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# **FUTURE OF POTENTIAL MEDIA IMPACTS AFTER TRANSFORMATION OF MEDIA ENVIRONMENT**

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## **Abstract**

Transformation of media environment is often the subject of discussion after the entry of domestic capital into the media. Therefore, the paper addresses the potential impact of the media, especially on the level of the content. At the same time, however, it also deals with the economic level. There are many factors and perspectives how we can consider on the media. The first one is the viewpoint of media acting on the recipient. The second one considers how different groups are acting through media on the society. The article deals with the example of the Slovak market and the financial group Penta – owner of some Slovak media. There is a question why Penta have decided to buy the publishing houses? What was the reason? Therefore, the article deals with the future of potential media impacts especially after this transaction.

*Keywords:* advertising, transformation, media ownership, media impact, buyers

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## **1. Introduction**

The future of media impact may be considered from two perspectives. Not only from the viewpoint of media acting on the recipient, but also from the viewpoint of acting of different groups through media on the society. Let us have a closer look at the whole issue of media ownership and influencing the media market (in different ways). Why is it important to investigate the ownership of the media? It is mainly because the influence of the media on people is sometimes overestimated, but more often it is not sufficiently estimated. One thing, however, is certain that media are present in the lives of most people and thus have a significant share in the socialization of an individual. From the media people gain patterns, adopt attitudes, values, and gradually accept new ways of behaviour. It is quite possible to say that their share in taking patterns of behaviours, idols, social opinions, and so on is precisely documented. Media have a significant impact on people's opinion. They are the driving force that can set masses in motion (e.g. the fight against corruption). It should be noted that the professional and lay public are interested in how the media work, in the efforts of legislators to regulate media

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communication, in politicians' efforts to penetrate in the media and lobbyists for media control. Media can be said to have a huge ability to influence the attitudes and opinions of the public, to construct and transform social reality – as an example we may mention the exchange of views on the functioning of health care system and education. All of this is based on a clear belief that media have a significant influence and impact on an individual and society. In addition to legislative, judicial, and executive powers, they are often referred to as another power in the state that mediates information to a large number of people, but there are also other media functions. They have a considerable ability to influence public opinion and, by highlighting negative phenomena in society, are an important means of socializing and public control.

## **2. The Slovak market - a brief account of the analysed media law issues**

In Slovakia, the media ownership has been regulated since 2000 by the Act on Broadcasting and Retransmission in its tenth part – 'Plurality of information and transparency of property and personal relations in broadcasting', as follows:

- A publisher of the periodical press issued at least five times a week and publicly distributed to at least half of the territory of the Slovak Republic may not simultaneously be a broadcaster licensed for multiregional broadcasting or nationwide broadcasting.
- One legal entity or one natural person may not be property related to more than one broadcaster licensed for multiregional or nationwide broadcasting of a radio programme service or to one broadcaster licensed for multiregional or nationwide broadcasting of a television programming service; at the same time, they must not be property related to the publisher of the nationwide periodical press.
- One legal entity or one natural person may be property related to several broadcasters licensed for the local broadcasting of a radio programme service or for the regional broadcasting of a radio programme service or to several broadcasters licensed for the local broadcasting of a television programming service or for the regional broadcasting of a television programming service only if the broadcasting of all such broadcasters with which that person is property related to, can be received by most up to 50% of the total population.
- Broadcaster can create a programme network to the extent that it can be received by most up to 50% of the total population.

The ownership and personal connection of the radio programme service broadcaster and the TV programme broadcaster to one another or to a publisher of national periodical press is prohibited.

### **3. Media theories**

The first question regards the influence of the media as a decisive factor on changing ownership relations. The answer can be found in the effects of the media on the recipient. If considering phases of media effects of D. McQuail, in the last of his explored phases, we are at the stage of both the strong position of the media and the audience:

- First phase – unlimited power of the media (roughly 1900-1940) – the media content was believed to produce similar effects for all recipients;
- Second phase – the inefficiency of the media (roughly 1940-1965) – it began to be considered that as individual personality characteristics differ, it may come to individualized reception of media content;
- Third phase – re-belief in the strong media effects (roughly 1965-1980) – increasing the importance of the receiver's active approach to the media;
- Fourth phase – transaction ideas on effects (roughly since 1980) – strong position of both – the media and the audience [1].

In general, consequences of media production and mass media activities can be divided into three following groups:

- media can act as a tool for social integration of individuals and groups, making them a stabilizer of the status quo in society;
- however, media can also become holders of social changes;
- and last but not least, media are a powerful tool for promoting interests of individuals and groups [2].

D. McQuail provides also another view. The more the audience is depending on mass media at acquiring information and simultaneously the more the society is in a state of crisis or instability, the more power the media will probably have (or the greater power will be attributed to them) [1, p. 104].

Classics of media and cultural studies (such as Robert K. Merton, Harold Laswell and Charles Wright) call individual media functions differently, with different sensitivity set for specific detail, meaning that they are mutually exclusive. On the contrary, they are complementary to one another. If we make a free summary of their ideas, we can divide media functions first of all into following ones:

- positive (eufunctions) and negative (dysfunctions),
- further to obvious (manifest) and hidden (latent).

From this general, structural-functionalist level, it is possible to descend to a 'lower' and more specific analytical level. If we consider it with this optics, the media:

- provide information and make easier its relocation;
- store and preserve information;
- maintain continuity by, for example, mediating cultural heritage;
- mediate education and participate in education;
- socialize individuals and entire social groups, for instance by contacting them with reference groups;

- integrate and homogenize society, e.g. by creating mainstreams, articulation of criteria of (non)normality and the like;
- offer entertainment;
- offer escape from reality and forgetting;
- make money and offer work exertion [2, p. 51].

However, the need for media ownership may also be related to other factors, defined in literature as reputation management or impression management. V. Svoboda deals with classification of both terms [3].

In the search for new outcomes to gain lasting and good relations of the organization, the so-called reputation management – RM has been applied in the last years. In the area of image creation, such solutions are looked for are bearable in the long run, where none of the communication sides will lose anything. Brauer [3] states that through reputation, the public will not only get an overview of the relevant organization, but usually they also seek to obtain further information about it, namely often through neutral information sources. This makes them more resistant towards manipulative news from the media. Reputation is best done when the image of an organization is created through people who know it best. Building reputation follows the build-up of knowledge, orientation and trust of the organization in a certain part of the public in order to preserve such value. This is the new quality and challenge for Public Relations. Reputation, especially in the USA, but in recent years also in Europe, is created as a certain more perfect synonym for the image, although the forms and means of its realization are not fundamentally different from the creation of the image. The basis for understanding the phenomenon of reputation management consists of four attributes, namely: credibility, trustworthiness, reliability, awareness of responsibility [3].

Managing of creating impressions, the so-called impression management, is an attempt by individuals and institutions to manage and control the impression that they have on the public. In this sense, impression management is considered as a strategy of staging, which explains and describes the creation of the image. Researchers increasingly accumulate evidence that the phenomenon of attentiveness and awareness in present-day information society is evolved into a somewhat new form of money. „Today it is not enough to be just rich. Whoever wants to become somebody must be at least somewhat prominent. This means that they have to gain something else – thus a non-material income“, say M. Piwinger and H. Ebert, authors of impression management [3, p. 62].

### ***3.1. Other view on media market***

Those who run media for their owners are characterized by one-sidedness – they worry about the programme content of the radio, the print or the film. The owners themselves are more concerned with the media as such and are satisfied with vague formulations of the type that that they provide the audience with what they want. Owners are aware of the media as power and they know that this power has little in common with the ‘content’ or with media embedded in

other media [1]. And so we get to the next opportunity to explore the reasons for the private investor's entry into the media market.

The most immediate influence of the owner is shown at an extra-media level. The media, unlike other sectors, are not only sources of profit, but also of power. The owner can directly promote their political and business interest due to them. Whether the intention of changes in ownership relations within the media area is to profit from this area or just to use the media effects, will show the time - likewise the transformation of other factors that affect their functioning [4].

Last but not least, it is necessary to stop viewing the media only as a matter of spreading content. The second dimension is the concentration of buyers of advertising expenses. Although the market of the print media is declining in this direction, however the online market is on the growth. This is the reason why publishers often make packets of advertising spaces in the print and online versions, or greater concentration is given just to the online content.

#### **4. Conclusions**

There is absolutely no doubt about the overall growth of online advertising at the expense of offline media. Online advertising is getting stronger, especially at the expense of print media and it is also fundamentally taking away from the TV and radio budgets. This is not a local trend; on the contrary, it is rather a global trend. It is also predicted by Advertising Expenditure Forecasts. Zenith Optimedia predicts that Internet advertising in computers will account for 19.1 % of total expenses on advertising in 2017. The share of mobile marketing in total advertising spending will increase from 5.7 % in 2014 to 15% in 2017.

In total, Internet advertising will account for 34% of total advertising, making it ranks behind TV advertising with 35.9%. The difference in market share between these two media will drop from 13.3 percentage points in 2014 to 1.9 percentage points in 2017. Such a fast growth will result in Internet advertising overrunning TV advertising in 2018. Costs on print advertising will continue to fall worldwide in compliance with the trend lasting since 2008. Zenith Optimedia predicts that advertising in newspapers will decline by an average of 4.9% 2017, while advertising in magazines will drop by only 3.2% year. Their combined share on total advertising spending will drop from 39.4% from 2007 to 19.6% in 2015 and will further decline to 16.7% in 2017 [Redakcia, *Mobilní marketing předstihne v roce 2016 příjmy z reklamy v novinách*, 21.09.2015, <http://www.marketingjournal.cz>].

The values of media products depend primarily on their producers. On the other hand, the content of media products reflects the requirements and tastes of the audience. The virtual world created by multimedia doesn't deprive us of the obligation to know the complexity of reality in the information society. New media make a new sense of hope. They shape a new generation of tools that can be used for the development of education and transfer of values as well [5].

The media will also play a significant role in the functioning of democratic and civil society after the transformation of the media environment, with considerable influence on the political and economic instruments of power and consequently on public opinion. In the forefront of our attention there have to appear greater responsibility of media towards society.

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