

## SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS

### INTERNAL PROBLEMS IN THE CROSSMEDIA STRATEGIES

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It is not the first time, when the journalism faces fundamental changes, which come with a progress. Reorienting of classic newspaper publishers to multi-platform media outlets seems to be resolved today. It would seem that all is needed is to choose the optimal crossmedia strategy that would combine the advantages of a classic newspaper and an electronic publication in the best way. In practice, it turns out that the obstacle to effective cooperation is the stubborn and stereotyped views of journalists. Let's take a look at some cases, which reveal the difficulties of professional cooperation on the example of German regional newspapers and publishers' websites.

On the one hand the heads of German publishing houses concur in the opinion that the first step in pursuit of their audience is to change the patterns in minds of journalists. «Crossmedia does not originate from a product, but from minds of participants», summed up H. Seidenfaden, the Hässisch-Niederländische Allgemeine [4, p. 1], «to think in terms of both media spheres» invokes R. Geisenhanslüke, the Schwäbische Zeitung [4, p. 6]. It is obvious from the presented interviews that crossmedia publishing houses are really making efforts to reorient, first of all, their professional outlook and eventually work cycles. However, between the lines there is still commitment to the classic media.

The editor-in-chief of the Weser-Kurier newspaper has a similar opinion: «There are some newspapers, some media companies that tend to online: they concentrate 70 percent of their activities on online against 30 percent on print. We have a ratio of print to online 60 to 40, or even 70 to 30. But this is reasonable considering the profit structure. We earn nowadays yearly in online as much as two pages with advertisements bring us in the printed the Weser-Kurier» [4, p. 11]. It turns out that development and promotion of a publication's website as it is, not only expands the readership, but also has an indirect influence on a perception of a classic newspaper by this audience: «Development of an online market position helps stabilize a newspaper product» [4, p. 10]. The Schwäbische Zeitung is also moving forward through online to strengthen the position of its

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print newspaper: «The print still remains the main area of activity; it is the mothership that brings us the biggest profits and the best audience outreach. However, due to calculations of the information community for control over the distribution of advertising media, one can see the print run decreasing everywhere, the same decreasing is also by us, but not such extend. [...] We hope that we will be able to compensate this future crisis as well as these future fluctuations in turnover and profits by the fact that we are actively working in the digital field now» [4, p. 2].

Generally editors of classic newspapers believe it is hardly likely that a newspaper will be able to borrow something from a website. They think the website's editorial office is too weak to explore its own stories. This situation is illustrative in a way because it implicitly contains important information about a microclimate between teams of both editorial offices. «The editorial gap between print and online has still not been bridged. The quarrel over presidency between Spiegel magazine and its successful online subsidiary suggests that the difference between print and digital journalism is primarily a matter of the editors' mindset. Public has perceived journalistic brands more than only multimedia for a long time, but in the editorial culture, as a rule, stereotypes of competence and hierarchy still prevail, which proclaim the dominant position of the press» [1, p. 35]. It is very important not only to develop a single crossmedia strategy, but also to learn how to implement it in the everyday, and the Spiegel is no exception, this is a general situation.

Head of the online editorial office at the Süddeutsche Zeitung Stefan Plöchinger, in his turn, also draws attention to this problem. «Innovative culture in editorial offices should be planted not in the leadership, but where the walls in minds have not been destroyed yet, where is a gap even in the integrated newsroom between print and online, where «online people are still a green second class, not worth being paid» [2, p. 165].

However, only appeals haven't been enough. A real scandal erupted in the spring of 2014 due to a transfer of S. Plöchinger to the editorial office of a print newspaper. In a Sunday's issue of the Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung Harald Staun openly ridiculed the competitors' policy: «Maybe it wouldn't be worse indeed to assign an Internet-expert for newspaper management. But wouldn't it be better to take a journalist to the Süddeutsche.de editorial office?» [3, p. 45]. So, it is not surprise that a split between editorial offices does not allow to distribute tasks optimally and to prepare high quality materials.

Despite all the experts' pessimistic and almost fatal forecasts and deep level changes in the modern media sphere, companies are confident that a print newspaper will not only survive, but also ensure itself a stable and secure future, it will be a sign for a «renaissance of print», if we recall a

statement of R. M. Gefeller, the Frankfurter Neue Presse [4, p. 10]. At the same time, we should pay tribute to editors-in-chief, they do not talk about immense periods of time, but keep to a short and medium terms.

«Online will continue to develop very progressively, newspaper will be heading towards a condition similar to our area of distribution, which suffers greatly from population decline and it is forced to reckon with the loss of subscriptions, but at the same time a newspaper will remain extremely important. For a joint venture, even in a medium term, online will not be able to bring in the profits like a print publication does. The newspaper will remain a cash cow», notes H. Seidenfaden, HNA [4, p. 10]. Considering this, the above-mentioned commitment to a print newspaper is logically justified.

The American journalist Jeff Jarvis bases on a non-standard point of view in assessing the competition between publishers of both types. He shifts the emphasis from such a factor as the time of media consumption to the effectiveness of this consumption in the competition for readers. Not duration has to be a basis for the research, but the effectiveness of satisfying reader's motives: «Instead of measuring our success by how long we have been able to hold their attention, we should focus on how short is a time they spent with us to score their own goals. [...] If the problem is that young people spend less time reading the news, we might think about what benefits we can find here. I would say that we should help everyone of any age to spend even less time, not only to find more information, but also to do it more effectively» (quoted in: [1, p. 38]). So, solving internal problems, as well as settling an effective microclimate will contribute to implementation of crossmedia strategy.

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