

THE EVOLUTION AND STRATEGIC APPROACHES OF NEW MEDIA IMPLEMENTATION IN ROMANIAN ENTERPRISES

Mihaela STOICA¹

In the case of professional implementation of new media in modern enterprises, strongly dependent of client demands and technological evolution, the enterprises response are driven by external factors more than any internal logic or strategic directions. The social part of new media (lately named social media) is giving a way to consumers not only to comment about products and services, but also to recommend to other consumers what, where and if a product or a service is reliable. The purpose of this paper is to show whether this dependency relationship exists in the case of Romanian enterprises and whether they are prepared for this rapid change of technological access of consumers.

Keywords: new media, social media, customers, organizational change, organization, crowdsourcing, competences, technology, Internet, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

1. Introduction

In a computerized world, the *new media* research is a challenge, due to the rapid changes occurring in this area, and the implications they bring their rapid development in all spheres of our life. From the birth of World Wide Web, more than 25 years ago [1], organizations and people tried to continually adapt to rapid changes and the transition from local organization of a global network affiliation.

The implementation of government policies influenced by bureaucratic processes, must keep pace with the unprecedented development of these technologies. As Alvin Toffler emphasizes, governments and parliamentary institutions of the Second Wave were designed for making decisions slowly, in a world in which it took a week for a message to get from Boston or New York to Philadelphia. Today, however, the messages from all part of the world are instantly received, and then leaders in Washington, Moscow, Paris or London must sometimes react with decisions in minutes [2].

Frederick Taylor vision of labour [3], but also the theories of Max Weber on bureaucratic organization [4], prevailed in the industrial era, establishing clear working relationship and clearly defined tasks. A classical industrial bureaucracy: a giant, hierarchical, permanent, top-down, mechanistic organization, well designed for making repetitive products or repetitive decisions in a comparatively

¹ PhD, University POLITEHNICA of Bucharest, Romania, e-mail: stoicamihaela11@yahoo.com

stable industrial environment. Now, however, as we shift to the new principles a new kind of organization is necessarily for now and the future.

A variety of management theoreticians have contributed to improve Weber's theories over time so that organizations respond more quickly to environment changes. New concepts related to the new communication way and ability to use this technology, appeared in the last years and emphasizes the changes in the way we think in the technology driven world.

New technology-mediated communication technologies are changing the way organizations communicate with partners, customers and consumers. Messages are transmitted not only by corporations from top down, to the consumers, but consumers are talking among them and transmitting their messages to corporations.

Ability of organizations to use this open communication was going to concepts like crowdsourcing, crowdfounding, wikinomics [5], and so on.

In this context, this material is an analysis on how are perceived and implemented in organizations in Romania this rapid changes in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

2. New Media definition

The terminology "New media" is difficult to include in a simple definition, because new media is a mix of technology, skills and processes that are changing at such a great speed that is impossible to define. For example, the mobile phone in the late 80s could be considered part of the New Media, while now only certain phones with certain sets of applications can enter this concept.

What makes it even more difficult to define the idea of "new". The very idea of something new mean something made or created (relatively) soon; appearing for the first time, what have arisen recently or has a progressive element that occurs in development [6].

Another definition presents new media as an interactive communication using the Internet, including podcasts, RSS feeds, social networks, text messages, blogs, wiki platforms, virtual worlds and more. New media makes it possible for everyone to create, modify and share content with others, using relatively simple tools that are often free or not very expensive [7].

Lister states that while some people use the term new media have only one thing in mind (the Internet), for others this terminology may mean other things (digital television, virtual environment, computer games or a blog). This may lead to many types of phenomena. It is a comprehensive terminology with cultural connotation with more than a tinge techniques or specialized application [8].

New media can also be used in offline environments, for example in using a CD-ROM or DVD. New media is a combination of online and offline media, such as computer networks or personal computers. They are a combination of transmission links and artificial memory (filled with text, data, images and / or sounds) that can be installed on separate devices [8].

Lately, new media called Web 2.0, or social media, is the transition from static looking information and posting them on the web by an administrator, called web 1.0 version created by Bernard Lee [2], a new media that allows direct communication with the consumer. Web 2.0 is a phrase first used by Tim O'Reilly and explained in 2005 as providing software as a continually-updated service, which is even better the more you use the more users, consuming and remixing data multiple sources, including individual users [10]. Kotler noted that Web 2.0 is created in the Information Age [11].

Web 2.0 is the business revolution in the computer industry caused by the move to the internet as a platform, and an attempt to understand the rules for success on that new platform. Chief among those rules is this: Build applications that harness network effects to get better the more people use them [10].

3. The new communication paradigm

With the evolution of new technology-mediated communication technologies, has emerged a new paradigm of communication. The message is transmitted not only by corporations, by traditional methods to the consumer, but also from the consumer to corporations.

Development of computer communication has gone from communicating face to face or by phone, computer mediated communication, which has specific characteristics. This is defined as communication produced when people interact with each other by sending messages through a computer network [12].

In his paper "A Mathematical Theory of Communication", Shannon points that "The fundamental problem of communication is that of reproducing at one point either exactly or approximately a message selected at another point". With this work he is revolutionizing technology, the idea being taken up by engineers in communications, this idea leading to today's information age. He argues that the information contained in the message is to use the numbers 1 and 0. Simple all communication lines today is measured in bits per second, a concept introduced by Shannon as channel capacity. This theory allows the use of storage bits required for imaging, audio and other data [13].

He is introducing the idea of the "noise" in the process of technology mediated communication, meaning that in an engineering process the mathematical algorithms are solving the technical problems, but not solving the meaning of the message [13].

New media communication, especially social networking communication, the source of noise is exactly the meaning of message. Internet communication practices amended as the type of writing, the content of communication or interaction type of public exposure (by adopting a virtual identities) [14].

Low barriers of entry into the New Media [15], without any or very low identity verify bring the question the validity and reliability of new media available content. Thus, one of the requirements in the use of new media is to search for, collect and process information and use it in a critical and systematic

way, to assess the relevance and distinguishing real from virtual while recognizing the links [16].

Knowledge and understanding of communication in new media are very important goals for quality communication. This requires a contextualized approach to initiate action, making connections intra - and inter-community (both micro and macro-scale: family, group of friends etc.). The purposes of communication can be the most diverse and depends, in general, of the users intentions (in particular transmitter) and the context in which occurs. One can distinguish four categories of purposes:

- The collection of information;
- Processing of information;
- Generation of information;
- Dissemination of information.

Direct communication has the advantage of filling certain data with non-verbal communication, or body language, having more data available for deciphering the message. In New Media, this non-verbal communication can be achieved by introducing graphics or multimedia, so it is absolutely necessary to know clearly the purpose of communication for choosing the most appropriate communication channels: static communication through a website or social media through social networks.

4. The new business landscape

Organizations may consider all the above mentioned factors for both, protecting the business and taking advantage to grow the business in this new world..

In „Marketing 3.0”, Kotler brings into discussion the three major forces that shape the business landscape toward the web 3.0 technology is influencing the organizations:

- the age of participation and collaborative marketing
- the age of globalization paradox and
- the age of creative society [11].

At most companies the majority of employee communications already flow electronically through blogs, wikis, instant messaging, video conferencing, and various enterprise collaboration tools. As collaboration tools improve, they are enabling collaboration that looks and feels as everyone is in the same room. The result is that workplaces become smaller and teams are more geographically distributed, with virtual teams from all over the globe [5].

Decentralization of the work flow and the actual workplace will be the defining trend in years ahead. Indeed, Linux, Wikipedia, and other collaborative projects will make it easier and less expensive for employees to self-organize productively than to be squeezed into a corporate hierarchy [5].

Samuelson has a different opinion; he argues in his article, that national borders will remain because they are driven by politics and psychology [17].

In this context, when e.g. marketeters want to develop a culturally relevant campaign, marketers may need to have an understanding about anthropology and sociology. They should be able to recognize and assimilate cultural paradoxes that might not be obvious at first sight [11].

Aforesaid may serve as an example, how important it is to understand that and how workplaces are changing in this new era. A new level of competencies in organizations, combining digital competencies with a good knowledge of global workplaces, different cultural background and local specialization are required. Companies moving with this trend, will look for new “type” of employees.

The ability of managers of leading cross-cultural, multi-functional teams in international or global projects is already a main ability of internationally operating organizations. Using interfaces communication technology, and working with various platforms, raises level of job competences, including digital skills.

Considering aforesaid, it is very important and necessary to delimit required competences for new media. There are two main areas, which at first glance may look very similar:

- *IT skills, programming and hardware and software maintenance*
this is an area with tradition, both internationally and nationally. Specialists in this field are trained in traditional schools and skills related to the structure and architecture of computing, microprocessor based systems, programming languages, software systems, artificial intelligence and expert systems [18].
- *Digital skills and use of software and virtual platforms*
Computer mediated communication requires the development of special skills to use technological interfaces and applications installed on them. In the European Union were created standards for digital literacy and the level at which a person can be considered to have a good level of digital skills [16].

5. New media in Romanian enterprises – evolution and actual status

Romanian curricula in Computer Science are the result of over 50 years of experience and evolution, taking into account the needs of organizations. Preparing engineers specialized in structure and architecture of computing systems based on microprocessors, programming languages, systems, software, artificial intelligence and many other, supported evolution of organizations [18].

The evolution of businesses from offline to online is increasing the demand for IT professionals. An analysis of Romanian professionals from HR online platform shows that most of job offers are for IT specialists. In 2008, IT specialists jobs was on sixth rank of job offers of companies and evolved to second rank in searches in 2014 [19].

Together with the increased demand for IT professionals, there can be noted an increased demand for specialists in Internet and e-commerce [19].

Regarding the use of the online environment by companies, a research carried out by Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union, shows that in

the EU, in December 2013, 30% of EU companies that have more than 10 employees, are using a form of social media and almost three quarters of them have a website [20].

Also there is noted a shift from static web pages to web applications that include functionality such as online ordering and links to social media. Organizations are using web presence to improve their image.

In Romania, in December 2013, 42% of enterprises had a website, 19% used a type of social media, 5% had a formal policy to use social media, 17% used social platforms (Facebook, LinkedIn, Xing and others) 6% were using websites to broadcast multimedia content (YouTube), 3% used blogs or microblogs and 2% wiki platform for the dissemination of knowledge.

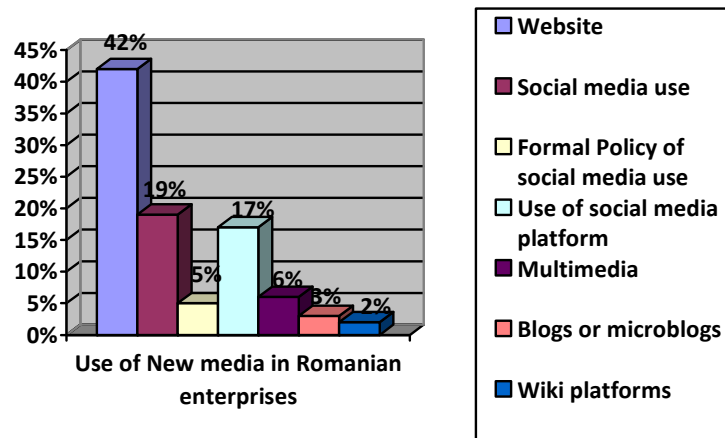


Fig. 1. New media in Romanian enterprises in December 2013 (Eurostat)

Websites and social networks require different skills, moving from the programming needed to build a website, the communication skills required in social networks. [20].

In Romania (???) the number of users of the social network Facebook has grown from 518,140 in January 2010 to 6.6 million in December 2013 and 8,000,000 on March 16, 2015, with a penetration rate among Internet users rising from 68.5% in 2013 to 83.0% in 2015 [21]. Overall penetration of Internet in Romania in April 1 2014 read 51.4 % [22].

In European Union, statistic per 30th June 2014 reveals that there are 582,441,059 Internet users, with 70.5 % penetration among population and 250,934,000 Facebook users in December 2012 (no recent data available) [22].

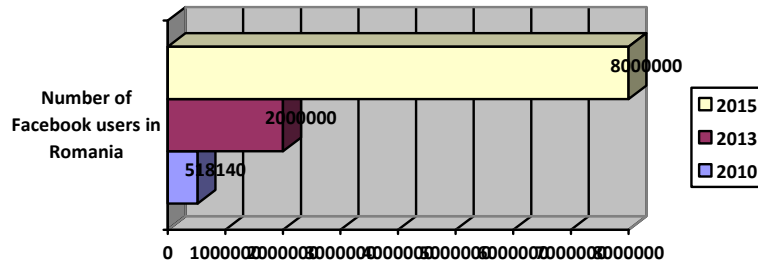


Fig. 2. The number of Facebook users in Romania from 2010 to 2015 (Facebrands.ro)

Integrating online platforms within organizations in Romania led to new professions with digital skills for working “online”. In contrast to those trained in IT, with 50 years of academic experience, this new professions have not an academic background, yet, and are not yet indexed in the Classification of Occupations in Romania. Jobs like online manager, social media specialist or online marketing specialist are still assimilated with classical form of occupation.

In the same time, the management of social online platforms require social media specialists, especially in areas closely related to customers and interaction with consumers.

6. Managerial implications

Organisations will have to adapt and update their policy on the use of online networks and train employees to use new media and especially the social technologies in a beneficial manner for the organizations. Having the understanding that technology is currently the main driver, if not one of the most important factors for organizational change and success, would allow organizations to minimize risks, take advantage of opportunities and shape the organization for the future.

New media implicates a new, high level of transparency through the information available online. This could make organization vulnerable, in case is not managed in an appropriate way. Managers may consider aforesaid and to invest more in people in order to manage new technology and be prepared for new communication channels and related risk management.

Integration of new media in organization requires establishing specific and clear goals, what to communicate, how to communicate and to/with whom to communicate. Clear goals will lead to clear measures needed to achieve those goals. Whether it is collection of information, processing of information, generation of information or dissemination of information, all those areas require clear goals and appropriate measures for taking advantage of new media.

Below recommendations may help managers to define the indicated clear goals and related measures, allowing to take advantage of the opportunities offered by new media but also to limit the potential risks of new media. The list of recommendations may not be exhaustive.

- Updating the vision, mission and strategy taking into account new forms of social media;
- Updating governance standards, for example in terms of communication and approval procedures;
- Updating data on the form of organization to cope successfully with the challenges;
- Establishing a new team in social media, possibly attached to the department of public relations, customer care or sales and marketing;
- Clear definition of roles and responsibilities in terms of new and social media for all relevant internal and external stakeholders (including monitoring market / media and communication);
- An updated guidance and / or social media policy to give employees a clear framework on how to work with new media in order to protect information / intellectual property of the company;
- Updating of job descriptions and recruitment policy;
- Updating the training plan and initiatives dedicated to continuous development to ensure that employees are at any time prepared for challenging and fast moving environment of new media;
- Ongoing monitoring - internal and external – of environmental changes and challenges that the organization must be ready to cope with and whether related internal initiatives are properly and timely implemented.

7. Conclusions on the evolution of the industry and human resources capabilities

International communication strategy is including more and more new media channels. As data reveals, a lot of Romanian enterprises are still using the static communications, via website, and a few are linked with social media channels. Most of statistical data reveals areas of use of new media in enterprises, but not how organizational model or culture of organizations were and shall be enhanced.

Our today's virtual world, characterized by a high level of mobility of consumers and data puts the challenge on organization to be as fast moving as the consumers are. A formal organization with fixed rules and a clear demarcation of positions and hierarchy may be soon overtaken by organizations, which are more flexible and closer to the customer, regardless of their geographical location.

The use of statically online communication rather than social media channels may not only be a result of human resources available but of culture of organization, too.

REFERENCES

- [1.] *** The birth of the web, <http://home.web.cern.ch/topics/birth-web>, 2015
- [2.] *Toffler, A.*, Al treilea val, (Third wave) Antet Xpress și Lucman, Grupul drago print, București, 1980
- [3.] *Taylor F. W.*, The Principles of Scientific Management, USA: Publisher Harper & Brothers, 1911
- [4.] *Weber, M.*, The theory of social and Economical Organizations, Translated by A.M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons, The Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois & The Falcon's Wing Press, Copyright 1947 by Oxford University Press, New York, Inc. , 1947
- [5.] *Tapscott, D., Williams A. D.*, Wikinomics : how mass collaboration changes everything, Published by the Penguin Group, 2007
- [6.] *** Dexonline, <https://dexonline.ro/definitie/nou>, 2015
- [7.] *** New Media Basics, What is Using New Media?, <https://www.aids.gov/using-new-media/new-media-basics>, 2012
- [8.] *Lister, M., Dovey, J., Giddins S., Grant, I., Kelly, K.*, New Media: A Critical Introduction, published by Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, London and New York, second edition, 2009
- [9.] *Dijk van, J.*, *The network society* – second edition, published by Sage, Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore, Washington DC, 2006
- [10.] *O'Reilly T.*, Web 2.0 Compact Definition: Trying Again, <http://radar.oreilly.com/2006/12/web-20-compact-definition-tryi.html>, December 10, 2006
- [11.] *P. Kotler, H. Kartajaya, and I. Setiawan.* Marketing 3.0 From Products to Customers to the Human Spirit, Published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Hoboken, New Jersey Published simultaneously in Canada, 2010
- [12.] *Herring S. C.*, Computer-Mediated Discourse Handbook of Discourse Analysis, edited by Deborah Tannen, Deborah Schiffrin, and Heidi Hamilton. Oxford: Blackwell, accesată la <http://odur.let.rug.nl/redeker/herring.pdf>, 1996
- [13.] *Shannon C.E.* The Mathematical Theory of Communication, Ed. University of Illinois Press, Illinois, 1949, pg. 2; reprintat cu corecții din The Bell System Technical Journal, Vol. 27, pp. 379–423, 623–656, July, October, 1948, accesat la <http://cm.bell-labs.com/cm/ms/what/shannonday/shannon1948.pdf>, 1949
- [14.] *Beciu, C.*, Mass-media, public și societate, (media, public and society) în *Lazăr Vlăsceanu* (coord.), 2010, Sociologie, (sociology) Editura Polirom, Iași, 2010
- [15.] *Porter, M.E.*, (March–April 1979), How Competitive Forces Shape Strategy, Harvard Business Review; Porter, M.E. (1980) Competitive Strategy, Free Press, New York, 1980. ; Porter, M.E. (2008) The Five Competitive Forces That Shape Strategy, Harvard business Review, January 2008
- [16.] European Commission , Measuring Digital Skills across the EU: EU wide indicators of Digital Competence, May 2014
- [17.] *R. J. Samuelson*, The World Is Still Round, Newsweek, July 25, 2005.
- [18.] *** Facultatea de Automatică și Calculatoare, <http://www.upb.ro/automatica.html>, 2015
- [19.] *Ana-Maria Cetățean*, Anunțuri publicate pe eJobs în anul 2008-2014, site de recrutare forță de muncă Conferințelor Wall-Street | HR 2.0, mai 2014
- [20.] *** Eurostat, Social media used by 30% of enterprises in the EU28... ..and almost three quarters of enterprises had a website, newsletter,
- [21.] http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/4-16122013-BP/EN/4-16122013-BP-EN.PDF, 2013

[22.] Facebrands.ro, 2010.2013, 2015, Harta utilizatorilor de Facebook din Romania, <http://www.facebrands.ro/map.html>, 2015

***Internet World Stats, Internet Users in Europe, <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats4.htm>, 2014