

Information and Communication Technologies as a Vital Tool for the Development of Professional Competencies of Specialists in the Sociocultural Sphere

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Summary

The article considers the peculiarities of corporate image formation in cultural institutions, which relate primarily to the specifics of their activities. The major components of a positive corporate image of the organization are defined. The paper also examines Internet technologies and their capabilities in creating and shaping a positive image of cultural institutions. Assessment of cultural institutions via the indicator method is conducted.

Keywords:

image, corporate image, cultural institutions, Internet marketing, Internet technologies.

1. Introduction

In the face of quite stiff competition in the provision of cultural and leisure services, today's cultural institutions introduce marketing strategies in their management, which assumes the use of advanced Internet technologies to create support for their positive image and expand their online presence [1-3]

For a modern cultural institution, image communication is currently turning into one of the most effective ways of interacting with consumers, stakeholders, and other participants in the market of cultural and leisure services and the labor market, and cooperation with the professional community. In the outlined context, consideration of the role of modern Internet technologies in the formation of a positive image of a cultural institution is especially topical [4-7].

Practice demonstrates that as of now, no cultural institution can function without efficient communication support. Well-thought-out communication policy creates the desired stereotypes of perception of certain phenomena and objects in the target audience [8,9].

In the midst of the development of an information society, contemporary information and communication technologies are being introduced in almost every sphere of social life. Cultural institutions have not been spared from

this process. In recent years, Internet technologies have been decisive in shaping the image of cultural institutions. The process of creating the image of a cultural institution is largely the same for all organizations. Some specific models of creation and promotion of corporate image can only be introduced in this process in the case of narrow specialization of the institution. For this reason, the present study will not only consider the common options for creating the organization's image and improving its reputation but also delve deeper into the peculiarities of the process that distinguish the formation of the image of cultural institutions.

2. Results

Today there exist different options for classifying the components of the corporate image. Moreover, many versions of the structure of the corporate image are considered in specialized sources. As a rule, the proposed models do not have substantial differences from one another. All of them typically present a collection of some of the following components: financial prosperity; image and reputation of the staff; external attributes (company name and logo, corporate identity, location); the personality of the head; features of the interior design of office space; product image, quality of goods and services; business communications of the company and its employees. Reliance on these components in the formation of the organization's image reliably delivers the desired results.

However, none of the models incorporates as its component the use of Internet technologies in the promotion of the organization's services. We, however, assert that at present, this is one of the most vital components characterizing the image of any organization, particularly a cultural institution.

The choice of a specific model for the formation of the corporate image needs to consider the organization's profile and specifics of work and opportunities to change the existing corporate relations and incorporate new business

communications. The importance of each specific component may vary depending on whether improvement is required for the image of the organization itself, the services it offers, the head, or the staff. Information priorities are usually established based on a comprehensive analysis of the situation.

Thus, we conclude that the image of a particular organization is formed by a great number of components. Public opinion about each component has the most direct impact on the overall image of the organization.

There is quite a wide range of online marketing tools, and new technologies appear almost daily. The use of a specific instrument by the organization owes to a variety of actors and relies on the results of marketing research conducted by the organization prior to planning its marketing strategy for promotion on the web. The factors of choice include numerous quantitative and qualitative indicators from the research, as well as the objectives of the organization, its budget, technical capacities, the target audience, and the type of product/service. Many researchers cite the following three instruments as the primary tools of online promotion: Search Engine Optimization (SEO), media advertising, and contextual advertising. Surely, the list could be continued, but these three instruments can be considered the standard means of promotion on the Internet. Websites and banners are indispensable components and the basis for the promotion of any organization.

The main objective of a cultural institution and the basis of advertisement is the creation of a website that fully meets the modern requirements and peculiarities of the organization. The institution's website is of undeniable priority among the means by which information about the institution is generated, its positioning in the market of cultural services is carried out, and the organization's positive image is created. A website is a controlled means of communication because the sender controls the content of their messages to the recipients. On the other hand, a website presents a kind of electronic directory of a cultural institution, an open information system, because it has all the features of such a system in the classical sense: the presence of a certain array of documents, means of information search, technical and technological means of recording, storage, and presentation of information.

Rational structure, convenient navigation, original and appealing design, unique content, responsiveness (fast and systematic information update), the presence of feedback, and features for consumers with visual impairments are important components of the effective use of a website.

It should be noted that the website of an organization is in itself an image tool, and, consequently, it should incorporate various marketing tools. The marketing instruments that function on the organization's website and maintain it on a decent level are internal marketing tools for website promotion, among which are chat boxes, interactive photos, and videos. External marketing tools that promote

the organization's website (as the basis, and, therefore, the products and services of the organization as well) are SEO (search engine optimization, allowing the website to rank higher in search results), as well as media and contextual advertising.

One of the basic technologies of promotion on the Internet is banner advertising (media advertising). In contrast to the initial stages of its development, today, banners are presented by advertising professionals in completely different formats. Banners in the online environment can be classified into:

- regular banners (as an advertisement);
- media banners (interactive banners, moving banners that react to the cursor);
- pop-under banners (banners marked by their large size and usually appearing in a separate window);
- transforming banners (change their shape depending on the stage of loading a particular page).

A banner is a rectangular graphic image that is located on a web page and necessarily has a hyperlink to the advertised site. Banners are divided into text and graphic ones. Graphic banners are displayed as images or animations, and text banners contain text with hyperlinks that lead to the website of the organization. In addition, so that the clicks are not in vain, media advertising is targeted, and banners become an element of contextual advertising. Customized targeting reduces the cost of untargeted clicks that were common in the early stages of the development of media advertising.

Hence, when describing the process of media advertising it is worth noting two indicators that characterize its effectiveness. These indicators include reach (impressions) and target clicks. Banner advertising has two functions:

- promotion of the company and informing the audience about its products;
 - attraction of the audience to the organization's website.
- In this, it is important that the efficiency of banner advertising is defined not by its design but by the advertising offer on it. The efficiency of media advertising is measured by the number of impressions (how many users were reached by the banner), and the number of clicks (how many users clicked on the expanded information about the offer or went to the website).

Undoubtedly, the organization's website and banners are powerful image tools for reaching audiences, but it is critical to know which audiences to engage with. Internet technology allows finding and engaging with the target audience through search engine optimization and contextual advertising.

SEO (search engine optimization) is one of the main tools of online marketing and is designed to improve the position of the organization's website in search results.

As a rule, the results of activities on forming and correcting the image of the institution are evaluated via a special toolkit. The image of the organization is quite difficult to assess by qualitative and quantitative criteria. The

complexity of such diagnostic procedures lies in that the study of the effectiveness of an organization's image management occurs under a high degree of uncertainty, so the result cannot be predicted with certainty [10].

The study of an organization's image requires consideration of all of its elements. Therefore, a comprehensive,

systematic approach is used, providing for the use of both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

To study the positive image of the cultural institution, we employed the method of indicator assessment. This method involves the use of three groups of comprehensive indicators, each consisting of a number of individual indicators (Fig. 1).

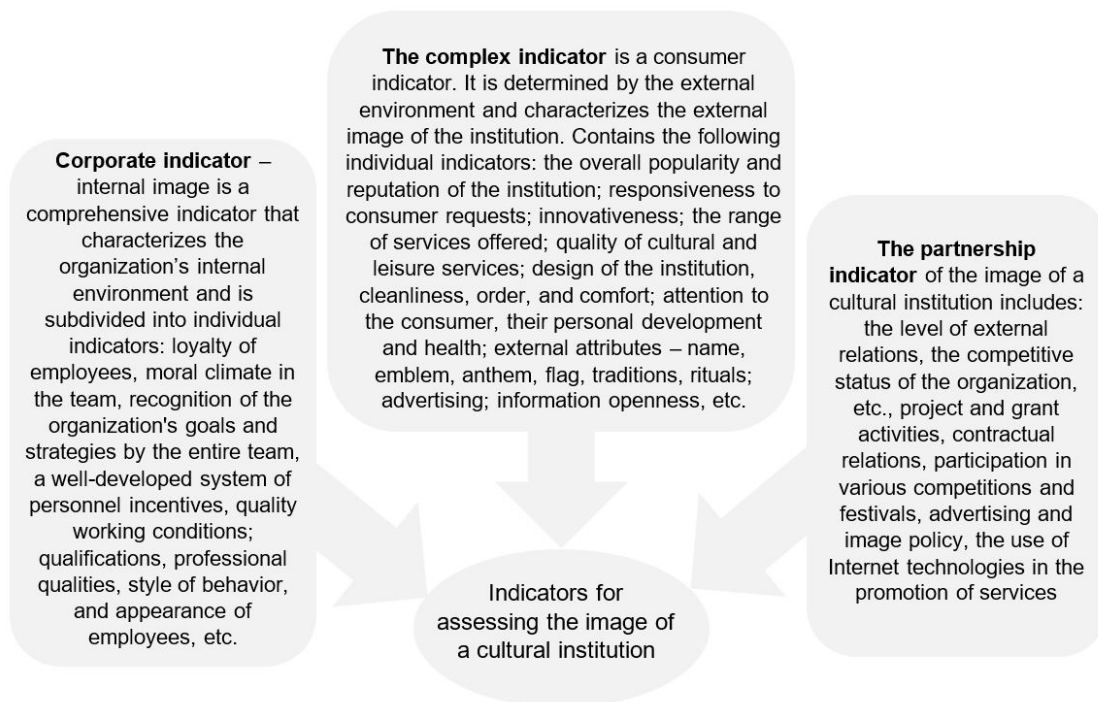


Fig. 1. Groups of comprehensive indicators

Assessment of the image indicators was conducted using the score method, which assumes assigning a certain number of points to individual image indicators (within each component) to indicate the level of their expression. Based on quantitative calculations, a conclusion is made about the level of expression of the image, and the image is deemed to be either positive, negative, or blurred.

In order to assess the image of the cultural institution, we conducted a study, whose primary objective was to assess the components of the image of the Municipal Budgetary Cultural Institution "Borisovskii" Cultural Development Center and determine their impact on the effectiveness of the institution. The interpretation of diagnostic results was carried out according to a point scale:

3 points – full compliance with the criterion;

2 points – significant degree of compliance with the criterion;

1 point – minimum compliance with the criterion;

0 points – absence of characteristic or non-compliance with the criterion.

1. Analysis of the internal image of the Municipal Budgetary Cultural Institution "Borisovskii" Cultural Development Center focused on the indicators of:

- the relevance and promise of the institution's mission, strategies and goals, and its concept;
- the existence of a certain philosophy of the institution reflected in the organizational culture of its staff;
- the formation of the internal image of the employees of the cultural institution, the quality of the staff (higher education corresponding to the profile of the position, work experience, advanced training, etc.).

For this purpose, we analyzed the regulatory documents governing the activities of the institution (the Charter, prospective and annual plans, annual reports) and conducted interviews and questionnaires with the institution's employees [11].

2. The study of the external (consumer) image involved the study of:

- external attributes of the organization, the brevity of its traditions and rituals, attractiveness, and compliance with the image of the institution;
- the condition of the material and technical base, the institution's territory and premises;
- information environment of the institution, its openness and accessibility;
- the external image of the staff and its attitude to the participants in the process, the visitors.

Assessment of this component of a corporate image comprised the study of the attributes of the cultural institution; the study of the institution's traditions and rituals based on the analysis of work plans, information resources, and in conversations with participants in cultural and leisure activities and teachers; analysis of the material and technical base of the institution, the attractiveness of its territory, the design of its premises, and the information space of the institution in terms of its openness and the availability of information about the institution's work; analysis of the means of information, and the like.

Analyzing the utilization of Internet technologies to promote the services of the institution under study, we should note that the "Borisovskii" Cultural Development Center has been working for four years on the PRO.Kultura.RF platform. In 2021 considerable work was conducted on the portal's functionality. A total of 233 events were created and confirmed there (168 events in 2020, 75 events in 2019, and 14 events in 2018). In 2021, the number of specialists working on the portal increased. Among the cultural institutions of the Borisov district, the "Borisovskii" Cultural Development Center takes 4th place in the rating (25.13) with 2,972 sessions and 563 publications on social networks.

The "Borisovskii" Cultural Development Center has been working on the "Cultural Region" portal for three years now. For the convenience of purchasing tickets for offline events, the institution is selling them via the portal. In addition, the "Borisovskii" Cultural Development Center has its own website – the website of the Municipal Budgetary Institution "Borisovskii" Cultural Development Center [11]. The website was launched in November 2018 as part of the Official Websites Project. The website of the Cultural Development Center is regularly expanded and supplemented with materials and news. The platform makes it possible to quickly report on upcoming events at the Cultural Development Center. In addition to showcasing the institution's work, the website helps to gather feedback from visitors. The number of visitors to the website at the end of 2021 was 2,770 people, in 2020 – 2,446 people. The number of website visits thus increased by 349 people (12.5%). The rather modest increase in the number of visitors is due to the fact that, despite the coverage of information about the presence of the website on the institution's social media pages (communities, groups), subscribers find it more convenient to use social media applications (VKontakte, Odnoklassniki, Instagram, etc.) than to go to third-party sources. Despite the convenient interface of the website, finding information on it takes more time compared to social networks.

Below are charts from the Sputnik statistic analyzer that display the entire year's data in an orderly fashion (Fig. 2).

The most popular pages are the home page, club activity data, movie schedule, and schedule.

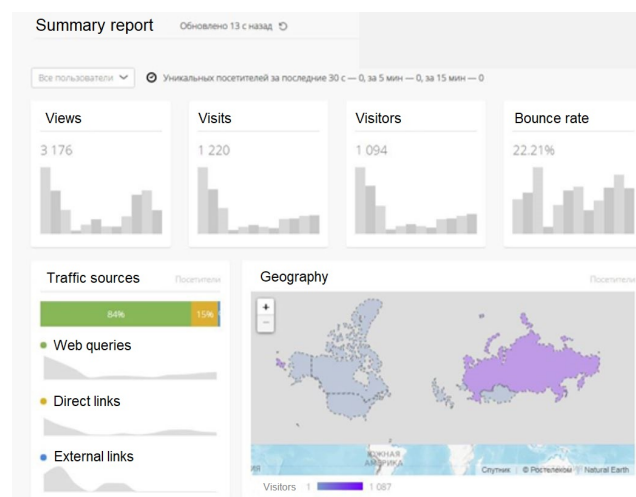


Fig. 2. Charts of the "Sputnik" statistics analyzer of the "Borisovskii" Cultural Development Center website for the year 2021

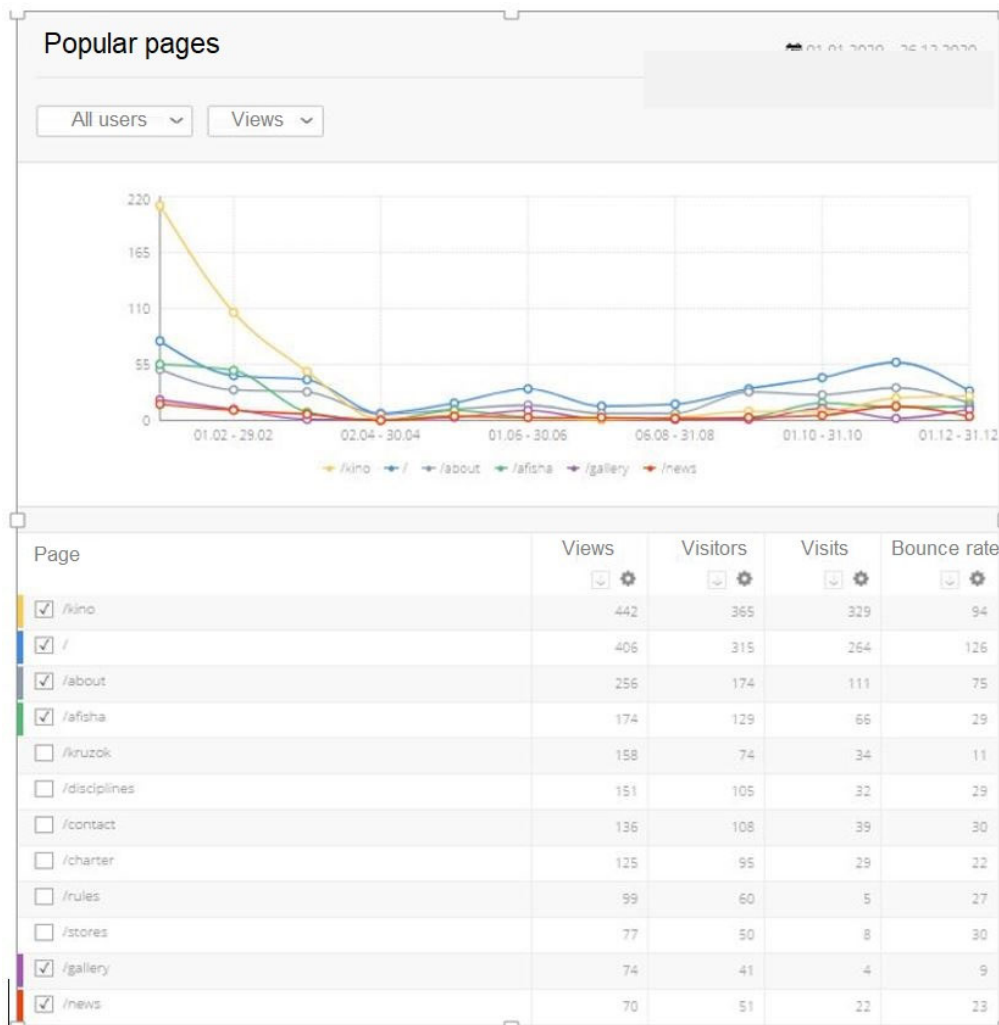


Fig. 3. Analysis of browsing on the "Borisovskii" Cultural Development Center website

Interaction between cultural institutions and the media is expressed mainly in the fact that the latter inform the population about the activities of cultural and leisure institutions in organizing meaningful leisure activities and advertise the upcoming mass events.

The new formats of work have enabled the Cultural Development Center to stay in touch with its visitors and have attracted new users and subscribers. The key to the success of the "Borisovskii" Cultural Development Center is a variety of forms, tools, and methods, a creative approach to the methodology of cultural and leisure activities, the search for new forms and methods, and their

improvement through observation, feedback, and surveys. Social networks are of great importance in announcing events and establishing feedback. The "Borisovskii" Cultural Development Center is working on various social networks, including VKontakte, Facebook, Odnoklassniki, Instagram, and YouTube.

The geography of the Center's community on VKontakte shows that the activities of the "Borisovskii" Cultural Development Center are of interest not only to people who live in Borisovka but also to people who live far beyond it (Fig. 4).

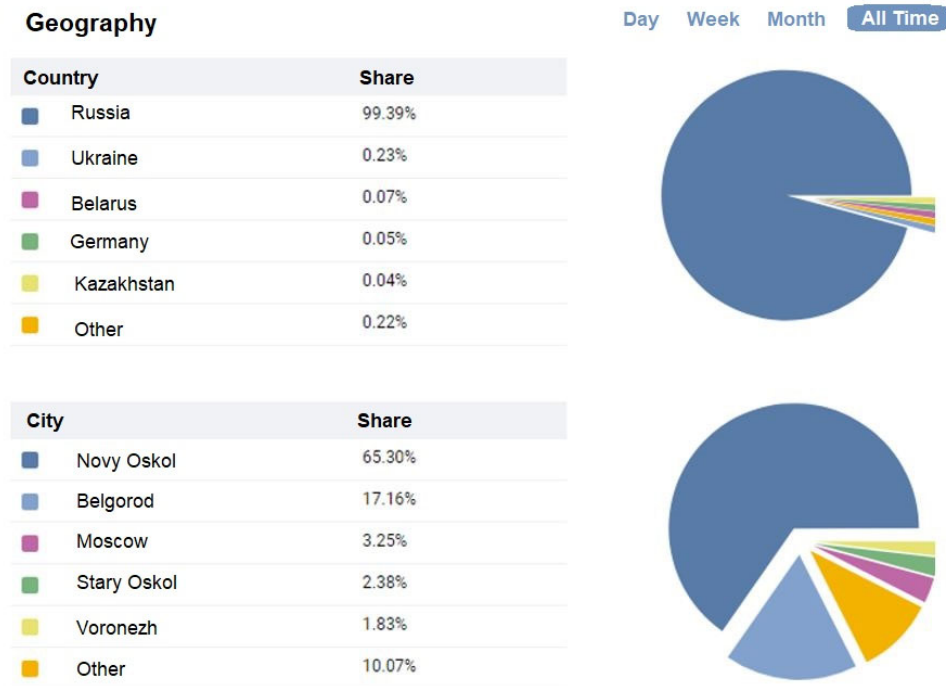


Fig. 4. Analysis of the geography of participants in the VKontakte public group of the "Borisovskii" Cultural Development Center

The analysis of devices used to access the website pages shows that more than 90% of VKontakte users and over 70% of Odnoklassniki users prefer the mobile version (Fig. 5).

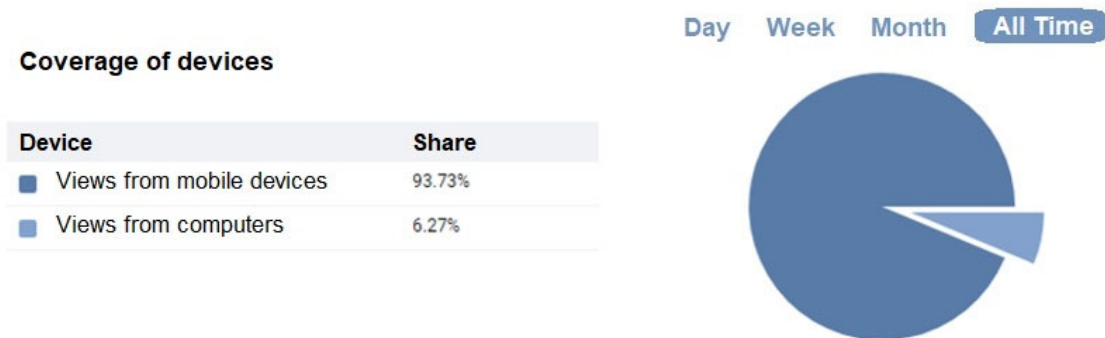


Fig. 5. Analysis of user preference for the mobile version

3. As part of the study of partnership image, the public activities of the cultural institution were examined. In this context, we noted the presence of broad links of the "Borisovskii" Cultural Development Center with various organizations and institutions, collaborations with partners, and the dynamism and consistency of the publication of information about the activities, as well as analyzed the participation of students and employees of the Cultural Development Center in city and regional events, cooperation with the population, etc.

The development of integration relations between the various structures of a particular territory is one of the leading factors in the success of its development. In the course of its creative activities, the Cultural Development Center has developed close contacts and relationships with various institutions, enterprises, individual entrepreneurs, and public organizations, i.e. the so-called cultural cluster. The Center's work draws on virtually the entire cultural potential of the district. As a result of common efforts, the institution creates a real

cultural product, which will bring not only spiritual but also a certain economic profit in the future.

All events held by the "Borisovskii" Cultural Development Center are covered in the media, particularly by the district newspaper "Prizyv" and the radio station "Avtoradio-Borisovka", as well as on information websites of the "Borisovskii" Cultural Development Center, the Center for Culture and Folk Art, the Department of Culture of Borisov district administration, the Youth Affairs Administration of Borisov district, and the official website of the Administration of Borisov district.

Processing the results of the study by these comprehensive indicators enabled us to determine the coefficient of a positive image for the cultural institution (Cpi), which comprises a number of components: coefficient of internal image (Aii), coefficient of external image (Cei), and coefficient of partnership image (Cpri).

The level of expression of the positive image of the Cultural Development Center was calculated by the formula:

$Cpi = Aii + Cei + Cpri$ (1) and evaluated by the following levels:

Low level – the image is poorly expressed or completely absent;

Mediumlevel – the image is insufficiently expressed;

Highlevel – the image is clearly expressed.

Summarizing the results of our research, we can conclude that the coefficient of the positive image of the "Borisovskii" Cultural Development Center (9 out of 10, which is 90.0%) is clearly expressed, which allows classifying it as high. This indicates that the management of the Cultural Development Center was actively involved in creating a positive image of the institution and is working towards this end.

Thus, the findings demonstrate that the image of the "Borisovskii" Cultural Development Center is developed purposefully, and there is a clear system of work towards this goal. The efforts of the "Borisovskii" Cultural Development Center in creating its positive image can be regarded as a positive experience for other cultural institutions of the Belgorod region.

3. Conclusion

The key specifics of the formation of corporate image primarily relate to the peculiarities of the operation of a cultural institution, its mission and strategic goals, and the realized socio-cultural values. An important feature of the considered process is the potential of the institution's operation, which is evaluated through a wide range of visual and verbal tools, forms, methods, and techniques of sociocultural activity.

Internet marketing tools are capable of promoting a cultural product, bearing in mind its specific characteristics: immateriality, inseparability, instability of service

parameters, and non-preservability. These tools give the opportunity to most accurately demonstrate the product, offer the audience native information, ensure constant contact with the consumer, customize targeting, personalize outgoing information, and create interactive communication with the target audience using engagement techniques. Furthermore, online marketing technologies allow the user to become a source of advertisement themselves.

Promotion on social media gives cultural institutions the opportunity to better explore their target audience and effectively interact with any audience, which is due to the possibility of targeting, reasonable costs (instantaneous close contact with the audience), modern technology, and professionalism of the SMM specialist. Interactivity, fast data transmission, accessibility, nativeness, scale, and, of course, unique phenomenal information generated by the user themselves are the distinctive features of social networks.

As a result of our study, we conclude that the use of contemporary Internet technologies is decisive for the formation of the image of a modern cultural institution. Their implementation provides almost limitless possibilities for the institutions to use almost all the information available in the world in order to not only provide high-quality cultural and leisure services but also present the organization broadly and comprehensively in the network society. For cultural institutions, web resources acquire the importance of a communication source that presents (reveals) the range of its interests, the scope of services, and the results of cultural and leisure activities in the global information space through the Internet.

Consequently, cultural institutions need to pay constant attention to the adoption of the latest information and communication systems in order to maintain the upward trend of their own rating.

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