

Face-to-face Communication vs. Digital Communication. Case Study: “Cărturești” and “Două Bufnițe” Bookshops

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Abstract: *In this paper, entitled “Face-to-face Communication vs. Digital Communication. Case study: “Cărturești” and “Două Bufnițe” Bookshops”, we aim to distinguish as clearly as possible between direct communication and its role in establishing interpersonal relationships, and technology-mediated communication and the specific elements it brings in interpersonal communication and information transmission. In the first section, we focus on some theoretical aspects related to these two types of communication, as well as on reviewing methodologies for communication instrumentation, looking at the different tools for mediating the communication act and at how each instrument influences the act of communication itself. We relied on the study of organizational forms of communication, in terms of the communication methods and digital media marketing strategies used by organizations and their implications in achieving a communication and information relationship that benefits the organization and its customers. In the case study, we analysed the communication methods adopted in two organizations, namely, the bookshops ‘Cărturești’ and ‘Două Bufnițe’, and how their methods of transmitting information to their clients can*

influence the relationships established with them and the construction of their organizational image.

Keywords: *face-to-face communication, digital communication, local bookstore, chain bookstore*

1. Introduction

The main objective of the study is to analyse two bookstores, “Cărturești” and “Două Bufnițe”, in order to see how the two organizations use online and face-to-face communication. “Cărturești”, as a bookseller well-established on the market, uses more digital media, while “Două Bufnițe”, being a small neighborhood bookstore that emphasizes community value, uses more face-to-face communication.

The idea of analyzing the above has also developed due to current events – being in the midst of a pandemic and forced to move our work online – and especially because young generations have lately become more active online and less active in direct interaction. With this in mind, we thought to come up with a proposal, at the end of the analysis, which consists in developing online communication for the “Două Bufnițe” bookstore.

2. Research methods

In the analysis, we used as a research method the analysis grid, adapted to the type of communication for each bookstore, the grid that was adapted to the online environment for the “Cărturești” bookstore and to the communication itself for “Două Bufnițe” bookstore.

The analysis grid on the “Cărturești” bookstore showed that it uses various online communication tools: the bookstore website, the blog, the facebook page, the Instagram page, Twitter and the YouTube channel. The most usual online communication tools used by “Cărturești” are its website and its blog.

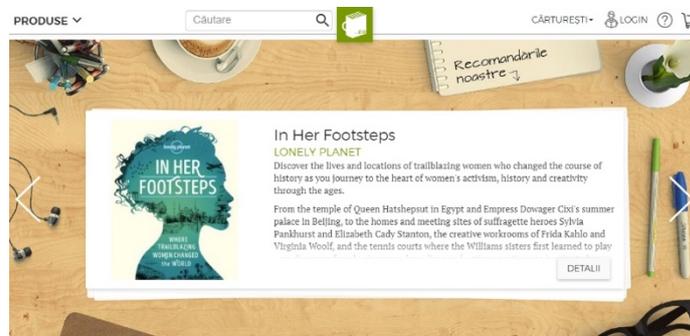
3. Results

The layout of the analysis grid:

1. Online communication channels (library website, Facebook page, "About me" page, frequency of postings, content of postings)
2. Message content – targeting and identifying the topics covered (logo, how the organization is perceived behind the text)
3. The verbal message (use of certain words, specific address, subjectivity, language, etc.), where we find:
 - "Language"
 - Register (familiar/colloquial or elevated), everyday language/specialized terms, professional jargon, and language used: English/Romanian + English)
 - Style
 - Subjective marks/marks of objectivity (depending on whether one or the other of these types of brands is present, conclusions will be drawn on the social distance/with the public)
4. The visual message containing:
 - Type of image
 - The theme
 - The presence of the organization's logo
5. Text-to-image association (attention-catching colours, moving/sensitizing images, etc.)
6. Marketing strategies in the online environment.

Applying the Online Communication analysis grid for the "Cărturești" bookstore:

- **The "Cărturești" Website**, with a pleasant design, with a harmonious and wide range of vivid colors, complex graphics; navigation of information is logical, consistent and well-designed. There are unique animations for every theme or subject, which do not bother the eye.



- **The “Cărturești” Blog.** On the website: <https://Cărturești.ro/blog>, readers can find various valuable information such as: news, events, contests, promotions, projects, selection section where articles with various ideas and interviews are posted. As a design, they adopted a much more simple style, where information is displayed in chronological order. There is also the search button in the upper right corner of the page, along with the other online communication tools (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube).



- The **“Cărturești” Facebook page Timisoara**. After the analysis, we noticed that the “Cărturești” page has 10.207 likes and 11.389 followers. Those who follow the page frequently interact in the following ways: like, share, check-in or label in page posts. The Facebook page was opened for the general public on November 22nd, 2000.
- **The About Me Page** or **„About Us Page”** (Romanian translation) is very well organized; one can find information about the bookstore address and the location on the map, the company's products, its story and the prizes that the bookshop has received.

Conclusions

In this paper, we have defined and listed the essential concepts of direct communication and media communication, as well as the forms of communication, promotion techniques in the digital environment and the marketing strategies of organizations.

The “Cărturești” bookstore uses several online communication channels, such as: the bookstore website, the blog, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube, the most common among them being the bookstore website, Facebook and the blog. With these online communication tools, “Cărturești” achieves better networking with customers or potential customers, with a very well-developed marketing strategy.

From the analysis of the two bookstores, it appears that some methods or techniques used by the “Cărturești” bookstore can be borrowed and adapted by “Două Bufnițe”. Our suggestion to “Două Bufnițe” so as to make the virtual bookstore more effective is to improve its marketing strategies by adding annual promotions, organizing children's book fairs where price reductions can be made and setting up a customized loyalty program for loyal customers.

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Webography:

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