Social media likes in the service of marketing

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Abstract

Companies rely heavily on social media for their marketing and promotional strategies because it provides them with a platform through which they can reach their target audience. At the same time, the identity is almost constantly revised, given that it depends on the publicity that the organization gains through its profile activities. Many businesses, through so-called like farms, pay themselves to get fake likes on social media. The concept, as a marketing strategy is fairly simple, users genuinely or engaged through the like button expressing "their" approval or affinity for a particular post, page or piece of content. In this way, they signal to others that the content or page deserves their attention. And as in standard advertising, the more broadcasts in the media, i.e. the more likes, the more the morale to buy the given product increases. The purpose of this report is to identify ways of generating likes in the service of marketing.

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The Tenth International scientific conference
- NEW GLOBAL ECONOMIC, SOCIAL - AND MARKETING TRENDS -

30

Keywords: social media, marketing, like, profile, concept.

Introduction

More than 23 centuries ago, ancient Greek thinkers posed an important question that is still searching for an answer today. Is it possible to attain the meaning of life without knowing true virtue, that is, true virtues, and how these virtues affect the life of man as an individual, that is, *zoon politikon* – but concerning *homo faber*?[19]

Towards the end of the 20th century, modern thinkers invented the Internet. Communication takes place in virtual reality, communication is no longer limited by distance and boundaries.

The development of the Internet, and a little later of social networks, influenced the emergence of social changes. They have influenced organisations to change their attitudes and activities towards the communication mix and the way they do promotion.

The first commercialization on the Internet happened in 1996, when a married couple of lawyers from Arizona sent an advertising message for their law firm. A protest by the Internet user community followed, but their business was significantly increased. Today, the Internet is one of the most important tools of business.

Social media advertising, also known as "social media optimization," is a type of marketing whose purpose is to produce content that users like and share on their social profiles.[19]

The prerequisites for the emergence and existence of Internet marketing are:

- *The hypermedia environment of the Internet*. This environment is characterized by a high degree of efficiency in presenting and absorbing information. This significantly increases the possibilities of marketing by building and strengthening relationships with consumers.

- *Building key links between corporate structures and users.* Users in a highly competitive environment, such as the Internet, through the created communities generate and change the general rules of interaction.

- *A global electronic marketplace.* Within this market, transactions are constantly carried out and payments are made. This reduces the value of transactions, while changing the spatial and temporal scales of conducting the business. In this market, the distance between counterparties plays a role only in terms of transport costs.

- *Change the time scales in the Internet environment.* In the virtual space, information and services are available throughout the day, thus optimizing the time for searching for counterparties, making decisions, making transactions, developing new products and services.

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- НОВИ ГЛОБАЛНИ ЕКОНОМСКИ, СОЦИЈАЛНИ И МАРКЕТИНГ ТРЕНДОВИ –
The Tenth International scientific conference
- NEW GLOBAL ECONOMIC, SOCIAL - AND MARKETING TRENDS -

31

- *Keeping up-to-date information without restrictions.* The Internet provides a high degree of flexibility, allowing easy changes to be made to the information presented, thus maintaining up-to-date and reduced dissemination costs.

- *Personalization of interactions and transition to one-to-one marketing.* Through the means of electronic data transfer, companies can receive detailed information from each individual user and automatically provide products and services corresponding to specific individual requirements.[19]

Internet marketing is fundamental in the virtual space. In the digital environment, there are various communication techniques that organizations need to take into account when creating a digital strategy. The most important are:

- **Search engine marketing.**Internet search engines are the main way to find information about an organization and its proposals. This is the starting point in the digital environment, and therefore keyword analysis, or more precisely, keyword analysis, is very important when planning promotional activities. The most popular search engine worldwide is "Google", but there are many other search engines that are popular in certain regions or countries. such as "Baidoo" in China or "Yandex" in Russia.

- **Public relations in the digital environment**. The main element of public relations in the digital environment is to maximize positive mentions of the organization, its product, brand or website, all on third-party sites visited by the target market segment. This includes minimizing negative mentions.[19]

- **Online partnerships and interactive advertising.** Online partnerships are an important aspect of an organization's promotional activities in the digital environment. They manifest themselves in several forms, such as:

  - *Link-building* is a public relations activity that is also crucial for search engine optimization. Providing visibility of brand organization on third-party pages, all in order to increase the number of links leading to the organization's website.

  - *Affiliate marketing* means promotion through third-party websites. The main advantage of this type of promotion is that organizations pay a certain percentage of the sale only after the deal is completed, i.e. the product or service is purchased.

  - *Linking a brand to relevant content and context* involves creating brand awareness and strengthening brand receptivity that is clearly different from standard online ad formats.

- **Email marketing.** Based on the direction in which the information moves, we distinguish between outbound email marketing, when email campaigns are used as a

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The Tenth International scientific conference
- NEW GLOBAL ECONOMIC, SOCIAL - AND MARKETING TRENDS -

32

form of direct marketing, to promote sales, and inbound email marketing, consumer emails addressed to the organization.

- **Virtual marketing.** It is an online form of oral propaganda. It can be in the form of videos, TV commercials, photos, songs, political or informative messages, etc.

- **Social Media Marketing.** Cherry defines social media marketing as monitoring and facilitating interaction and participation in the relationship between the user and to the consumer on the Internet to encourage positive engagement with the organization and its brand. Interactions can take place on the company's website, social networks and other third-party sites.[19]

In general, there are three main ways to conduct marketing activities on the Internet through websites, web blogs and social networks. A special place is occupied by social networks as special communities in the virtual space.

Are social networks valuable?[19]

As a value is considered anything that can be an object of human need and desire and that can be satisfied in a way that does not contradict the given culture. Value matters only in the relationship of a person with an object: a person shows interest in an object or, what is the same, the object is valuable to the person.[19] In many cases, the individual does not choose values, but simply targets them from circumstances. This can best be proven by the example of a starving person. A person who dies of hunger, even if he was cynically offered a choice between food and the most expensive alternative possible (without the obligation to be, sex), could not choose, because for him in this situation there is only one value: food, to which, by the way, even in the case of a slightly less dramatic hunger, he would take a lot. Or take for example a person who goes to work in the morning instead of taking a walk on a nearby hill. He does not choose to go to work, but follows a whole set of obligations to himself and his family, agreeing to this departure, but nevertheless with a whole system of values. Deciding between fruit and alcohol for alcohol, the alcoholic also does not choose, but simply obeys his inclination. It makes sense to talk about choice only in the case of choosing one of approximately equal or similar opportunities or one less likely among them.[19]

Value can be defined as a conscious articulation of human inclinations. It is a kind of equation between desires, things, on the other hand against everything that is not desired, that is not sought or, moreover, that is avoided. Viewed from the left, subjective side of this value equation, values are a representative projection of needs, aspirations, etc. In the world of existing or only desirable things it is clear, that values in the latter case assume the role of ideals. However, viewed from the other, objective side, they are a kind of definition of things of all kinds (from ideas, emotions, conditions and institutions to material needs); and this determination that can be established taking into account their relationship with the emotional-motive side of the human being.[19]

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- НОВИ ГЛОБАЛНИ ЕКОНОМСКИ, СОЦИЈАЛНИ И МАРКЕТИНГ ТРЕНДОВИ –
The Tenth International scientific conference
- NEW GLOBAL ECONOMIC, SOCIAL - AND MARKETING TRENDS -

33

Although literally all values are marked by a certain measure of sociality, the distinction between individual and social values is not yet appropriate. Social values are labels for the predominant, but by no means general, acceptance of individual value orientations within certain boundaries of social groups or given cultures. "The values that affect the stability of the legal order are actually the ontological basis of the legal order which can also be referred to as the state-law order. If the rule of law in its normative part can be called a system of law, it is clear that this system must be based on something stronger than a sanction."[19]

The main value of social networks is that users have free access.

Social networks represent a quality source of advertising for companies, and especially for some smaller companies that have not yet reached a significant level of business, so social networks provide them with a free source of advertising.

With the very development of marketing in social networks, people's awareness of the existence of a particular product or service grows. The goal of social media marketing is not to forcibly sell a product, but to encourage people to think about that product, and if a person likes it, they will share their positive opinion with friends, acquaintances and family.

The advantages of social networks in marketing:

- Creating and maintaining friendships, promoting user or company profiles, conducting network marketing, etc.

- Creating a large customer base, which is of great importance for companies, through social networks they have the opportunity to collect data about their customers, their desires and interests, which significantly helps them in raising and improving their business.

- Speed - companies and customers can publish information in a very short time, which will always be the most up-to-date at the moment, so there is no fear of outdated information.

- Customer feedback, which is an extremely important component of the company's business, as companies can get feedback in a very short time about what customers think about the company, products, and more.

Although social networks have many advantages, they also have disadvantages of use, such as:

- Disclosure - users voluntarily provide their own information, which can be used for a variety of marketing, criminal and intelligence purposes.

- Loss of privacy, which is closely related to the above-mentioned disadvantage.

- Anonymity and virtual identity, where a person can be anonymous, that is, present themselves under a false identity.

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- НОВИ ГЛОБАЛНИ ЕКОНОМСКИ, СОЦИЈАЛНИ И МАРКЕТИНГ ТРЕНДОВИ –
The Tenth International scientific conference
- NEW GLOBAL ECONOMIC, SOCIAL - AND MARKETING TRENDS -

34

- The problem of virtual friends or avatars, which implies friendships in the virtual world, in social networks, without a real friendly basis and without expressing feelings.

- The problem of loneliness and isolation, where modern information and communication technologies actually influence the individual's thinking in such a way that he understands that he belongs to any of the social networks and feels like an integral part of an organized virtual community there.

- Addiction - people spend more and more hours on social networks neglecting their personal lives, family, friends, etc.

Social media management focuses more on posts and conversations, and marketing focuses more on creating a strategy to generate leads. In this way, social media presence can drive business growth.

If the company works tirelessly to improve its operations and build a quality relationship with customers, then the following marketing strategies are available.

The first marketing strategy concerns the use of social media, which is an integral part of any company, as these are precisely the places where companies can publish all the relevant and useful information about products and services that could be of interest to potential customers. Also, companies can publish all the information about their business or industry, the company is in, on social media to attract as many potential customers as possible.

The other marketing strategy is related to the creation of different videos by the company in order to get more feedback from customers. That is why *YouTube* is gaining great importance as a social network that is used by an increasing number of people nowadays, precisely because this network is of great help to people when they find themselves in a problem and look for a visual solution. Similarly, with their videos, companies can significantly help their customers and increase the value of their business by creating new, interesting and authentic videos every day that will help them in this.

The next marketing strategy that can significantly help businesses in the market is to start your own blogging business. It is important for companies to understand that blogs are not only about publishing different business ideas, but also need to focus on authoritative blogging, and for this reason, different platforms for this type of blogging appear. with a mass audience like *Medium*, which is used to post different content, then *Quora and Reddit*, which are platforms for answering various questions, but *LinkedIn* also plays an important role. It is also very important, if a company publishes blogs, to pay for the quality of this blog, because no one will be interested in a short and uninteresting blog. but from one that carries a certain value.

A marketing strategy, which is also extremely important, is the strength of influencers. If the company wants to increase its recognition in social networks, it is important to choose an adequate influencer who can clearly influence the target group, which is of great importance to the company, and who conveys the message to the target audience in the right way, which actually leads to an increase in the company's audience.

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- НОВИ ГЛОБАЛНИ ЕКОНОМСКИ, СОЦИЈАЛНИ И МАРКЕТИНГ ТРЕНДОВИ –
The Tenth International scientific conference
- NEW GLOBAL ECONOMIC, SOCIAL - AND MARKETING TRENDS -

35

The next marketing strategy is to build its own magnet of leadership and which the company can create if it knows how to correctly detect the pain points of the audience, but at the same time present an appropriate solution to this problem. For this reason, it is important for the company to understand what problem the target group users are facing and why the company has actually taken up this business. Only when the company identifies all the problems in the company itself Only then can it be certain that the problem will be more easily solved in the leadership magnet.

In order for companies to take their business to the next level, it is also important to use *Facebook ads with retargeting. It is through* Facebook that companies can segment their audience, and segmentation can be done according to age, gender, profession, geographical location and the like. In addition, companies should be aware that it is not all about the number of clicks of the audience, but it is important to maintain communication with the audience and with the help of *using Facebook Pixel* they redirect their existing or new audience. A pixel is actually a certain code that is unique to the accounts of companies engaged in advertising, and allows the company to monitor the behavior of visitors to the page. Once visitors click on a page, Companies can automatically send advertisements to interested visitors.

A marketing strategy that companies should also pay attention to is the correct and effective use of *LinkedIn profiles. LinkedIn is a place where businesses can reach a large audience, but only if they engage with their profile. Given that it's a business social network, it's important for companies to introduce others to their business and publish interesting and effective business stories that interest a wider audience. Similarly,* LinkedIn is a place that allows companies to connect with other companies that carry out similar or the same activities, and through mutual communication they can also improve their business.

The next strategy is to create your own affiliate program, which allows companies to connect with various partners that could be of great benefit to the company in the future. The problem that arises when creating an affiliate program is related to the uncertainty of the company and the premature refusal to find a partner, since many companies do not realize the   that sometimes this path can be much more difficult than it seems at first.

As a final marketing strategy to improve a company's business is the strategy of using email marketing sequences, which is an important part of any sales funnel. These are actually automated messages that users receive after subscribing to the list of companies, so it is important that the company is authentic and flexible when using a certain sequence of emails. All this in order to create a relationship with the user. Also, this marketing strategy is important in segmenting users from the list, which can be easily done according to the page clicks that users have previously made.[19]

What's most valuable in the digital age is that media platforms have gone beyond mere communication tools and become indispensable drivers of engagement and commerce.[19] It is important to create content on social media that will be useful to customers.[19]

Liking as a new communication paradigm

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- НОВИ ГЛОБАЛНИ ЕКОНОМСКИ, СОЦИЈАЛНИ И МАРКЕТИНГ ТРЕНДОВИ –
The Tenth International scientific conference
- NEW GLOBAL ECONOMIC, SOCIAL - AND MARKETING TRENDS -

36

Social media has become a new hybrid component of integrated marketing communications that allows organizations to establish strong relationships with consumers.[19] These are media created by users (user-generated media) and which constitute a diverse source of information that they use with the intention of informing each other about products, brands, services and problems they encounter. Their increasingly important role is reflected in the fact that they encourage companies to communicate with their consumers. Namely, with the advent of social media, Visitors to the virtual world are no longer just passive users of information.[19]

Digital technologies are evolving faster than human ideas, the digital realm, which presents itself as real, beneficial and has a futuristic approach to the world, is essentially a new manifestation of traditional transcendental idealism.[19]

Internet technologies today represent an indispensable element in the implementation of marketing promotion, and the first recognizable social network – *Six Degrees.com* launched in 1997.[19]

The most popular social network *Facebook* (*Meta*) was established in early 2004 as a social networking service at Harvard University in Boston.

On February 2, 2009, "like" appeared.

 Liking *on* social networks can be defined as a message, intention and action.

Other authors believe that liking is an action of a user on a social network or other online platform in which he expresses a positive attitude towards a post, comment or other content by marking it with a "like" or "like" symbol. This action can be used to show support, approval, interest or simply as a way to save information for future use. In some social networks, the number of likes can serve as an indicator of the popularity of content, as this can affect the way other users see or interact with it.

When a user likes a product or service of a particular company, it usually indicates their approval, consent or confirmation. The focus of social media marketing likes are the following elements:

- *User engagement* This is the time a potential customer spends on a particular platform. Likes are the main way users engage with content on social media platforms in order to show support or interest in a particular product or service.

- *Social proof* Social proof is a psychological and social phenomenon in which people adopt the activities of others to reflect appropriate behavior in a particular environment.[19]When customers see a post with a huge number of likes, they may be inclined to engage with it themselves (purchase the product), whether it is popular or valuable.

- *Engagement Measurement* - Likes are one of the indicators used to measure the level of engagement with a post. Other engagement metrics include comments, shares, and clickthrough rates.

Десетта меѓународна научна конференција (Isctma'23)
- НОВИ ГЛОБАЛНИ ЕКОНОМСКИ, СОЦИЈАЛНИ И МАРКЕТИНГ ТРЕНДОВИ –
The Tenth International scientific conference
- NEW GLOBAL ECONOMIC, SOCIAL - AND MARKETING TRENDS -

37

- *Algorithmic Meaning:* Companies use new algorithms to analyze data to measure server engagement through email, social media, and contacts with a noncore team, and predict the risk of withdrawal by tracking alerts, such as how often servers update their resumes.[19] Many social media algorithms take into account the number of likes a post receives when determining the visibility of a post. A large number of likes can increase the likelihood that a product or service will appear in other users' shows.[19]

- *Emotional expression* - Emotional expression is a key skill in emotional intelligence.[19]Likes are often used to express emotions such as happiness, consent, sympathy, or support for a particular product or service.

- *Feedback* Content creators can judge the success of their products or services based on the number of likes they receive. However, the owners of the platform should be careful because it is possible that the like will be accidental or have no particular meaning.

It should not be forgotten that what is liked is not a public expression of the user's true feelings and thoughts, and therefore it is important to pay attention to what is liked and shared online.

Social media pages use new methods to collect clicks, such as spoofing links to the material they post.

A study done at McGill University in Canada shows how easy it is for someone to generate fake likes.[19]

"A lot of companies pay to get fictitious likes on Facebook and make their page look liked and popular. The most popular method of generating likes is through item likes farms. There are companies or individuals that generate a large number of fake profiles and use them to collect likes... There are also websites that act as a kind of exchange for likes. After creating an account, you need to like different Facebook pages, in return for which you get likes on your own page from other people... However, there is an easier way to generate likes that does not require farms, sites, registration, etc. You only need one *Facebook* account to manipulate the number of likes per article.[19]

Likemakers perform the daily norm of fraudulent clicks to simulate incomparably higher attendance or user interest than the real one.

How Click Farms in Bangladesh Create the Illusion of 'Social Media' Popularity

Fifteen dollars is the price per thousand likes of low-wage workers in Dhaka, Bangladesh, who earn a total of $120 a year for their three-shift work at the "likes farm." The rise of ad networks and pay-per-click ads has led to a skyrocketing number of fraudulent clicks.

Initially, they were bots that generated millions of clicks a day, and Microsoft and Symantec shut down one such network that made a million dollars a year from fake clicks. However, cheap internet access has allowed the use of digital advertising, but more importantly, it is a new way of exploiting workers as cheap labor to generate likes.[19]

Десетта меѓународна научна конференција (Isctma'23)
- НОВИ ГЛОБАЛНИ ЕКОНОМСКИ, СОЦИЈАЛНИ И МАРКЕТИНГ ТРЕНДОВИ –
The Tenth International scientific conference
- NEW GLOBAL ECONOMIC, SOCIAL - AND MARKETING TRENDS -

38

Bot farm in China

A scene like in sci-fi movies: thousands upon thousands of mobile phones, neatly arranged on white shelves and connected by chargers, endlessly surfing the Internet and creating false popularity in the service of big brands.

This is how one can describe the insight into a Chinese click farm visited by a Russian. Employees told him that in addition to those on display, they owned more than 10,000 cell phones that did the same job.

Click farms have been a great business for their owners in underdeveloped countries for years. Most of them are in Bangladesh and the Philippines, where clicks are done not software, but by hand - only one dollar is paid to employees for 1,000 likes or 1,000 followed on Twitter.

Click farms are hired by brands, social media administrators, or individual account owners to build great, albeit fake, popularity in a short time. Since a large proportion of people trust a product or person based on likes or followers, this is often ordered to increase the purchase of certain goods and manipulate sales.[19]

Clickbait is a text link that is designed to attract attention and attract users to follow that link and read, view, or listen to related content online, with a characteristic usually sensational or deceptive.[19]

The power of social media likes and marketing extends far beyond surface level metrics. Businesses can harness its full potential to achieve their goals and thrive in a competitive online environment.

Conclusion

Given that the Internet community was first created on a global level, it is logical to expect as a next step the creation of Internet communities in the real space. This means creating Internet communities in the space of already existing real communities. Whether the virtual community will open up new opportunities that the real community could not offer its inhabitants remains an open question.

In the age of social media, the control that marketing managers have over content and the frequency of deployment of information is greatly impaired. In the new paradigm, information about products and services, as well as in the traditional communication paradigm, originates in the market itself. This information is based on the experience of individual users and is channeled through the traditional promotional mix. However, various social media platforms, among which social networks stand out, increase the ability of users to communicate with each other. This "expansion" has deeply affected all aspects of consumer behavior and has given consumers a power they have never had in the market before.[19]

Десетта меѓународна научна конференција (Isctma'23)
- НОВИ ГЛОБАЛНИ ЕКОНОМСКИ, СОЦИЈАЛНИ И МАРКЕТИНГ ТРЕНДОВИ –
The Tenth International scientific conference
- NEW GLOBAL ECONOMIC, SOCIAL - AND MARKETING TRENDS -

39

Unlike the traditional way of promoting products and services, social networks are a simpler, but also a cheaper way for companies to advertise their products and services, while at the same time offering the opportunity to build long-term relationships between the users themselves and the company due to the possibility of receiving feedback at any time.

The presence of companies in social networks leaves a deep trace throughout the business world today, given that social networks are evolving and improving every day, which for marketing represents new ways to promote and interact with the users themselves.

It is important for companies to be aware that social networks are not just entertainment, but that it is necessary to constantly share information that is interesting and relevant to the audience and communicate with customers. What is also important is that companies should be aware that there will always be negative comments from customers, but what companies should not do in such situations is delete such comments, but they should be seen as things that the company needs to change or fix to satisfy the needs and desires of customers.[19]

When advertising and communication on social networks, as in all other media, it is important that both companies and individuals adhere to the "Code of Advertising and Market Communication – HURA".

However, likes "cultivated" on click farms do not benefit companies, least of all their potential customers.

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- НОВИ ГЛОБАЛНИ ЕКОНОМСКИ, СОЦИЈАЛНИ И МАРКЕТИНГ ТРЕНДОВИ –
The Tenth International scientific conference
- NEW GLOBAL ECONOMIC, SOCIAL - AND MARKETING TRENDS -

40

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41

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42