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THE INTEGRATED APPROACH TO COMMUNICATION IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Abstract

The article reveals the essence of the integrated approach to communicative interaction in public administration. Based on the analysis of scientific publications, it has been proved that the elements of communication interaction forms (direct, mixed and mediated) depend on interpersonal, group or mass communication and require revision. The model of integrated communications in public administration has been developed; each of the elements has been described: non-commercial advertising, Public Relations (surveys, media monitoring, deliberative formats, public hearings, public consultations, public expertise), branding, Event marketing, Digital marketing with its components as Direct marketing, messenger marketing, lead generation, content marketing, targeting, social media marketing, copywriting. The article explains the elements to be used in partial or complete integration. It has been noted that only an integrated approach to the communication activities of the authorities and local government will achieve sustainable interaction with the public.

Key words: public administration, communication, integrated approach, public authorities, local government, interaction.

Urgency of the research. In the context of Ukraine's strategic development, one of the most critical issues is the formation and development of sustainable interaction of public authorities with the public through the use of practical marketing tools. The relevance and public demand for the study are evidenced by the unresolved communication problems in public administration. Over the past few years, public

authorities and local governments have experienced the active influence of public opinion. With an irrational system of relations between state institutions and the public, there is a threat of losing important positions of the state in public administration.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Many scientists, who are nowadays studying the public administration sphere, note that communication is becoming more and more important from the point of view of the interaction between the authorities and the public. Some scientific and practical aspects of the use of marketing communication tools in public management have been researched in their works by V. Pesotskyi [1], V. Dreshpak [2], A. Shevchenko [3], L. Balabanova [4], D. Kisslov [5], E. Romat, G. Pocheptsov, K. Romanenko, I. Panteleichuk. However, all aspects of the use of integrated communications in public management, namely the introduction of new communication trends in this area, are still not sufficiently researched.

Research objective. The article aims to identify the elements of integrated communications, which are the most effective while interacting with the public in public administration.

Statement of basic materials. Communication development in public administration involves an integrated approach based on the complex and consistent communication channels, tools, and methods as a holistic information message that will ensure the consistency of communication processes. The sphere of business, interest groups, professional associations, civil society associations, foreign policy actors, international organisations and foundations play a significant role in the communication system of public administration. Still, the public embraces the central place and influences every stage of the communication process.

The following requirements can be highlighted in integrated public communications:

- communication must be strategic in nature;

- a focus on building trust and sustainable relationships with local government institutions and bodies;

the sole focus of the communication must be the public and its needs;

the communication must be strategic, aiming at building trust and sustainable relations with the local government institutions;

the communications must support the reputation of the public authorities and local self-government;

increasing the public's loyalty to the public authorities and local self-government, etc.

The author considers the factors that have recently shaped public institutions and local government activities in Ukraine. The high interactivity of society and increasing demands on the quality of information are distinct. The development of people's critical thinking requires an integrated approach to the interaction between government agencies and local authorities with the public.

Ukrainian scientists V. Pesotskyi [1] and V. Dreshpak [2] distinguish three existing forms of communicative interaction: direct, mixed, and mediated, noting that the constituent elements depend on the type of communication - interpersonal, group or mass:

direct interpersonal communication includes: informal exchange of views, personal reception of citizens, public council meeting; mixed communication includes: hotline, letters mailing; indirect communication includes: submission of appeals, enquiries, texting;

group direct communication includes: a general meeting of citizens, the introduction of local initiatives; mixed group: public consultation, public expertise, petitions, postcards, leaflets; group mediated communication includes: social networks, blogs, texting;

mass direct communication includes: public hearings, rallies; mixed communication includes: flash mobs, referendums, polls; in group mass communication: messages on information boards, advertisements, graffiti, website postings, SMS, media messages [2].

The author of the article entirely agrees with the statements of the prominent scholars. Still, the analysis of this classification has outlined the necessity to improve

the current state of public administration development and general requirements by introducing new trend communication elements and integrating them into the traditional system of elements.

Figure 1 presents the developed model of integrated communications in public administration so that the public authorities and local governments have to be able to reach all three levels of the public - target, potentially target and general ones. It has to be noted that each time the set of activities have to correspond to the objectives of a particular project, such as raising awareness, developing trust, changing behaviour and others. However, the target audience can range from a particular social group to the general public.

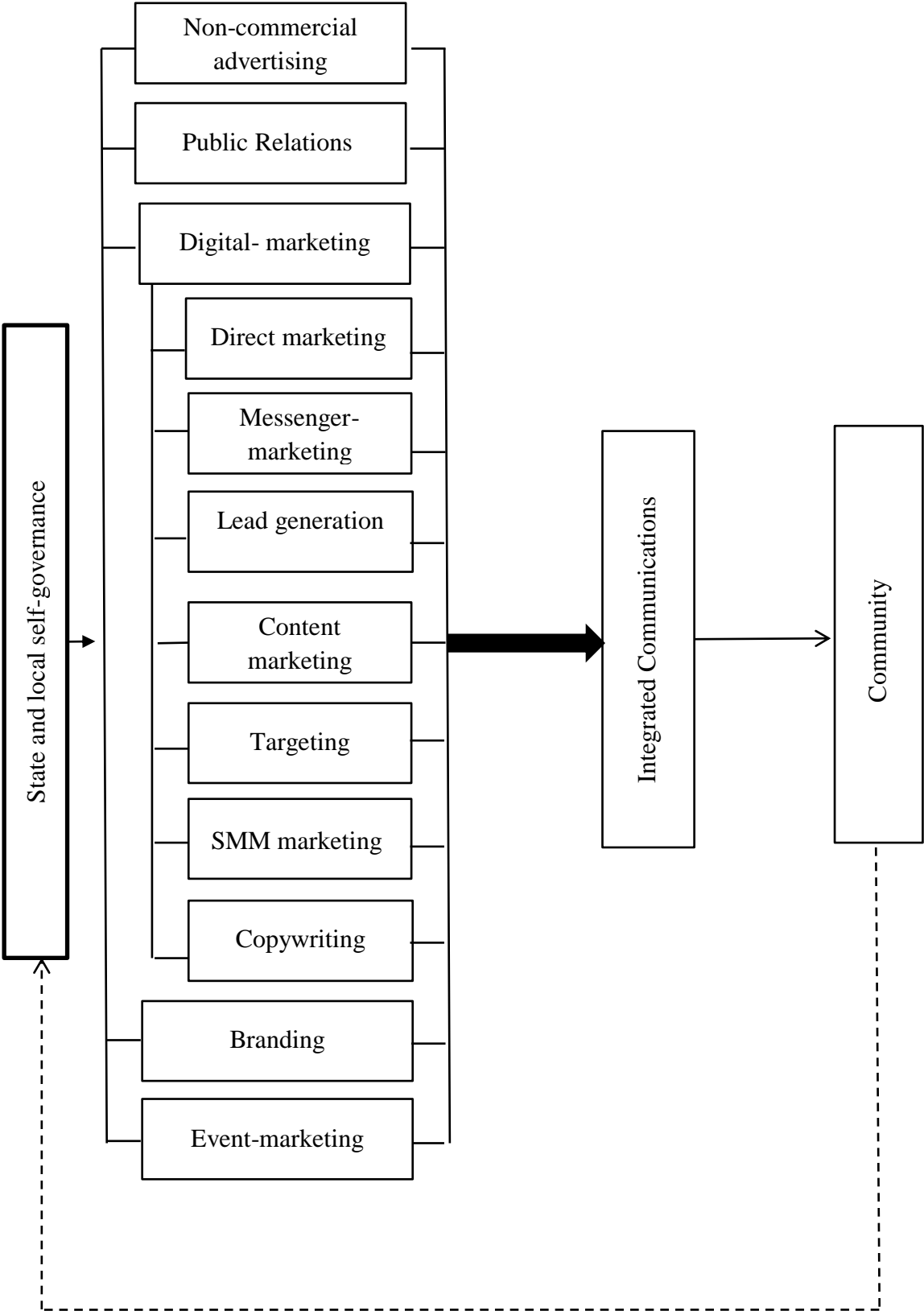


Figure 1. Model of integrated public communication in public administration
(developed by the author)

Public relations advertising is often used in public administration, but only of the non-commercial kind, namely political, social and confessional advertising. The strategic objective of non-commercial advertising is to change the behavioural pattern of the public towards the object of advertising. Thus, political advertising aims to promote political leaders, organisations or ideas, etc. Social advertising attracts public attention to socially important issues, shape public opinion, change the behavioural model in society, support public policy, stimulate action to solve public sphere problems, etc. Religious advertising is relatively rare and is religious advertising. Therefore, all types of non-commercial advertising belong to mass-mediated communication.

Public Relations is most often used in public administration. A. Shevchenko, for instance, interprets PR as a specific communicative practice aimed at achieving mutual understanding and trusting relationships between public actors, which are individuals, groups, community in a broader sense, and various organisations and production structures [3]. Among the variety of PR tools, the following are most commonly used [4]:

- indirect mass influence - press releases, fact sheets, interviews, statements, case stories, articles, review articles, media kits, commentaries;

- speeches and annual reports;

- special events: receptions, conferences, press conferences, presentations, briefings, lobbying, charity work, roundtables, opinion research, deliberative events;

- support tools - visual identity, blogs, social media pages.

Emphasis has to be placed on public opinion surveys, issues concerning public life, which enable the authorities and local government to understand the demand regarding information and their actions. Secondly, it is the opportunity to focus the attention of the target public groups on the public issues that are proposed for discussion and collection of proposals. Moreover, a tool that actively involves the public in communications is the deliberative measures, including public hearings, public consultations and public expertise. These measures involve active public members to ensure that their opinions on socially essential issues are heard.

Direct marketing, often through direct mail, ought to be used in public administration communication activities when it is necessary to address public members to build a reflective relationship without using information intermediaries for communication.

Messenger marketing uses chatbots to establish or improve interaction with the public. Like direct marketing, messenger marketing is employed in integration with lead generation, the main methods of which are:

- personal interaction - at face-to-face meetings, conferences, roundtables between authorities and the public;

- interaction via the Internet - using the website to collect leads, social networks, etc.;

- mailings - e-mail, direct mail, SMS, etc.

Currently, digital marketing in public communications has the most substantial impact on the public due to society and business digitalisation, which is constantly evolving. Digital technologies in public management allow not only to deliver information and receive feedback but also to investigate the state, moods, needs and attitudes of society and its individual representatives. Public communications have to apply direct marketing, messenger marketing, lead generation, content marketing, targeting, SMM marketing, copywriting, and others. Content marketing in public administration aims to attract the public to increase loyalty and trust to state and local authorities by placing transparent, open, reliable, and relevant information on their websites, which must be presented professionally. Therefore, copywriting deserves special attention and should be used in compliance with all the tools of the public communication model because the quality and correctness of the text depend on both the promotion of public interest and public relations. Attention has to be paid to storytelling as a form of copywriting, due to which it is possible to build trust with the public through the publication of success stories appealing to readers. It is evident that a competent text construction arouses interest and emotions; that is why it must be used primarily in the social aspects of public administration.

Targeting is a communication tool in public administration used as direct interpersonal and direct group communication. In this case, the public target group is segmented according to specific criteria.

SMM marketing is being quite rapidly developed as the number of users of social networks increases every year, so it is one of the most effective tools for public relations. It is worth paying particular attention to marketing influence, which relies on product placement from opinion leaders as a tool based on trust. It is efficient to use it in a social direction by promoting issues important to the public, such as healthy nutrition, environmental protection, combating violence, building barrier-free environments, supporting homeless people, social services for displaced persons, and other societal challenges. A broader concept is media marketing, which promotes socially important content through media formats and products. The human element is of particular importance as well because the media are also members of the public that are read, watched and listened to by many. Understanding the public's demand and preferences will help determine which messages overlap with the target groups of communications. In doing so, media mapping ought to be ensured to pinpoint specific communication actions.

Having analysed the publications and definitions of branding in public administration, the author would like to focus attention on the suitable formulation provided by the Ukrainian scholar D. Kislov who says it is the activity of the relevant structures of the country authorities and civil servants aimed at implementing national and regional country brands in the minds of population in the internal dimension; in the minds of state, corporate and international representatives of other countries and an unlimited number of individuals in the external sector [5]. To promote the brand of a territory or any public institution, it is necessary to use integrated communications to form a public opinion or raise awareness of critical public issues and, consequently, trust.

As a result of the study of various communicative activities, the author considers it advisable to introduce the integrated approach to the communicative interaction of public authorities and local government the organisation of events,

activities, celebrations which are organised for the public, usually of entertainment nature, to "reach" every individual citizen, building a sufficiently strong associative link directly between their values and performance results. Therefore, marketing programmes must necessarily be integrated into a global promotion strategy, such as administrative services, to ensure their effectiveness and sustainability [6]. That is to say, the application of event marketing offers the opportunity to create a sense of community cohesion and belonging via an event. Event activities have to be integrated with advertising and PR activities as well as other public communication tools.

Conclusions from the study and prospects for further research in this direction. Taking into account the analysis, synthesis and presentation of the ways of solving the scientific task of forming an integrated approach of communicative interaction in public administration, the author concludes that communication activities ought to be on an ongoing practice, based on the tactical and strategic planning of integrated communications in public administration. Public authorities and local self-government bodies by forming a strategy of communication development in public administration and plans of communication activities, applying all the elements of integrated marketing communications presented in the study, especially paying attention to new trends, will allow involving as many citizens as possible in the active public life of society and the state as a whole.

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