

RUSSIAN SPECIALIZED PERIODICALS IN CULTURE AS A MODERN COMMUNICATIVE CHANNEL

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Abstract

Purpose: The key factor of modern society development is mass media, and nowadays its demanded business model is the translation of advertising information.

Methodology: The solution to the research problem posed in this work required the application of the following methods: theoretical analysis, typological analysis, content analysis, and periodical comparative study.

Result: Specialized periodicals in the field of culture occupy a separate niche in the system of modern mass media and are focused on specialized needs meetings of different social audiences. This type of media is also involved in advertising communication. First of all, this happens due to the maintenance of its activities, the preservation of quantitative self-sufficiency and the substantial identity of this type of periodicals. The article is devoted to the consideration of Russian specialized periodicals in culture as a communication channel demanded by society.

Applications: This research can be used for universities, teachers, and students.

Novelty/Originality: In this research, the model of Russian Specialized Periodicals in Culture as a Modern Communicative Channel is presented in a comprehensive and complete manner.

Keywords: *Culture, Communication, Mass Media, Specialized Periodicals, Typological Features, Advertising, Journalism, Media Economics.*

INTRODUCTION

The modern mass media landscape is notable for the abundance of both traditional and new digital platforms with their unique capabilities to broadcast information to a wide variety of audiences and provides them with the opportunity not only to choose information independently but also to become its creator. Reasoning about mass media essence, the researchers emphasize that they have a powerful potential impact on society, influence the processes of its transformation, consolidation, national and cultural identity ([Bandura, 2009](#); [Gerula, 2004](#); [Korochenskiy, 2002](#); [Luhman, 2005](#); [Mehraj, 2014](#); [Polonskiy, 2017](#); [Salaverría, 2017](#); [Slater, 2007](#); [Swart, 2017](#); [Thorsen, 2018](#)), its “expectations about the ways the world should be represented, the things that should be talked about and the person who is authorized to talk” ([Baym, 2017: 12](#)). However, nowadays, in order to understand the nature of the information circulating through the mass media channels, it is necessary to keep in mind that the market, turning all media enterprises into the media industry, working “on the basis of contact sales to its audience” ([Ivanitsky, 2009](#)), also changed their traditional values that determine the production of news information ([Mast, 2017](#); [Mast, 2019](#); [Deuze, 2018](#)). Media coverage is hybrid nowadays, consisting of the elements attributed to the regulatory and commercial logic of the mass media” ([Koehler, 2019: 233](#)). Due to the “commercial logic”, almost all the media provided their “field” for advertising, which created, as E. L. Vartanova writes, “the only effective business model that allowed the mass media to exist relatively independently. Indeed, in the conditions of planned target financing of the mass media, the mass media must fulfill a specific order by any structures - the state, political parties, the church or by any other social institutions. Under the conditions of the advertising industry, with all possible negative consequences to which the dependence on advertising can lead, newspapers, magazines, and television can achieve a certain independence” ([Vartanova, 2010](#)).

The consideration subject in this study is specialized periodicals in the field of culture as a communication channel. Today, when society is persistently seeking the answers to the questions relating to its value-semantic space development and the role of the media in this process, they feel a very acute need for the awareness of the communication channel features, which are related to personal ideological foundations development. “It is very promising to comprehend those information resources that offer a set of knowledge, facts, and information based on the principles of focusing, profiling and differentiation ... and which have the unique ability not only to respond purposefully to the target audience requests, but also to have a modeling effect on society cultural status in general” ([Polonskiy, 2009: 159](#)).

METHODS

Despite the high degree of social importance for specialized periodicals in culture, the researchers addressed the issue of this communication channel nature of the press segment in the context of the general system of periodicals quite rarely ([Zinin, 2017](#)). The study relevance is determined by the lack of a deep tradition of research devoted to this section of the periodical press, as specialized publications in culture, the importance of which is extremely high for society.

The practice has developed in modern science to consider specialized periodicals as an independent type of press, for which (1) problematic subject-matter differentiation and (2) target audience are the main ones. E.P. Prokhorov draws attention to the fact that the primary role in specialized periodicals is played by the target audience requests, its social and cultural parameters, ideological and political orientations, information needs, etc., which “generates a huge number of strictly oriented periodicals and the programs specifically addressed to specific audience” (Prokhorov, 2002: 211). S.G. Korkonosenko also emphasizes the importance of the audience in this press segment: “Specialized periodicals are designed for an audience with more or less clear contours to provide stability, although in most cases it does not promise tremendous general demand” (Korkonosenko 2001: 201).

On the grounds of the audience parameter A.I. Akopov suggests that all publications be divided into the mass, targeted at a broad social audience, and special (specialized), intended for the experts in various branches of science, technology, economics and culture (Akopov, 2002: 156). Special periodicals, in turn, are divided into a number of subject groups, among which there are magazines in the field of education, culture and art (Akopov, 1995: 11). L.L. Resnyanskaya notes that the basis of specialized publication activities is one of the following principles: 1) “not everything for everyone”, that is, the principle of thematic limitation and 2) “not everything and not for all” - the principle of limitation by social audience and topic. Besides, the researcher, on the grounds of mass media practice analysis, concludes that there are mixed type periodicals (“about everything for like-minded people”), which combine the characteristics of universal publications (“everything for all”) and specialized ones.

Researchers review mass, high-quality and specialized periodicals for different audiences. At that, those periodicals the audience of which includes a significant part of the population, are considered to be the mass ones, the “high-quality” periodicals are intended for the intellectual elite. Specialized periodicals are for experts of different professional profiles. Scientific-journalistic magazines, as well as subject-specialized (professional and hobby-related) magazines, are differed on such grounds, as the focus on the audience's interests and needs. In accordance with the social, professional and personal interests of the audience, Ya. N. Zasursky singles out educating, specialized, educational, popular and recreational and corporate periodicals.

Thus, the modern media market takes into account the information requests of the target audience, including the audience of specialized periodicals. Specialized periodicals are a special communication channel serving various information requests of specialized audiences. Quality and accuracy, the purposefulness of the target audience with its inherent collection of information needs and cultural values and high-quality content are among the key properties of information provided by this type of publication.

The specialized press is also published for those consumer groups that are united by personal or professional-amateur interests in culture (the publications for cinema, theater, music, painting, dance servants and fans, etc.) (Chukov, 2004: 21), as well as by shared values, knowledge, and cultural practices.

A number of studies are devoted to the problems of specialized periodical development and evolution in the field of culture, which are regarded in the context of the culture-forming function of journalism with its inherent ability to promote important cultural values expand the body of human knowledge and enrich his spiritual world. Certainly, “journalism makes culture accessible to everyone, due to the wide development of the channel system for information transmission” (Prokhorov, 2002: 63). Specialized periodicals in culture are demanded by society as a key resource, “responsible” for the selection of cultural facts, their interpretation and propaganda, for the distribution of relevant socially significant information about reality, for meeting the information needs of different social audiences, as well as for spiritual production, focused on cultural value system provision and the modeling of public consciousness.

Among the publications dealing with cultural issues, A.I. Akopov singles out cultural-educational (the periodicals devoted to culture issues or aimed at the expansion of educational issues) and art history (general art history journals and art history magazines) (Akopov, 2002: 156).

Ya. N. Zasursky draws attention to the fact that changes take place during the recreational period: it appears in two versions - figurative (such publications as, for example, "Kultpohod" and "Afisha") and fragmented, specialized one (“Theater-lover”, "About cinema"). By the range of information, researchers identify the publications with a wide range of information, with a narrow range of information and specialized publications that are intended for special reading groups.

Besides, “The typology of publications” offers the scheme for the classification of publications by functional purpose - according to general tasks and specific functions. Researchers identify the class of so-called free reading publications, which includes literary and artistic publications and the publications for leisure (Milchik, 1990: 206). This group includes the magazines as the supplements to newspapers, for example, such as "Theatre-goer", published by the newspaper "Novye Izvestia".

On the basis of publication purpose, they distinguish literary, artistic, artistic-journalistic, cultural, educational, methodical and entertaining publications.

Based on the dominant publication type, researchers distinguish popular science, literary and artistic publications. Popular science publications contain publications about the research in the field of science, culture and applied activities and are

intended for a wide distribution of knowledge and self-education. Periodicals mainly include the works of fiction in various genres and art criticism ([Michik, 1990: 196](#)).

The majority of works devoted to the typology and the classification of periodic publications, offers to classify specialized publications in the field of culture depending on the following characteristics (criteria): by function, by publication purpose, by publication nature, by information nature and content, by publication topic, by audience specifics, as well as by interests and needs and by the range of information.

Thus, in modern science, there are different views on the typology of specialized publications in the field of culture. The problem of understanding the characteristics of this type of publication is not only theoretical but also practical and requires a detailed study that takes into account the dynamics of modern society, the features of its spiritual needs and the communication technologies it uses.

The solution to the research problem posed in this work required the application of the following methods: theoretical analysis, typological analysis, content analysis, and periodical comparative study.

RESULTS AND ITS DISCUSSION

Considering specialized publications in the field of culture as a communication channel of modern society, it is necessary to determine the distribution scale of this segment on the Russian market of periodicals. At this point, in our opinion, an objective source that actually reflects the list of periodicals operating in the market is the catalog of subscription editions, such as the combined catalog "Press of Russia", which provides reliable information on periodicals in Russia for the current year. The catalog includes more than 4,000 newspapers and magazines of various subjects, segmenting the subscription to the publications on topics. The combined catalog "Press of Russia" highlights the trend "Art. Culture. Aesthetics". This section includes 145 titles.

Quantitative self-sufficiency and meaningful identity of the publications that make up the trend "Art. Culture. Aesthetics" allows us to consider specialized publications in the field of culture as an independent segment of the press. Taking into account a number of indicators, namely, the degree of target audience preparation, the subject of display, the nature of funding, etc., it can be argued about the heterogeneity of specialized publications in the field of culture, which leads to the search for new criteria within the approach to the classification of periodicals.

Thanks to specialized publications in the field of culture, covering the events of cultural life in the capitals, regions and abroad, raising the variety of issues related to human cultural experience, a single axiological area is developed with characteristic normative guidelines necessary for the effective functioning of society. This axiological area is necessary to develop "objective criteria assessing key social trends and the general spiritual and moral formula of social good" ([Polonskiy, 2009: 19](#)).

Researchers note unanimously that the publications in the field of culture make an invaluable contribution to a personal worldview development, to the expansion of his knowledge, to the deepening of his emotional experience, but today, like all media, they find themselves in tough competition, therefore their appeal to advertising is quite natural.

An indisputable feature of specialized publications in the field of culture is a high coefficient of trust in a source and, thus, in all the information contained in this publication. An important distinguishing feature of this channel is the target audience segmentation, which allows you to create the content that takes into account the most social, psychological and professional parameters of consumers and his requests in the field of culture. This provision gives considerable prospects for publications in terms of advertiser attraction.

We analyzed more than 60 magazines and newspapers in this segment of periodicals (Cinema Art, our legacy, Ballet, Cinema business today, Music life, Theatergoer, Theater life, Culture and time, Culture, etc. for the presence of advertising content in specialized publications devoted to culture and its character. The analysis showed that there are not so many advertising appeals in specialized publications devoted to culture, their share is just over 5% of the total amount of information. This indicates a special, selective attitude of specialized publications in terms of culture to advertising.

The analysis determined that the subjects of advertising appeals in the publications devoted to culture are the following ones: 1) self-advertisement; 2) cultural events (festivals, exhibitions, competitions); 3) cultural institutions (museums, exhibition halls, galleries, etc.); 4) publishing houses; 5) the mass media; 6) books; 7) trade organizations (salons-shops, antique shops, furniture stores, the shops for designers, photo equipment shops, etc.); 8) technical products (video and photo equipment) and 9) other subjects (tea, coffee, porcelain, etc.). The percentages of each thematic group can vary considerably from publication to publication, but the first 6 groups that combine advertising information relating to the publications themselves and the cultural sphere in general, represent more than 60% of advertising hits.

As we see, different objects can act as an advertised object in specialized publications, but they somehow reflect a fairly high level of consumer demands and requirements for an advertised product. For example, the advertised objects in the journal "Theater lover. Theater news" is Yuri Nikulin Circus on Color Boulevard, Moscow Theater "Lenkom", Theater "MOST", "Moscow Art Theater", Moscow Theater "Sovremennik" and "The theater named after E. Vakhtangov. However,

most advertising appeals are commercial ones (44.5%) - Greenfield tea, Jardin coffee, exclusive Rudolf Kampf porcelain, photo equipment, etc.

The arrangement of advertising materials in specialized publications devoted to culture depends on publication layout and has no clear boundaries since there is no advertising heading in publications. However, advertising materials are placed mainly on the cover pages: the second (inner front), the third (inner back) and the fourth (outer back). The last page ("back cover") has the best communication performance in terms of advertising, as it has a high level of contact with the reader. Such publications as, for example, "Art Council", "Theater lover. Theater news", "Scenarios and repertoire", "Collection", "The Art of Cinema" devote the third and the fourth pages of the cover only to advertising materials. Each "back cover" of the magazine "Scenarios and Repertoire" is dedicated to the best holiday scenario among readers. This competition was organized by the magazine.

The specialized publications devoted culture demonstrates various genre forms of advertising (advance advertising, showcase, advertising report, advertising article, advertising catalog advertising), the frequency of which depends on the editorial policy. So, for example, the "Theater lover" magazine refers most often to such genre form of advertising as a billboard. Advertising articles are widely featured in the "Arts Council" magazine. An illustrative example of catalog advertising use is the magazine "Assembly", which devotes the entire third page of the cover to the information about the magazine's previous issues and the possibilities of its purchase.

CONCLUSIONS

Summing up, let's note that specialized publications demanded by Russian society in order to meet the specialized information needs of different social audiences and spiritual production are forced to turn to advertise nowadays to support their own activities. Quantitative self-sufficiency and meaningful identity of the publications that make up the trend "Art. Culture Aesthetics" allow us to consider specialized publications in the field of culture as an independent segment of the press.

An indisputable advantage of specialized publications in the field of culture is a high coefficient of trust in the source and, thus, in all the information contained by this publication. An important distinguishing feature of this channel is the segmentation of the target audience, which allows you to create content that takes into account the socio-psychological characteristics of the consumer and his demands to the maximum. This provision provides considerable prospects for publications in terms of advertiser attraction.

It is necessary to take into account that there are not so many advertising appeals in specialized publications devoted to culture, which indicates their special attitude to advertising. Thus, the advertising policy of each individual publication requires a special study.

The study of the communication channel specifics formed by specialized publications devoted to culture has a further research perspective, of course.

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