested veteran entrepreneurs or their families, as well as families of fallen soldiers, will be able to apply for cooperation with the Lavochka tradytsii in Silpo as suppliers of craft products. The Ministry of Veterans' Affairs of Ukraine, in turn, will provide an opportunity to label..."
these products with the 'Created by Defenders' logo." (Bondar K. Silpo launches a campaign to promote veteran businesses in Ukraine, 2023) In addition, this project has an educational component, as potential suppliers will be provided with certificates for free specialised training for food entrepreneurs and practical advice from those producers who have already made their way to Silpo's shelves.

J. B. Pine II and J. G. Gilmore claim that in a few decades the economy of impressions will be replaced by the economy of transformations (Pine, 2021, p. 317), where the basis of the scenario will be transformation, and indeed this component was observed in the case described above with the educational proposal of Silpo regarding the re-profiling of war veterans. "The progression of economic value forms an economic pyramid, where each subsequent category of offers is based on the previous one... impression creators must take care of the service that will keep the customer's attention and play out the interaction in such a way as to create a memorable event (which will be reminded by a product-emblem, product-souvenir)." (Figure 7)

The researchers emphasise that transformation cannot be ensured or directed, but can only be guided, as changes occur in the cognitive dimension of the client. One of the most representative projects of the impression economy, which initiates the transformation of the civic position of children and young people, is the educational and charitable project "Instoryky" by the Silpo supermarket chain with the support of Mastercard, in the framework of which, with the help of the authors of "The Black Sheep" Publishing House and historian K. Halushka, Silpo published a book with biographies of 25 famous Ukrainians – from the times of the princely era to the present day – from Prince Volodymyr to Symon Petliura and Vasyl Stus. Historical figures tell about their life journey in the first person, joke, share motivation and guidance for future generations of Ukrainians. Sachets with stickers about all the prominent Ukrainians from the book became a meaningful and informative capsule of the project, where, like an Instagram post, historical figures with conceptual hashtags (for example, about Ivan Mazepa: #Іван_Мазепа, #Гетьман_макроінфлюенсер, #Голова_Козацької_держави, #Меценат) showcase a presentation post about themselves. For example, a fragment of a post from a sticker about Ivan Mazepa: "It happens like this: you donate to culture, education, art, and then you become a part of it all. Byron and Hugo dedicated poems to me, thanks to which I became a cult hero of the Romantic era... As for business, thanks to my dexterity and extensive experience, I captured the heart of Europe, even charmed it." The active civic position of the buyer in the "dramaturgical structure" of this performance is also achieved by transferring one hryvnia from the sale of each bag to the account of the "Ptakhy" charitable project, which is responsible for providing medicines in the de-occupied territories (Machulka, 2022) (Figure 8).

Social networks created to support the special project contribute to the integrity of the experience, in particular, the "Instorical Horoscope" section of Instagram, which consists of allusions to quotes from 25 historical figures who are the heroes of the project, deserves special attention (Figure 9).

From the point of view of an optimal dramatic structure, a project (business as a whole) has the following phases (which is much better than a "simple" structure): "exposition (introduction to the context); set-up (beginning of active action), development of action (increasing number of opportunities and intensity of action), crisis (high activity and presence of an obstacle), climax (one of the options for the development of the storylines occurs), decline of action (logical consequence of previous events) and resolution (separate storylines converge into one; return to everyday life)" (Pine, 2021, p. 212). Therefore, with the help of the Similarweb monitoring program, it was possible to verify that the Instoryky project, which began on 30 November 2022, had exactly the same structure, which echoes the scheme proposed by D. B. Pine II and D. G. Gilmore based on Brenda Laurel's study "Computers as Theatre" (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1993) (Figure 10).

As can be seen, the case of "Instoryky" proved to be successful, as shown in the graph: "only a play whose action builds up to a critical point and then falls off can hold the attention; a simple dramatic structure without a peak cannot be interesting" (Pine, 2021, p. 19).
Figure 8. The educational and charitable project of the Silpo chain, Instoryky

Source: official Instagram page of the project @instoryky ("Union of Instorians of Ukraine")

Figure 9. The "Instorical Horoscope" section of the project's official Instagram page @instoryky ("Union of Instorians of Ukraine")

Source: official Instagram page of the project @instoryky

Figure 10. a) Phases of the dramaturgical structure of business theatre

Source: (Pine, 2021, p. 213)

b) A case study of the dramatic structure of the "Instoryky" project by the Silpo network based on the results of the monitoring programme of viewer requests for the "Instoryky" project from November 2022 to May 2023

Source: https://pro.similarweb.com/
4. Conclusions

Therefore, “in the experience economy, companies need to understand that they need to create memories (not goods) and create the preconditions for increasing economic value (not just provide services)” (Pine, 2021, p. 203). However, impressions are not the final economic proposition, so to avoid the tool of cheapening, it is worth using economic propositions such as customisation, conversion or transformation, enhancing them with social media tools, etc. The example of the Silpo chain demonstrated a complete scheme of economic value creation, a package of economic offers (hashtag activism, design solutions, own radio and its updating for thematic interaction with customers, thematic chatbots, effective communication offers of a hotline adapted for psychological support within the framework of charity projects, such as the All-Ukrainian humanist movement UAnimals and the help of the National Psychological Association, the organisation of the sale of veteran products and their support with an educational project, the educational and charitable project "Instoryky", which includes the publication of books, stickers, special projects in the thematic Instagram of the project (hence, according to the monitoring programme Similarweb, between August 2022 and August 2023, the search query "Instoryky" reached 281 searches, and "Silpo promotion Instoryky" – 96, which proves the thesis that the project has gained such recognition that it does not require a chain). All of this contributed to the effective communication of civil society in the context of the response of responsible business to the request to actualise the value of national identification.

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