

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING AS AN EFFECTIVE INSTRUMENT FOR A COMPANY'S PUBLIC RELATION PROMOTION AND SALES

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Abstract: The article describes the fundamental principles of social network operation as a successful and potentially developing means of communication; their marketing benefits and prospective use as a new tool for the implementation of effective public relations activities in various directions.

Key words: social networks, social media marketing, a public relations communication tool.

For the past 15 years, the media has served as the primary medium of communication and information for public relations practitioners. Television, radio, and print media all resulted in a sizable engaged audience and pool of potential customers. The situation has changed since the introduction and development of the Internet. Communication with clients has reached to the revolutionary level, as a result of new available platforms.

"The Internet has made public relations (in the following will be referred as PR) public again, following years of virtually exclusive reliance on media, - claims American marketing expert David Meerman Scott. Organizations can engage directly with purchasers via blogs, online news releases, and other forms of Web content". (David Meerman Scott⁶ 2007).

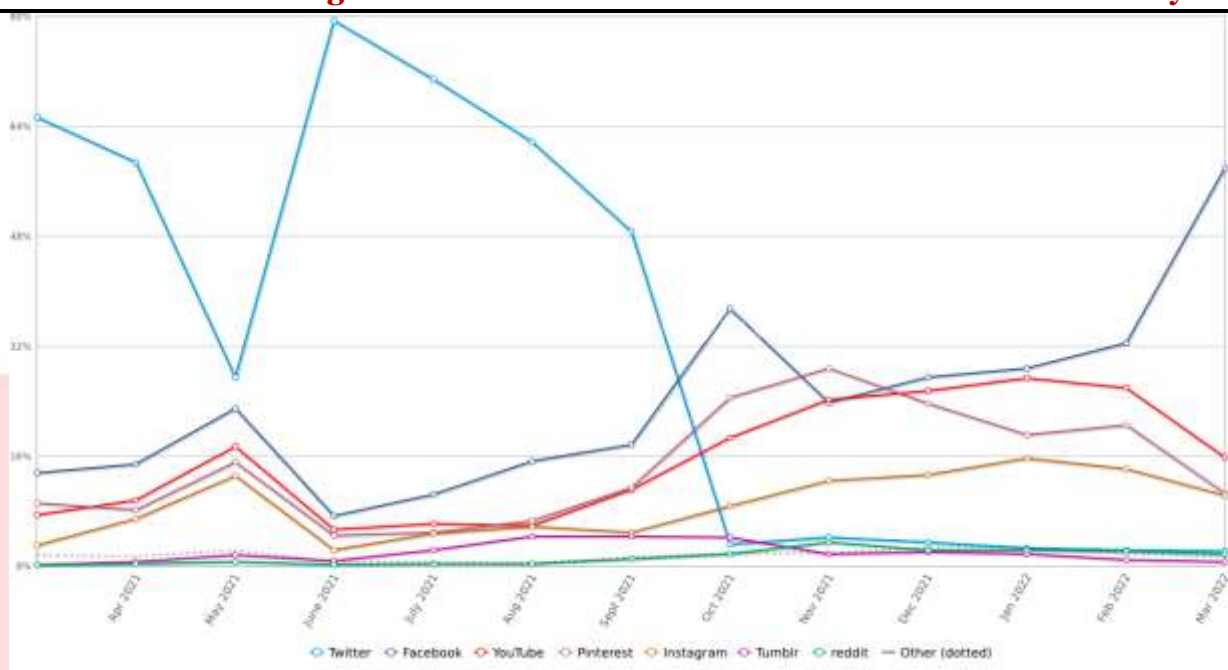
Social Media Marketing is one of the essential tools in digital PR which could endow the image to its auditory and creates a comfort zone between the company and its clients in terms of communication of back and forth. In other words, the media's monopoly on information has begun to erode, whilst social networks have significantly narrowed the distance between the brand and the public, allowing them to communicate directly. {why the next paragraph is begun with the plan all of a sudden??? There should be a connection between the former and the latter paragraphs}

It means that social media communications should be connected with the company's overall business plan, and the style of information presentation should be based on the brand's values and characters. As a result, PR specialists should start by setting goals, conducting in-depth research on the audience and competitors' actions, and then building an SMM strategy based on the findings. Sometimes start-ups or beginner businessmen fill out the company's social media profiles on their own, but it makes more sense to seek expert help.

More important factors like economy, politics, education, health, defense and others could be analyzed to find the actual result of the integration of Social Media Marketing and Public Relations, as well, its affect as an instrument of Public Relations and Sales. Hence, variables affect to the change results of PR technologies, campaigns and tactics periodly can be socio-economic sphere. Consumer perception and attitude are critical assets of any brand's capital, and they can and should be addressed through marketing and Public relations as its part. This research will seek to illustrate its significance of Social Media longevity, and involvement in digital public relations and sales growth in Uzbekistan, particularly in Tashkent.

Social networks are a rapidly evolving platform with a diverse set of features that may be utilized for both personal and commercial purposes. Active participation on Facebook, Instagram, Tik-Tok, Twitter, Odnoklassniki, VKontakte and Weibo enables the company to boost consumer confidence, monitor the opinion and mood of the target audience, manage reputation, and favorably influence sales. The new communication environment is transforming old methods of working with customers, necessitating the development of new tools and opening up a slew of new channels for communication with target audiences, all of which contribute to the formation of new forms of labor.

The goal of social media marketing is to build relationships with your target audience. There can be created a platform for directly building a reputation with the use of SMM promotion. Consumer perception and attitude are critical assets of any brand's capital, and they can and should be addressed through public relations and marketing. In the Republic of Uzbekistan, social networks as a tool for PR and marketing have begun to be mastered recently, we can already talk about great prospects for this direction, however.



StatCounter Global Stats¹ analysed Uzbekistan's most active social networks give activity levels for the one-year period: from March 2021 to March 2022. Based on these figures, we may get a sense of Uzbekistan's media landscape over the last year.

According to StatCounter Global Stats, Facebook will be the most popular social network in Uzbekistan by March 2022, with 58% of Uzbekistan's citizens using it. Despite Twitter's popularity during June, at the end of the year it lost its useability. YouTube comes in the second position, with 15% of citizens of Uzbekistan utilizing it. 10% of the population is preferred rather Instagram and Pinterest. One percent of Uzbeks prefer Tumblr and Reddit, as well as other social networks. As a result, social networks provide access to a broad audience of active and potential clients and can be regarded as an effective route of information transmission on par with traditional media. Local producers of goods and services are gradually growing their participation in social networks, experimenting with novel advertising tactics. This in turn, resulted in, organizations offering integrated SMM advertising services have developed in the market (Space academy, P-agency, Alpha Omega Marketing, Bright Media LLC).

During the investigation, we looked at the social media profiles of important Uzbek enterprises, including MacBro, Safia, Belissimo, Korzinka, Macro, Najot Ta'lim, Mayor Tayyor, Azon Books, Asahi Books, and Book.uz. It should be noted that, in general, the same message appears on all social networks represented by the company, as well as in part on Messenger (Instagram, Facebook, Tik-Tok, Telegram). As well as, we provide publication dates in the context of the Instagram, Facebook social network and the Telegram messenger for clarity and convenience. We categorize content into numerous categories.

It is well known that one of the primary responsibilities of social network activities is to raise awareness of the target audience. The instructive role is stated in the first post on the Safia Confectionery Factory's website (06.07.15): "Here for sweets!" Through Instagram and Facebook pages, social networks report on the brand's activities and the website's capabilities. For example, Safia Confectionery announces the debut of its website on social media on February 4, 2021 as "I opened my website." It should be highlighted that Tone of Voice is also essential in this brand's activities, with Safia's TOV dominating in news of the company's activities. brand speaks with the audience through words written in a little girl's vernacular. "A new dessert produced by my confectioners," "I am now in Andijan," and "I am in Kazakhstan", written in the seller posters. People would respond favorably to this activity, news, and brand expression on social media, bringing feedback and purchases.

Unlike advertising, which is imposed on the consumer without his agreement or interests, social networks allow for choice: the subscriber decides to receive news. As a result, the disturbance factor is nearly nil. "Social networks offer an excellent solution to the problem of producing revenue for devoted users." "Once someone

¹ <https://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/uzbekistan>

joins your community and subscribes to your blog or other channel, you will be able to regularly update them about new items, sales hits, and special deals," explains Damir Khalilov one of the leading specialists in Russian SMM marketing (2014).

Different approaches to promotional material design and presentation are of interest. Short, engaging messages with a link to an external resource where you can gather more information are common on brand-organized community pages. In this situation, the social network serves as an advertising platform, driving traffic to the official website or online store. MacBro², one of the biggest multi-brand electronics stores in Uzbekistan, has employed this strategy successfully. Traffic from Instagram, Facebook, and Telegram posts to call centers, websites, and messaging sections (messenger, direct and group chats). Informative and other sorts of YouTube video can also be used to acquire data for analytics by asking viewers about their most recent decisions and choices.

While the Bellissimo Pizza ³brand communicates with its audience and consumers on Instagram through content, it encourages customers to repurchase with Telegram bots on Telegram Messenger. When an observer or potential customer visits the Instagram page and is able to place an order via the bot, they will be reminded of deals and festive product sets. For example, from February 25 to March 8, a promotion commemorating International Women's Day was announced. The campaign was valid until March 6th, and ordering these "three for 99" pizzas would save them 26 percent on prices. During Ramadan, he also announced on social media that the service had been tailored to the country's ideals and religious practices.

He also stated that the timetable has been modified to accommodate Iftar and Sahar hours (the schedule from 10:00 to 02:30 has changed from 11:00 to 4:00). This helped to bring in new clients. In order to entice returning consumers, Telegram issued an SMS through the bot announcing that Iftar sets will be sold at a 17 percent discount for the duration of Ramadan. Following the sales posts, the Bot published articles that benefited the brand's reputation among regular consumers. It requested that the Bellissimo Pizza ⁴ brand (on official Telegram Bot), which had been nominated for Brand of the Year⁵, be used as a candidate brand, and sent a text to the observer highlighting the importance of their votes. People want to underline how essential they are to brands and how decisive they are as a single consumer. This is typically a Call To Action (CTA) call with more clout than a simple plea to vote.

Another strategy is to place periodicals with an ambiguously indicated advertising component. Damir Khalilov refers to such posts as "generic themes" since "they do not address (or indirectly mention) the product itself and instead discuss some connected topics." Such postings are required to weaken the commercial component while maintaining user interest". (Damir Halilov, 2014) The value and quality of the content are the most important variables in this scenario. MacBro released "Hedgehog" material on December 26, 2021 (official telegram channel, Instagram and Facebook pages of company). It included a poster and an article titled "Everyone Has the Opportunity to Be an Apple Picker with MacBro," which alluded to the notion that consumers of Apple products are also "apple pickers," given the hedgehog's apple-eating habit. The audience was reminded of their ability to pay on a frequent basis. Until then, the brand had constantly referred to its social media followers as "apple-eaters" and had prepped "Hedgehog" for content marketing.

The material "Apple Women" was posted near the March 8 holiday. It detailed the Female-TOP employees at Apple. Following that is Apple's emphasis on women's electronics in color, light weight, and comfortable size. This meant that the brand was assisting in the selection of presents for ladies in a largely male audience.

We can also analyze content released at MacBro's official service center. "How to charge your phone quickly?" (January 26, 2022, Instagram), "What to do when your iPhone falls into the water?" (8.02.2022, Instagram), "Hard Reset as if your gadget came out of a new package" (13.05.2022, Instagram), etc. are of practical importance for the protection of data on the device. Due to the explicit advertising nature of such messages, we cannot link them to real promotional materials, as they are mainly characterized by a non-standard form of presenting information, with a desire to be interesting and useful to readers.

² <https://macbro.uz/>

³ <https://instagram.com/bellissimouz?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>

⁴ <https://instagram.com/bellissimouz?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>

⁵ <https://marketing.uz/brend-goda-2021/uz/>

Content that contains information of practical importance, particular educational content: interesting facts, valuable recommendations, step-by-step instructions, expert guidance, is successful with a target audience.

One significant benefit of social media activity is that it provides feedback and can receive comments from the public. Surveys aid in assessing client satisfaction, identifying product flaws, and making timely changes to a company's marketing plan. Asaxiy Books (official telegram channel), which conducts similar polls on the social network on a regular basis, is noteworthy: "Which work have you regretted not reading before?"⁶(1.05.2022, official telegram channel), "Look at the book cover to see if you can discover his name." "Which genre of novels do you prefer?" (8.04.2022, Telegram) "What kind of books do you prefer: audio, paper books, or e-books?" (30.03.2022, Telegram) among others.

One of the most successful strategies to increase audience loyalty, in our opinion, is to post customer evaluations or relationships, or to create content or goods in reaction to them. Thus, the MacBro offers the information sought by observers in the comments through headings and words such as "the rubric you've been waiting for" in the presentation of content. "You inquired," I replied, "the product that blew up your call center iPhone 13." Buyers and observers who stated or advised this answer in the comments were told that "the topic I requested was taken into account." It is commonly known that subscribers place greater trust in the opinion of a third party than in the company's sales texts (source – the Instagram page).

The company also strives to create conditions not only for potential consumers of their products, but also for spectators whose financial situation does not enable them to purchase the product, which increases people's trust in the brand and stimulates action. A student target audience was also chosen and granted a predetermined payment based on their financial situation.

Social media platforms play a vital part in building a company's good image. Large corporations, for example, frequently recruit celebrities to participate in an advertising campaign or even to become the face of the company. The presence of a celebrity in a TV commercial or on the cover of a magazine is obviously noticeable. However, proof in favor of a promoted product does not always instill trust in the audience. The supplies appear to have been paid for, the writing has been pre-written, and it is unknown whether the protagonist would use the product in real life. Similar technologies, on the other hand, are employed in social networks.

For example, MacBro has made the tech blogger and artist its "brand face" (YouTube, Instagram) and occasionally appeals to Influencers (Instagram). And we can see that ApexPizza frequently advertises its brand through wineries and singers (Instagram). Suzane Wallpapers⁷ (TV advertisement) and Click.uz also represented the well-known vocalist (Instagram). It should be noticed that the photo's subject is depicted not only as a "guest star," but also as an actual and mostly loyal consumer of the organization.

Alternatively, competitive companies may employ unique features to congratulate each other on the holidays and post images on Instagram. This method was used by the Macro brand (Instagram), which went to congratulate Korzinka.uz on the occasion of its founding date (10.01.2022, Instagram). On his social media page, Macro writes, "When you came to congratulate your friend and he have gone to celebrate without you!" The photo shows an employee of the official Macro uniform going to the Korzinka.uz store with a gift. Such publications are designed to earn the trust of audience and give the business a positive image because it is more pleasant to communicate with real people rather than with faceless companies.

Content that serves to improve the image aids in the development of the corporate spirit and the recruitment of new personnel. Yes, with the advancement of social media marketing and digital PR, Uzbek businesses are increasingly discussing their competitors' successes and achievements. Audience support marches are also promoted on social media, and the corporation is active in HR and PR communication. People in need of jobs are invited by Core and Safia from among their observers (Instagram page). This will not only aid in the recruitment of applicants but will also ensure that the company's employees are informed of its actions. It also has a beneficial impact on the company's image, implying that the organization not only provides a product or service that helps its audience but also generates an image of the team as a team that answers people's issues and stays near to them. We can see from this that social networks have provided Internet users with a space to develop their own online portrait and self-presentation. The brand link has the potential to have a strong

⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/suzane.official/>

⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/suzane.official/>

emotional influence on social media users. According to observations, consumers choose. The one more company 'Mayor tayyor' evokes a military atmosphere by utilizing language like "my armament/arsenal" and "a forceful hit of rice hamburgers."

MacBro, on the other hand, posts content that expresses "a philosophy of brotherhood, solidarity and its mission" on occasion. And, according to the company's Tone of Voice, 3-4 months later, the audience began to respond to the desire to be referred to as Bro as Bro and brother. Despite the fact that the girls work at a call-center, they form an image of a brother and refer to him as "Bro." (Instagram page's direct and telegram group chat of official channel) Philosophical headings may appear to be non-commercial content at first glance. However, it is the strategy that distinguishes businesses from their competition. MacBro has cultivated an image of a brand that is concerned not only with the company's service and sales, but also with the feelings of its audience and customers.

The usage of the "after impact" is another significant part of social media marketing. As a result, the company builds a consumer base that applies to it both online and offline. "Are you satisfied with the brand's product or service?" people are asked after making a purchase or using a type of service. In Bellissimo Pizza, for example, a client who phones the call center will be addressed by name on the next call. "Which destination should we deliver meals to this time?" clarifies when a customer uses the delivery service through several addresses. Social networks, which are used to monitor the after-sales situation through social networks, are also becoming a public relations tool with these features.

As conclusion, we can say that Uzbekistan companies' obviously making efforts to promote their brands on social media. Social networks as a tool for public relations and marketing have only lately begun to be mastered in the Republic of Uzbekistan, but there is already promising potential in this direction. Yet, no research has been conducted in Uzbekistan on the relationship between Social Media Marketing and Public Relations and Sales. Hence, based on the analysis, we can conclude that company sales continued to climb and fall under the effect of PR and Social Media Marketing.

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