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Creative Technologies in Corporative Communication

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The material presented in the article reveals essential issues of practical culture science. The article is devoted to studying the phenomenon of creativity and creative process in corporate communications. Aesthetical and ethical aspects of creativity used in the process of generating ideas for advertisement and public relations are being analyzed in the article. The article presents some techniques of coming up with creative ideas for special events and proposes methods, which increase effectiveness of communicative activities.

Keywords: creativity, corporate communications, special events, advertising, public relations, communicative technologies, communicative activities, symbolic capital.

Introduction

Phenomenon of creativeness as a strategically aimed (pragmatic) creativity can be acknowledged as an essential issue of practical culturology. Creative activities in corporate communications are oriented on forming «symbolic capital» (Bodriyar, 2000), and having one helps commercial and non-profit organizations keep their positions in dynamic socio-cultural environment and competitive conditions of the market.

The main objectives of modern communicative activities are successful promotion of objects (it can be a company, a person, goods, services, or ideas), also forming a positive image and good reputation, increasing the level of loyalty and publicity, creating a positive dialogue with public and target audiences. Nowadays, in the situation of having competitive markets and development of competition in the sphere of impressions, the

main objective of successful promotion of different objects is quite complicated and requires creative approaches when developing a communicative program. In order to attract attention of the target audiences bright creative solutions need to be presented and it leads into a temptation to play with images on the edge of taboo. In modern practice of communicative activities creative solutions can be quite unordinary and debatable from the ethical and aesthetical points of view, especially in a tandem «object of promotion vs. means of promotion». Whereas, a well determined and properly brought to life challenging creative idea can contribute to achieving a cascade of corporative goals with maximum effect. Nowadays, creative technologies have huge impact on mass and individual consciousness (Kovrizhenko, 2004).

Creative activities in the sphere of corporate communications consume a large amount of

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information from the rich world culture heritage. Art is a storehouse for advertising and other different kinds of communicative creativity. Then, what does the phenomenon of creativity lie in? Where is the «golden ratio» that gives us grounds to speak about art of advertising, public relations and event communications?

Point of view

The birth of an idea is a complicated process not only in art but also in communicative activities; both in art and in creativity. Nowadays, professional vocabulary of specialists in corporative communications most often uses the term «creativity» (from English «creative», which means «original», «constructive»). What is the similarity in and what is the difference between the two terms – «creation» and «creativity»? Creation is a dialogue with the eternity, God, with yourself, and the world. In creation the human being assimilates to God as he is not under constraint but absolutely free. Creation is a free response to God's call (Berdyayev, 2007). An artist expressing his perception of the world in creation with various techniques is free in the choice of them. It can be paints and canvas, graver and marble, words and gestures. Creation in art is free from pragmatic goals, whereas creativity in communication serves achieving some image, informative, and marketing objectives. A birth of a creative idea is a sacrament, which in art is called an inspiration, but in communicative activities – a technology.

Creation belongs to the world of art, whereas creativity to the sphere of corporative communications. In art, beauty is for beauty, the truth is for the truth, it is where a search for the higher, real, ideal, and beautiful takes place. In creativity the beauty has to be useful and serve achieving commercial and image success. Creativity uses inner resources of the artistic text for achieving commercial objectives and

this is exactly what the specific characteristic of creativity is.

A production of art is an author's artistic interpretation of the vision and understanding of the world, «an artist willing to say something ... says more, than he realizes» (Jung, 1992). With author's ideas a creation of art also captures the worldview of the era. An art creation is valuable by itself - it needs a feed-back and it does not need one at the same time. An artistic text made for communicative activities and promotion purposes is oriented on receiving a feedback from the targeted audiences. Creating of an advertising image, developing a scenario for a special event or working on the image of the corporate character is a way to build a communication with the target audience. Achieving positive and result giving reactions is one of the main purposes of creative activities. In order to achieve this and a number of other marketing and communicative goals modern technologies of promotion often use techniques of postmodern art (installations, collages, and happenings).

The art of corporative communications begins where two things come to a conjunction: marketing objectives and authorial artistic superpower, knowing the stylistics of an advertising text and artistic taste. Various elements of corporate communications, first of all, special events, advertising, corporative design, and company style – are certainly a part of contemporary art. These dimensions do not only use artistic resources and techniques but also develop traditions of conceptual art and design. Different advertising technologies carve themselves into the history of art, eternalize their ideas and artistic solutions, creating catalogues of advertising art productions.

Creativity is art for strategical purpose. Creation in the sphere of corporative communications always has its framework: strategy of positioning, communicative and

marketing objectives, target audience, specifics of the object being promoted, budget, technological opportunities of media-channels and media-carriers. Also, there are several socio-cultural factors that limit the freedom of the creative activities: religious traditions and cultural specifics of the country, general ethical principles and professional norms of ethics, and, finally, the legal regulations. The top class of creativity and proficiency in promotion activities is solving a corporative problem on a worthy artistic level speaking the same language with the target audience and keeping high ethical and aesthetical standards.

Searching for new creative solutions takes place along the whole way of promoting an object – starting with forming a strategy and tactics of communicative activities in general, choosing the channels of communication and forms of working with target audiences, creating a visual (advertising images) and verbal series (slogans, key messages), actions (some special events) within the framework of communicative campaigns and finishing with developing a local action.

Creative games are limited by practicability. In corporate communications you have to come up with such a creative idea, to write such a creative text, which will work for the effective positioning, will draw attention, differentiate from competitors, raise volumes of sales, and correspond to/form/reinforce the image of an object being promoted. Competitive market environment encourages looking for creative solutions, which would be able to draw attention of target audiences emotionally tired from the flow of advertising influence. Using technologies of the outrageous when working on creative ideas and images is becoming a traditional practice today. Sometimes such creative solutions are used mostly due to artistic disability. Effectiveness of creativity, brave and outrageous solutions always

stands on the edge of successful attraction of attention and a danger of negative impact on image and reputation. Using alternative, aggressive creative solutions can be a consciously chosen tactic for general communicative and advertising activities. Provoking can be a chosen strategy, as well as a script of an action or a plot of an advert. Choosing a shocking, bright creative solutions for a technology of promotion is especially relevant to the world of politics and show business, but such type of creativity is prohibited (and even dangerous from the position of threatening to ruin reputation and image) when promoting socially important objects and ideas, medical and educational institutions, financial companies, banks and different non-for-profit organizations.

In the race for an unordinary creative solution a danger of discordance between the goals and the ways to achieve them can appear as a goal in communicative activities (positive image and reputation, good name of the company) cannot excuse the means of its achievement (provoking actions, aggressive and radical ideas in communicative technologies). Whereas, if corporate ideas, marketing objectives, and braveness of creativity are proper for each other, then it is a real recipe for success when dealing with communicative and marketing issues.

Nowadays, creating special events is one of the leading communicative technologies. Speaking of a special event we mean an organized task-oriented event, which aims at achieving some image, informational, advertising and other purposes of the corporation. A special event can be conducted as a form, for example, of a Year/Week/Day of Russia, (or any other country/city anywhere), a business forum, presentation, festival, corporative celebration, etc.

Example

Let's take a look at methods of developing creative ideas for special events as practical

examples. A search for a creative idea for organizing a special event is one of the key activities of the preparation process. A creative idea is some sort of an artistic core, which defines style of the special event, its spirit, atmosphere, rhetoric, space decorations, developing accessories, selecting gifts for the guests.

A starting point, grounds for a concept for an event can be already existing cultural, national, religious traditions, important calendar dates, rituals, archetypes and symbols, as well as totally heuristic ones, created, made up especially for a single event. In such case the new mythology, made up plots and symbols are based on the law of the myth existence. Today the mythical thinking remains (Eliade, 1996). New mythology is created with old recipes (Apinyan, 2003). Otherwise, «work» of a myth is not possible, creating mythical poetic space and immersion participants in it cannot be achieved otherwise. Creating modern rituals and «their existence is not preconditioned by cabinet creativeness but by those real functions, which actual historically formed ritual-celebrations, ritual-actions carry out: integration, communication, synchronization (uniting) and many others» (Savchuk, 1991).

Let's specify some *methods of generating creative ideas for special events*.

- Playing with traditional mythologemes is used most often – either a new representation of them or playing with plots and symbols is offered. It is an effective approach because in this case participants understand the origins and meaning of what is going on and improvisation becomes possible. Time and date for the event are chosen carefully in order to bring the artistic context of the activity, for example, January 7 – Christmas, February 14 – St. Valentine's Day, April 1 – April Fool's Day or October 31 – Halloween – these are natural celebratory
- matters, which are effectively used in dealing with marketing, advertising and other communicative issues.
- Another way to find a creative idea is to use artistic resources of the space where a special event is to be conducted. The space where a special event is conducted can be determined from the beginning, for instance, if the matter for the event is the Opening of the new line in the factory, then the event is organized in the new factory building. Contemporary technical constructions set up Hi-tech stylistic, in which a special event is performed.
- Selection of a creative idea can depend on a set format of the event, for example, «an official reception». Then, the objective is to create a bright, interesting plot; develop a unified style of the event; think the entourage and accompaniments through.
- The next way of searching for a creative idea can rely on the concept of the event. For example, it has to be extraordinary. Then, creative solutions that can achieve the goal are being developed. Different unordinary places to host the event can be used (deserted forts, buildings, islands, attics of museums), different modern technical devices for decorating the space and organizing the light, the sound, etc. As of today, creative models of interactive games (such as real quest) are used as original concepts for special events.
- Developing a creative solution for a special event can be based on already existing and tested in practice concepts. These days, the bank of creative ideas accounts about 50 various variants of such kind. Then, result of selection depends on the topic – for example, «Movies», «Ethno-party», «Traveling», «Adventures» and other ones – development of various

plotlines is possible. Within the «Movies» topic events can be organized in genre of «Oscar Award» or «Shooting a movie», or «Black-and-white movie» and so on.

Techniques used for increasing quality and effectiveness of a special event

It is crucial to think all the steps, which will contribute to increasing the quality and status of the event, through.

One of the techniques for increasing the status of the event is the *increasing the status of the guests* who participate in the event. The latest bright example is the visit of Russian President to Guatemala while the International Olympic Committee for selecting the capital of the Olympiad 2014 was working.

Support for the project by different government institutions. In this case, the importance of the event for the district/town/region/country is well demonstrated. Organizational issues are solved much easier if such support is provided.

Assistantship/partnership, presence of representatives from various international Unions, Associations, Clubs, which have serious reputation, at the event. A co-branding technology starts working here – when a young trademark starts developing its publicity with the help of a well-developed brand it receives some sort of credibility credit. Publicity, reputation of the «older» brand gives grounds for successful development of the brand-beginner. The «older» brand shares its loyalty of target audiences.

Creating a public and international resonance, engaging as much public interest as possible. Public international support of the event idea, passing the symbols on through country borders, overcoming cultural and national barriers, forming international feeling of involvement, sharing the idea and values of the event. For example, during the tragedy in Beslan, there was an international marathon

against spreading terrorism conducted. A series of concerts and performances of famous people, broadcasts of these events on air on television and the Internet helped to draw attention.

The next method is *to invite special honored guests*. In this case a person's brand starts «working» for an event. This method is important firstly because it emphasizes values and worldviews of the invited person, and the fact that the person shares the ideas of the event. Communication practice provides a large number of such examples - for instance, V. Rostropovich actively supported many national and international events, and celebrities of sports and arts carry on such activities.

Quality informative support of the mass media. For effective promotion of an event there should to be support from the mass media. It is sufficient to work with those media channels, which aim at the target audiences that are the same as the target audiences of your event. Also, with those mass media channels, which share ideas and values of the event. Partner participant in the events – it is always a public demonstration of corporate values, priorities, views, therefore we should find confederates.

Place of the event. A place where the guests are invited to can be a factor defining the stylistic and regulations of the whole event. Status, history, mythology of the place produce the whole spectrum of contexts and subtexts, which can influence the process of forming a conception, attitude and emotional feelings of the guests; give an ability to develop plotlines of the event scenario, add special charm and add weight to the entire event.

Creating an Internet-based resource for a special event/a project significantly increases effectiveness of the preparation process, assist in increasing popularity of the event, provides an ability of a quick feedback and direct interaction with publics and target audiences. A web site of

the project created in a corporate company style allows to fix a visual image of the project in minds of target audiences.

Resume

Creative ideas – it is a code system, which is specifically developed for effective delivery of corporate information in order to receive an emotional reaction from the target audience, to form a judgment, to contribute to understanding and adopting messages being communicated, in which verbal and non-verbal means of communications are used. Creative ideas are a powerful resource of achieving marketing and communicative objectives.

When a word «creative» was borrowed by Russian language from English it acquired a narrow meaning: the word began to represent a certain sphere where it is used, most often in communicative activities and advertising. Let's emphasize once again that creativity is a peculiar kind of applied art, which is limited by the framework of corporate objectives, therefore it has to be evaluated from the position of originality of an idea and quality of its fulfillment, as well as from the viewpoint of reasonability of means of accomplishment. Creativity as an ability to create something new in communicative activities has to «add value» to the object of promotion (a company, a product or a service) (Green, 2003). Therefore, when determining which creative idea to use it is most important to judge it from the viewpoint of how effectively it allows to accomplish assigned communicative and marketing objectives.

Evaluation of effectiveness of a creative idea can be done by two characteristics: image and economic criteria. Image criterion: degree of influence of creativity on the image and reputation of the event initiator; risk of discredit of the

brand; correspondence of the creativity with the general strategy of the communicative activities; following ethical standards; legality. Economic criterion: cost of fulfillment of selected creative ideas; ability of a creative idea to return the investment when objectives are accomplished; strategic marketing match (an offer for a creative idea is judged from the viewpoint of the general strategy of company development, its long-term planning); difficulty of implementation (evaluation of the number of resources needed for the project, technical ability to implement the creative conception, correspondence of the time needed with the real deadlines of the project).

Creative ideas in a special event have to show up on both the strategic level and tactical level, and are very important in little «details». Carefully thought through at first glance almost unnoticeable little details (such as small presents for the guests) contribute to, create, reinforce stylistic conformity of the event.

Value of creativity is not just in developing some interesting bright element (a logotype design or a script of a celebration scenario). Value of creativity consists of ability to create such artistic conceptions for communicative campaigns and special events, which are able to boost interest for life, professional activities, civil position and universal values.

Creative activities in corporate communications have to be aimed at searching so called «Big Idea», have to become «a creative strategy is a long-term and flexible program of product positioning, which has unique features that differentiate it from others and are aimed at involving the maximum wide audience by offering high value standards and appealing to socially significant tendencies» (Chumikov, 2006, p. 547).

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Креативные технологии в корпоративных коммуникациях

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Материал статьи раскрывает актуальные вопросы практической культурологии. Статья посвящена рассмотрению феномена творчества и творческого процесса в корпоративных коммуникациях. Анализируются эстетические и этические аспекты творчества при создании идей для рекламы и связей с общественностью. В статье рассмотрены приемы создания креативных идей для специальных событий и предложены методы, повышающие эффективность коммуникационной деятельности.

Ключевые слова: креатив, корпоративные коммуникации, специальные события, реклама, связи с общественностью, коммуникационные технологии, коммуникационная деятельность, символический капитал.
