

Student Interaction with University Internet Resources: Reconnaissance Research Experience

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Abstract. The article deals with the interaction of students with the Internet resources of universities. Particular attention is paid to social networks, which are the most attractive means of communication for young people. The popularity of social networks explains the creation of communities in them by universities, which are of an information and communication nature. Students and applicants use social networks on a daily basis to communicate and receive new information. The most popular social networks among students are highlighted, which they use to obtain information about the activities of the university. The opinion of students is analyzed about what the Internet communities of the Universities should be in social networks, what the posts should talk about, and what mistakes make the pages of the Universities unattractive for a young audience. Empirical data were collected using quantitative and qualitative methods. The combination of these methods provides more complete information to understand the problem. Quantitative methods - a questionnaire survey of students; qualitative methods - interviewing students. The quantitative indicators of the University accounts in various social networks have also been analyzed. The modern digital transformation of higher education must take into account all the needs of students for information about the activities of the university.

Keywords: social network, internet, communication, student, educational process, account.

1 Introduction

The mass informatization of society has made the Internet space an important part of the everyday life of most modern people. For a relatively short period of its existence, the Internet has turned out to be involved in all spheres of society's life - political, economic, socio-cultural. Modern researchers call the new world a changeable, fragmented, mosaic, fluid, with unstable relations and forms of organization of social life.

In modern sociology, network analysis has become an integral part of the discourse of modern scientific problems. Western sociological science also did not stay away from the network problematics. M. Castells has repeatedly emphasized the special role of network communities in the information age (Castells, 2000). Attempts to present a new information reality, analytical generalizations of the main characteristics of modern society were made by such scientists as B.

Velmen, B. Latour. (Latour, 2014; Wellman, 2011). They are representatives of the network approach in sociology, within the framework of which the structure and functions of modernity are analyzed, social processes are examined through the practices of interaction of social agents, their fields of environment, the context and prospects of interaction are determined.

The global Internet has firmly entered the life of modern society, creating a worldwide communication environment. Today, the Internet provides ample opportunities for its users: receiving and transmitting information, making various purchases and payments, concluding deals, placing advertisements, searching for potential buyers, communicating on social networks and much more. Everyday appear new Internet practices, which should be understood not only interpersonal communication and group communication, but also the purchase of goods, the use of electronic money, watching TV shows and films, listening to radio stations and music, searching for information, cognitive and gaming activity, creating groups in social networks and Internet communities, viewing and creating video blogs. The importance of social networks has increased significantly in the modern world.

«Social network» today is understood as a social system, the elements of which are people and various forms of social relations between them, the peculiarity of the structure of which lies in the multilevel, decentralization and non-hierarchy (Medvedeva & Vodaturskaya, 2013).

Social networks as an object of sociological research are a complex, multilevel phenomenon. This fact determines many of its subject properties: goals and motives of presence, self-presentation of an individual, methods and frequency of communication, choice of communication methods depending on public opinion in the network community and much more (Berger & Luckman, 1995; Schutz, 2003).

The leadership of modern universities clearly understands the need to introduce digital technologies into management (Petruk & Shashlo, 2020), including activities in social networks.

The popularity of social networks makes it important for universities to create accounts on social networks and use them as a tool to promote their activities. The main consumers of educational services are students, who are people between the ages of 18 to 25 years. They feel themselves most comfortable in the world of social networks; they want to get information immediately, on the screen of their smartphones. It is necessary to understand whether university accounts meet the information and communication requirements of today's youth. The tendency to create groups of universities and accounts to promote among students and students of educational institutions is growing every day. There is a problem associated with ignorance of the mechanism for promoting university accounts. This problem arises from the fact that the people who are engaged in this work are not professionals in the field of promoting accounts.

The phenomenon of social networks has been studied for a long time. Many contemporary authors have asked about the use of social networks as a means of promoting educational and scientific services of the university. It is not necessary to understand that effective communication with students and applicants is the key

to successful promotion of the university's activities. The information society is developing rapidly. The problem of perception of information in university accounts by students as the main consumers of services becomes very relevant in modern society.

Today, the relevance of monitoring social networks to identify student satisfaction is due to the following circumstances. The modern university is obliged to identify general trends in the interaction of administration and students, as well as manage to objectively assess the growing needs of students expressing their opinions on social networks. University leaders have to apply to the analysis of student opinions and attitudes as the most flexible and dynamic instrument independent evaluation of its activities. It is important for students to find the most accessible, fast and effective way to convey information to the university administration.

2 Materials and Methods

The purpose of this work is to study students' opinions on social networks of universities. This is necessary to organize an effective communication strategy for students in a social network.

Within the framework of this goal, the following tasks are actualized: to determine the most popular social networks of universities among students; explore what attracts students to social media; determine what information students lack.

Empirical data collected using quantitative and qualitative methods. The combination of these methods provides more complete information to understand the problem. Quantitative methods - student questionnaire survey (n = 100) and content analysis of the accounts of leading Russian universities, qualitative methods - interviewing students (n = 5) (Abrosimova, 2013). Content analysis is a method of quantifying the information presented in each account. This study is exploratory (reconnaissance) research.

The secondary goal of the exploratory study was the approbation of sociological tools for collecting information on this scientific problem. A questionnaire was used that contained various types of questions. Most of the questions were aimed at studying the attitude of respondents to the university page on social networks. Opened questions allow students to offer their own ways to make university account more interesting and attractive. The survey of students was carried out using a google form. This method of gathering sociological information saves time and resources researcher solves a very important problem of practical sociology - the problem of the availability of respondents.

Interviews with students made it possible to get more detailed information about the respondents' ideas about a good university page on social networks.

Researchers have chosen such social networks: VKontakte, Instagram, YouTube. The researchers chose these social networks because these social networks are among the most popular in Russia (The audience of the six largest

social networks in Russia in 2020: exploring insights, 2020).

The social network VKontakte is in the top 10 most popular resources in Russia, it ranks fourth. About 50% of the Russian Internet audience visits VKontakte every day, and within a month the coverage reaches 78%.

Instagram is one of the most popular social networks in the world, with about 1 billion users monthly. The platform's app ranks second among the most downloaded free apps in the AppStore, and on Google, Instagram is in tenth most popular. The monthly reach of users from Russia on Instagram in May 2020 amounted to 59.4 million users. 28.3 million Russians visited Instagram daily. YouTube has a combined audience of over 2 billion users. The platform is available in 91 countries, and the interface is translated into 80 languages of the world. The number of views reaches 1 billion per day.

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3 Results

The first stage of the study is to analyze the accounts of the most popular universities in Russia. The following data are presented as quantitative indicators: Number of subscribers Number of publications Date of creation. These metrics provide information about the popularity of these accounts. They also show that how well employees are university accounts

Table 1. Quantitative indicators of the activity of social networks of universities.

University	Social network	Quantitative indicators		
		Number of subscribers	Number of publications	Date of creation
Lomonosov Moscow State University	YouTube	122 200	1 451	6.01.2006
	Instagram	24 100	692	9.08.2017
	VKontakte	61 700	9 904	2.10.2014
National Research University Higher School of Economics	YouTube	74 900	2 483	9.02. 2006
	Instagram	21 400	1 596	2.09.2013
	VKontakte	1887 365	1 067 98	28.10. 2014 16.01.2019
National Research Nuclear University MEPhI	YouTube	310 000	648	19.01.2011
	Instagram	5 406	1 124	1.07. 2014
	VKontakte	13 795	6 708	25.04.2014
MGIMO University	YouTube	33 800	1 336	26.09.2006

Instagram	24 400	2 836	8.07. 2016
Vkontakte	38 800	10 567	30.5. 2011

Source: compiled by the author.

Obviously, the earliest dates for creating accounts are: 01/06/2006, 02/09/2006 and 09/26/2006. These are the creation dates of YouTube channels.

Despite the fact that YouTube channels were created much earlier, the leaders in the number of publications are the social networks VKontakte and Instagram. YouTube contains fewer posts, but the number of subscribers is significantly higher than other social networks. The reason for this may be due to the quality of the content. In addition to the entertainment context in which it is customary to mention this service in our country, foreign authors very often use YouTube as a practical scientific toolkit. This is due to the ability to broadcast visual information that can be accessed anytime, anywhere/

Scientists do not deny the importance of YouTube as a social phenomenon. YouTube enables people to receive and transmit any information. Very often, YouTube becomes an educational tool with the help of which educational institutions can convey various information to people.

The data in the table indicate that modern leading universities in Russia pay sufficient attention to their activities in social networks. Video content and informational posts on social networks are regularly posted on university accounts. A qualitative analysis of the content will allow us to more accurately determine the level of development of university accounts. This type of analysis will be implemented after the pilot study.

A questionnaire survey of students showed that the most popular social network for obtaining information about the university's activities is Instagram (47%). Students use Instagram to get information about university activities, news and events more often than VKontakte and YouTube.

Student interviews revealed the main reasons why students choose Instagram. The informants said that: *"Instagram is the most convenient social network for me. On the way to the University, I can watch the feed of my subscriptions. I can also see the news of my University"*.

Many informants point out that the popularity of Instagram accounts is explained not only by the content, but also by the very interface of this social network. *"Instagram is the most convenient social network for me" "Instagram is the only social network that I visit every day."* Such responses indicate that the popularity of the social network is driven by accessibility and usability.

Despite the high popularity of the social network Instagram, the social network VKontakte also has important characteristics for users. Many respondents say: *"VKontakte is a very convenient network because you can always get feedback there", "In the group of my university, I can find graduates of our university. I can write to them, ask questions, It is very convenient. ", "When I entered, I found graduates of our University and met them. Communication with them helped me choose a university and a study program"*.

The opportunity to communicate with representatives of the University, its students and graduates make a very attractive VKontakte social network.

The rating of the most significant publications of the university: information on cultural events – 41,2%; information about the educational process – 37,3%; information about outstanding personalities of the University – 12,7%; information about scientific events-25,8%; general information – 17,9%. These data show that students articulate their request for information. They understand that they are interested in what information is useful to them.

The question in the questionnaire "Is the information provided in the university account enough for you?" also aims to get information about whether students are satisfied with university accounts.

The question in the questionnaire "*Is the information provided in the university account enough for you?*" also aims to get information about whether students are satisfied with university accounts. The respondents' answers were distributed with a slight predominance of negative evaluation information content accounts. "*Information is not enough*" was answered by 62.8% of students.

Interviews with students made it possible to clarify what the students lack in the information flow. Most of the students noted that sometimes information is not published on time. "*I really wanted to take part in the scientific conference, but I found out about it three days before it was held. I didn't have enough time to prepare*".

Some students note that some informational posts have unattractive visual content. This is especially true of the social network Instagram. This network places a lot of emphasis on photography. The respondents answer as follows: "*I was flipping through the feed and did not pay attention to the picture. She was uninteresting and not beautiful*", "*I like it when the picture contains some information, it is very convenient, I can take a screenshot*".

It is very important to understand not only the negative side of the information in the account, but also to analyze how students are attracted by the university account. Some informants noted that they always receive feedback "*It is more convenient for me to write to the University group. I know that they will definitely answer me*", "*I solve all the questions on social networks. I know that there is the most relevant information*", "*I do not know who at the university will be able to answer this question for me, and social networks are always available to me*".

Some of the answers reflect the general attitude towards the account. "*It is very interesting for me to read about the life of my university*" "*We have a very good photographer at our university, I am happy to look at photos in my account*", "*I get a lot of useful information from the university's account. This information is not only about education. I am especially inspired by the stories of successful graduates and students who have achieved success.*"

4 Discussion

As mentioned above, this study was reconnaissance research. This stage made it possible to determine the strategy for further scientific work on this problem.

Working with the quantitative toolkit has shown that more questions need to be added. Questions need to be formulated in relation to each social network. This will make it possible to study the features of each social network more accurately.

Social media research is very popular in modern scientific discourse. A number of scientists have analyzed this problem in their works. But one should take into account the fact that the Internet is a very dynamic space that requires constant study and analysis. The results obtained two years ago are no longer relevant for the modern world.

Working with social media accounts should be complemented by content analysis. Analysis of only quantitative indicators of accounts in social networks did not allow us to accurately determine the attitude of Internet users to university accounts.

The main results can be considered data indicating that social networks are a modern resource for attracting students and a communication tool. Do not underestimate the power of social media in the educational market. Interaction with the services of the university, solving educational issues and obtaining information about events are information vectors that need to be covered in detail in the accounts of universities.

5 Conclusion

In the course of the study, all the goals and objectives were solved. Among the most popular networks with university accounts are two social networks: VKontakte and Instagram. Each of these social networks has its own characteristics of interaction with users: Instagram engages students with its visual content and ease of access. Students choose VKontakte in order to interact with other members of the virtual community (students of other groups and courses, administrative services, alumni).

Students believe that the main problem of information in social networks is untimely posting. This is confirmed by the data that students learn information about the educational process and various activities from social networks.

The secondary goal of the study was the approbation of sociological tools. Better instrumentation will make the results of subsequent studies more representative. This will allow university leaders to build a more effective strategy for interacting with their students in the digital space.

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