

Chapter 33

The Important Role of the Blogosphere as a Communication Tool in Social Media Among Polish Young Millennials: A Fact or a Myth?

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ABSTRACT

This chapter proposes and discusses the hypothesis that the blogosphere is a relatively well-developed and independent social media communication tool used by millennials. The first part of the study concentrates on the theoretical aspects of social media communication as presented in the literature, and the way blogs and the whole blogosphere function. The communicational and social profile of Generation Y is presented as it is this cohort that constitutes the major portion of the Polish blogging community. The prevailing trends in the Polish blogosphere are discussed, following a desk research into reports and professional studies. Moreover, some comments and findings are presented regarding an experiment conducted by the authors in which some representatives of younger millennials ran personal, non-profit blogs on a subject of their choice.

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INTRODUCTION

The social media market is characterised by the dynamic growth of various platforms and possible communication tools. Still, the research shows the blogosphere – with its communicational, marketing, and advertising potential – remains an important part of the world wide web. The global blogosphere is in its maturity stage, which means it is stable but growing at a slower pace. Blogs are a commonplace phenomenon with a significant impact on the way individuals function in their societies. The Polish blogosphere, too, is growing steadily. Just like everywhere else, with time and the permanent development of new social media forms and tools, the Polish blogosphere is changing: new trends emerge, and various aspects of the art of blogging and online presence take the spotlight.

One of the most prevailing trends – which is a subject of research – is the increase in the importance and the frequency of using social media channels to communicate blog contents. More and more often, bloggers make use of various social media to provide a permanent communication channel for their readers, which makes obsolete the original means of communication that is the comment section. The length of an average blog entry increases, which may be the reason for the decrease in posting frequency. In order to keep the readers interested and engaged, bloggers frequently make use of the shorter and easier social media formats (e.g. Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter) to accompany the main contents of their blogs. As a natural consequence, a question may be raised here whether blogs remain an independent communication tool within social media or whether their role was slightly aberrated. And if blogosphere is not the independent communication tool, can we talk about its important role in Generation Y communication at all?

For the reasons mentioned above, the authors decided to describe the phenomenon from the perspective of Polish millennials, who constitute the major portion of the Polish blogging community. This study describes blogs as an integral part of constantly developing social media communication, defining the characteristic features of this form of communication among millennials, and discussing the validity of the hypothesis that the blogosphere is a relatively mature and independent social media communication tool for Polish younger millennials.

The discussion in the study is based on a literature review and desk research. Moreover, some comments and findings are presented regarding an experiment conducted by the authors in which some representatives of younger millennials ran personal, non-profit blogs on a subject of their choice.

POLISH BLOGOSPHERE PROFILE AND CREATING COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

In the broad range of online communication tools, social media are doubtless one of the most important ones. Due to their dynamic growth, the specific character, the scope of functionalities available through the services, and the continuous increase in the number of users, they have become an important communication channel. They demand continuous and careful attention, as well as quick adaptation to new circumstances, which is to say they entail creating new ways of surviving in an evolving and dynamic environment which is continuously discovered anew (Cross, 2011, pp. 3-4; Szweczyk, 2015, p. 120; Couldry, 2012).

The term ‘social media’ refers to using online and mobile technologies to transform communication into interactive dialogue. The media are used for social interaction in the form of an elaborate set of

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