

**CDSSES 2020****IV International Scientific Conference "Competitiveness and the development of socio-economic systems" dedicated to the memory of Alexander Tatarkin****COMMERCIAL SUCCESS OF COPYRIGHT MEDIA PROJECTS  
AS SOCIO-CULTURAL PHENOMENON**

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**Abstract**

The transformation of journalism is associated with the formation and development of the media market and the rethinking of the place and role in a publicist's socio-cultural space. A publicist is an opinion leader, professional, status media personality. A new understanding of success, which considers the commercial component, has also affected professional journalism. The traditional system has collapsed, the adherence to work ethic principles of both famous journalists and their employers forced many to look for ways to communicate with a relevant audience. Self-realization, presentation of a social position to a society turned out to be impossible without any economic activity. This new understanding of success is being formed in the copyright media projects Yeschenepozner, NevzorovTV, Parphenon, Redaktsiya and others. The analysis of Yeschenepozner, Parphenon, and Redaktsiya allowed characterizing such a modern phenomenon to unify an economic man and a social man. It makes one capable of applying personal, professional ambitions and influencing public consciousness, breaking stereotypes and forming new traditions, and new communication culture. The main characteristics of this phenomenon include the preservation of the traditional values of journalism as a socially responsible profession; approval of new formats of mass communication; economic independence as a condition for opinion freedom and demonstration of a creative concept; and creation of a new type of advertising, based altogether on the original idea of the author, the authoritative opinion of a public person, socio-cultural phenomena.

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## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1. The economic factor of domestic journalism development**

The state political and economic characteristics always condition journalism as a social institution and as a socially significant profession. This is first substantiated in 1956 in Four Theories of the Press by Siebert, Peterson, Schramm (Siebert, 1956). However, the history of Russian journalism is unique. Its fundamental difference lies in the fact that it has appeared not as a need for economic information (as it is in other countries), but by the tsar (Russian king) as a means of the reforms promoting. For a long time, newspapers and magazines, like literature, are entertainment for the upper class. The Russian nobility more often spent own money for publication, rather than earn money on periodicals. Therefore, the economic issue turned out to be one of the most discussed in the 19th century. When in the mid-1920s a controversy about the trade direction has unfolded, which is already assessed ambiguously at that time (Obojmova & Razzhivin, 2019).

In Soviet textbooks, criticism of the trade direction ruled out the very idea that one could earn money by disseminating information, or rather ideology. There can be no question of the commercial success of a journalist and editor in the Soviet period. The place in the profession is determined by the degree of loyalty to the authorities.

It is obvious that commercialization, goods/money relations, and monetization determine the growth path and quality of journalism development (Novikova, 2017). The end of the last century changed all spheres of life in Russia, including the media. The controversy, started by Belinsky and his contemporaries (Belinskij, 1953), is continued at present under new conditions. These are digitalization of all spheres of human life; and information is equated with other goods, but its value is measured not by money as by time and attention of the audience, which are considered «rare resources» (Vartanova, 2009, para. 6). Government and business “quite quickly found common interests, often to the detriment and expense of society”, have provoked the creation of the necessary «check and balance, immunity in the form of journalism» (Kornev, 2015, p. 232). But society still have to form a completely new attitude towards the journalist and accept that a journalist commercial success is not always about subservience, skill, and lack of principle.

### **1.2. Journalism in the new economic situation**

A journalist is primarily a social person (Demina & Shkondin, 2016). One faces a choice to whom and under what conditions to sell one’s professional knowledge, skills, and abilities.

The development of online technologies and the Internet by journalism can be considered revolutionary. The following trends have had a particular impact on the transformation of the profession. That includes economic component: digitalization (an appliance of the universal language of communication in digital format), convergence and multimedia (merging of platforms, formats, markets, genres, etc.), diversification (segmentation of the audience and attention to the relevant audience), visualization (formation of a new language of communication), shift of emphasis in the presentation of an event, when the context is more important (which makes author's journalism popular), and interactivity

(constant change of positions between the addresser and addressee). All these tendencies are mastered by journalism and develop new principles of relations between the author and the audience. The audience turns out to be not just a consumer of information, but a solvent customer, determining the requirements for the profession.

Thus, the Internet has turned out to be a convenient, promising, and multifunctional platform for professionals who take a risk in organizing their own media projects (Golubev et al., 2016).

## **2. Problem Statement**

The transition of professional journalists to the Internet has been a difficult process. Mobility and usability have become the main requirements and primary conditions that are supposed to be provided by new editions as content creators to their recipients. Thus, the success of Meduza media (as well as its commercial one) is explained by the fact that the media creators have responded faster and more accurately than others to changing audience demands.

The main changes in the media sphere are associated with the formation of the market and economic relations. This is indicated by both media critics and successful media managers. According to them, there are three business models for the media: sponsorship, subscription and advertising (Sindeeva, 2017). From this point of view, author's media projects represent a successful attempt to form a new business model (Merzlikina & Shulus, 2017). That does not replace the collapsed one, but unites, even transforms, the three traditional models' principles.

Media projects have changed the attitude towards information in general and towards journalists as a profession. The commercial success of such journalists as Dud, Lebedev, Parfenov, Pivovarov, Solodnikov is indivisible bundled with the degree of their influence on a recipient. It ensures the success. The number of views is converted into money, primarily from the advertiser, who is not buying space or airtime today, but the audience.

The study of such professional, on the one hand, and commercially successful, on the other hand, media projects such as *Parphenon* by Parfenov, *Redaktsiya* by Pivovarov, *Yeshchenepozner* by Solodnikov, allows to highlight and characterize the features of their functioning, as well as to determine the place of such socio-cultural phenomenon.

## **3. Research Questions**

### **3.1. The professionalism of a journalist and the modern media market**

The professionalism of the authors of the copyright media projects under consideration is manifested in the following:

- the need for a constant reflection, an evaluative and critical reaction to the current events, which involves polemics and discussion with the professional community;
- the need for effective communication with the relevant audience, which is totally online;
- urge to participate in the formation of the agenda.

At the same time, professional skills and abilities are in demand on the media market, which, by the own admission of the creators of the YouTube channels, is a complete surprise. The eternal issue of the profession independence has received a new round of development. It is noted that understanding the media economics helps to be aware of what is happening and not get lost in the profession (Ryzhikh, 2020). The ability to sell one's talent, professionalism and yet not be venal has become a challenge of the 21st century. The Internet has provided the opportunity to create a public channel, in the sense that society itself chooses what to watch and who to pay for it.

Another topical issue is the development of the journalist traditions under new conditions. It is no coincidence that Pivovarov constantly emphasizes that, while creating "Redaktsiya", he wanted to preserve the best traditions of television "objectivist" journalism. YouTube allows Parfenov to revive the "Namedni" project, which for a long time has disappeared from the screen and published in book format only. Journalists Dud and Solodnikov have returned the format of a feature-length interview, which seems impossible under the tendency of the media texts reduction down to headlines.

To achieve that, even experienced TV journalists have to master new technologies and principles of dialogue with a new audience, which media critic Petrovskaya describes as "the most attractive: young, advanced, not amenable to the habitual zombification of old-fashioned TV" (Petrovskaya, 2019, para. 3). As a result, TV formats, which used to be popular in the past have been adapted to the multimedia platform, which journalist Pivovarov calls "New Television" (Petrovskaya, 2019, para. 8). Therefore, the rapidly developing YouTube journalism requires special research, since its business model has made it possible to preserve and adapt professional values in digital communication.

### **3.2. Attention to a person as a key for a project success**

In the center of all projects under analysis is a person. Both the author and the guest of the publication are the core.

A person in the mind of a journalist is both a social type and a unique individuality. This is the key of feature-length interviews by journalists Solodnikov and Pivovarov. The examples can be found in heading "Redaktsiya. Sources", as well as mini-interviews in the news releases of "Redaktsiya" and "Parphenon". The films of journalist Pivovarov ("Polniy Phormat" ("Full Format") and the releases of "Namedni" by journalist Parfenov can also be called human-centered. Films on "Redaktsiya" channel are based on a polemical comparison of different points of view on the most pressing issues of Russian history and modern reality. Examples of these can be the issue of foster children and foster families ("Russkiye syroti" ("Russian Orphans"); conflict between animal rights activists and trainers ("Zhapretit Zapashnykh?" ("To Forbid Zapashnykh?")); the history of the relationship between Stalin and Hitler ("Kak Stalin dryzhil s Gitlerom" ("How Stalin was friends with Hitler")); the Battle of Rzhev ("Rzhev – Russkaya Dolina Smerti (Rzhev is Russian Valley of Death)); the life of Russian Old Believers in South America ("Staroveri" ("Old Believers")); the ecological situation in the cities of Russia ("Cherny Krasnoyarsk" ("Black Krasnoyarsk"), etc. People, as important symbols of the national past and present, are presented in the issues of "Namedni" dedicated to one year in the history of the country. Pasternak, Kalatozov, Akhmadullina, Rozhdestvensky, Evtushenko, Voznesensky, and Ots are the center of

“Namedni” episode, devoted to 1958. Khamatova, Valuev, Sobchak, Kasyanov and Abramovich are the key players of the media episode, dedicated to 2005.

The personality of the addressee, to whom journalists constantly turn, turns out to be no less "convertible", of course, influencing the commercial success of projects. Respect for the addressee and fundamental dialogicity as the main characteristic of modern media communication, which researcher Duskaeva very accurately calls reciprocal communication (Duskaeva et al., 2019), attracts the attention of the audience. It is evidenced by the number of subscribers, views, likes, comments. Respect for all participants in communication – the pivotal figure and the addressee - can be called the golden rule of quality journalism.

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to determine the place and role of commercially successful copyright media projects in the modern socio-cultural space. The objectives of the study includes the specifics of the functioning of the media projects research. The copyright media projects under consideration are “Parphenon” by Parfenov, “Redaktsiya” by Pivovarov, “Yeshchenepozner” by Solodnikov. The typological determination and genre characteristics are also under research. Media projects are observed as a new type of business model as well as new professional journalism formats. The choice of projects is due to the fact that the creators state the projects as journalistic. Moreover, the professional activities of Pivovarov and Parfenov are of particular interest since the journalists have extensive experience in traditional media and have not immediately dared to master YouTube.

#### **5. Research Methods**

The choice of methods is determined by the purpose and object of the research, as well as the multimedia format of the copyright media projects. The research methodology was based on the scientific works of Korkonosenko (2017); Merzlikina (Merzlikina & Shulus, 2017); Vartanova (2009; 2018), authors of the collected volume “Kak noviy mediya izmenili zhurnalistiky” (Amzin, 2016) and the monograph “Sovremennyy model’ ephektivnogo biznesa” (Chernov, 2015). The main research methods include functional typological, discursive, comparative, intra-text and contextual analysis.

YouTube channels “Parfenon” (42 episodes), “Redaktsiya” (34 episodes of “Redaktsiya. News”, 5 episodes of “Redaktsiya. Polnyi Phormat” (“Editorial. Full format”), and “Yeschenepozner” (16 episodes) are under analyses. In addition, the empirical base was formed by interviews with Parfenov and Pivovarov, published in various publications.

#### **6. Findings**

##### **6.1. Media digitalization and a new business model**

New conditions for the online media functioning made it possible to combine the principles of business models, tested by traditional media. It is reflected in the genre and typological features of copyright media projects. The recipient is a sponsor, investor and the consumer of information all in on.

The recipient helps journalists to earn money by likes and increasing views. In addition, the addressee has the opportunity to send good money to the journalist and editorial office by: donations (voluntary donations); paid subscription (digital version of a business model known since the 18th century); and money transfers to the host of live broadcast in a stream format (Volkova, 2018). It is interesting that the stream format, “as evidence of what is happening, an authentic message for thousands of users” (Szirmai, 2019, p. 285), has been mastered by Parfenov, who at the same time combines the techniques of traditional television journalism and a new type of live broadcast. This is how episode “Namedni. PS seriyi” (Parfenon, 2020d) performs not only communication with users in an interactive format and answers to their questions, but also demonstrates videos that are not included in the series dedicated to 2004–2010, as well as interviews specially prepared for the live broadcast.

It is the digital format and the universalization of media functions that provide the opportunity for the audience economic participation in the development of journalism and its content formation. The convergence of mass media and information as well as computer technologies has created a new integrated market. Modern editions offer a range of multimedia products and services, which make the communication process convenient and ensure the financial well-being of journalists. Micropayments are especially in demand: donations, voluntary donations on the air, payment not for all content, but for a specific publication unit.

The third type of business model deserves special attention. This is advertising. In addition to the inclusion of advertising that is distributed by YouTube, "invading" the media text and, in the opinion of the audience interfering, with the content, the leading authors create their own advertising product.

## **6.2. Educational function of commercial advertising as a socio-cultural phenomenon**

The advertisements created in the projects under study are fundamentally different from those replicated in other media. They include three main features. Exclusivity is the first one. The author chooses the way to present the product or service, and the content of the advertising is not repeated from episode to episode. This eliminates the main annoying advertising quality from the recipient point of view - repetition, standardization, intrusiveness. In this case, the advertised object may not change. For example, Parfenov comes up with a new context and a new toast, advertising Dewars whiskey in each episode: “These are Pastorales Tahitiennes by Paul Gauguin in the colors we are accustomed to <...> In 1891 Paul Gauguin merged with the natural flavor of Tahiti <...> The tone balance is not only about painting, but also about whiskey. <...> For a bright color in everyday life! Cheers!” (Parfenon, 2020b); “There is nothing more familiar than Bilibin's illustrations to Russian fairy tales <...> Bilibin skillfully combines Russian popular print with Japanese engraving. A challenging combination of ideas and techniques is not only about painting, but also about whiskey. <...> Non-recognition of borders! Salut!” (Parfenon, 2020c). Solodnikov changes the text and video in advertisements for residential compounds, Internet programs, and car services. Pivovarov finds new arguments for the product placement in “Redaktsiya. News” episodes each time: convenience and technical advantages of Asus laptop (Redaktsiya, 2020c), an opportunity to communicate with native speakers in the “Cambly English app” (Redaktsiya, 2020b); optimal educational conditions on Geekbrains portal (“Na chto zhaluemsiy” (Redaktsiya, 2020a), etc.

The second feature is the publicism techniques appliance when creating advertising, which is expressed in an appeal to cultural phenomena and in the educational function implementation. “Yeshchenepozner” project places advertisement, as a cartoon text, in which Solodnikov showman tells facts and myths about Baikal (Yeshchenepozner, 2019d), history of the film industry (Yeshchenepozner, 2019a); the story of Gogol's literary success (Yeshchenepozner, 2019e); on the construction of Russian cities (Yeshchenepozner, 2019b); the myth of Babylon (Yeshchenepozner, 2019c), etc. Solodnikov's advertising of the “Podpisniye izdaniya” (“Subscription Editions”) bookstore, as well as constant talk about music with appropriate musical inserts, is also focused on the presentation of cultural and educational values. Parfenov applies paintings by famous artists (Paul Gauguin, Vincent Van Gogh, Frida Kahlo, El Greco) in the whiskey advertising, comparing their artistic style with the originality of Dewars taste (Parfenon, 2020d).

The third quality of advertising can be defined as the strengthening of the personal principle, which increases the degree of confidence of the potential consumer. It is almost always “personal experience” effect with the advertised goods and services.

### **6.3. Economic independence as a condition for freedom, creativity and speech**

The opportunity to say what you consider important and what you will not hear on the air of the official media, to choose the means and ways of expressing your own position is ensured precisely by financial independence, commercial success of projects. Journalists have always been the main participants, or rather, the initiators and creators of political, ideological discourse. Professional journalists on YouTube channels demonstrate a fundamental difference between an ideological function, which is obligatory and necessary in any state system, and propaganda that treats the audience as an object, excluding an equatable relationship.

Parfenov, Pivovarov, and Solodnikov present their position openly, often disagreeing with the point of view of the interlocutor, but not hiding it from the addressee. There are no taboo topics in these projects: politics, social problems, history, culture, biographical facts. Here are some typical examples. Negative assessment of the current government in the “Parfenon” episodes:

“There is one politician in the country, which means there is no politics, because it must be competitive. And in this political civilization we have long passed even the stage of Timur Bekmambetov's video advertising (video about Ivan the Terrible - author's note). Of course, this rough expression of the 16th century has been obsolete <...> Why ask now, on what terms? Since September 24, 2011, we know on what terms - on life-long terms <...> What difference does it make how Putin's post will be called after his seventh four-year term <...> He works as Putin!” (Parfenon, 2020a).

News and films of the “Redaktsiya”:

"Pay attention, how interestingly everything is arranged in Russia. Putin says pay doctors – they don't. Putin is angry - they still don't get paid. Putin appoints those in charge, arranges a public flogging of the officials – still nothing, barely any result. Because the system,

which took shape under Putin, is like a huge gyroscope: it rotates, hums and resists any attempts to unbalance it” (Redaktsiya, 2020a).

In the program (“Eshie ne vecher” (“Not Finish Yet”) on “Dozd” (“the Rain”) TV channel, Pivovarov describes the current situation in the online copyright media projects: “To say what I am saying now within the “Redaktsiya” framework is absolutely impossible on any federal or any other TV channel in modern Russia” (Dzyadko, 2020, para. 40).

The films by “Redaktsiya” are often devoted to the so-called forbidden topics: the danger of microloans (“Nalichniye seichas” (“Cash now!”); Kursk submarine disaster (“Pochemy ona utonula?” (“Why has it drown?”); domestic porn business (“Ludiy XXX” (“People XXX”). Revelations are also typical for Solodnikov's interview: questions about his personal life (an episode about Mamardashvili, interviews with Zvyagintsev, Vasilyev, Rost, Shanin, Arkus, etc.), about theatrical scandals in a conversation with Demidova, accusations and trolling in an interview with Khamatova and Federmesser.

Economic independence is also an important factor when choosing a creative manner and individual stylistics. This explains the genre originality and stylistic recognition of “Yeshchenepozner”, “Parfenon”, “Redaktsiya” projects.

## 7. Conclusion

Analysis of new projects in online communication allows to draw the following conclusions about the development of the journalist profession under the new communication conditions. Individual entrepreneurship as an actual business model has provided an opportunity to create a professional product on the Internet, preserve the best journalism traditions, and present original copyright media projects to the audience. The demand for high-quality content and the participation of the audience in its financial support, and, as a consequence, commercial success, leads to the emergence and development of such a socio-cultural phenomenon as a copyright media project, copyright YouTube channel.

Financial independence allows experienced TV journalists Parfenov and Pivovarov to find the most relevant, interesting, original communication formats with the relevant audience. These are weekly news releases in which not only "objectivist", that is, critically, the most important events of the political, economic, social, cultural life of the country (less often - the world) are assessed, commented and interpreted, but also the personal attitude towards them is presented. The balance of the objective and the subjective makes the dialogue with the addressee honest, sincere, frank, it is this form of communication that explains the popularity of “Parfenon”, “Redaktsiya”, “Yeshenepozner” projects. The latter's creator, a less experienced journalist, Solodnikov, has returned the format of a feature-length interview to the media and drawn public attention to unique personalities who are our contemporaries.

Traditional professional principles, adapted in digital multimedia formats, have turned out to be in demand, demonstrating "progressive capitalization processes, commercial viability as the main principles of media activity" (Novikova, 2017, p. 233).



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