Using Social Media in School Management: Experience of Ukraine and United States of America

Nataliia Prykhodkina and Tetiana Makhynia

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Abstract. The article presents the results of the analysis of using of social media in school management in Ukraine and United States of America. Social media is broadly defined as a lot of relatively inexpensive and widely available electronic instruments that allow any person to publish and receive information, collaborate and build relationships with other people. The authors of the article break up social media into social networks, blogs, content hosting. There are some constructive conclusions made in the article. The educational opportunities of social media among Ukrainian specialists are very underestimated. The value of social media as an instrument of the educational process is undeservedly belittled. Many educators treat them with neglect and skepticism, considering social media exclusively as an entertaining resource. Using of social media for educational purposes is perceived by American students, teachers, researchers as self-evident and inalienable function. The American didactic experience reveals that social media can be successfully used to arrange the work of the teaching staff and students, hold individual and collective consultations enhancing intellectual and creative potential of students.

1. Introduction

The modern period of development of school management is characterized by the active and comprehensive implementation of information and communication technologies. The main goal of their implementation is the improving the quality of training and the interaction of all participants in the educational process.

The social media grows in popularity all over the world. According to a new research by GlobalWebIndex [11], people expend a third of their network time in social media. And comScore data shows that percentage of time spent on social media and messengers accounts for more than a quarter of time spent on their mobile devices.

2. The definition of social media in the research of Ukrainian and American scientists

Professors of ESCP Business School (ESCP Europe) A. Kaplan and M. Haenlein gave a definition to social media in 2010. The authors define social media as «a group of Internet applications basing on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 that allow to create and share user content» [4, p. 61]. Web 2.0 is a tendency to develop websites on the similar principles stemming from the focus on the project and service socialization, its improvement by users [6]. Social media is fundamentally different from traditional types of media by implementing a bidirectional information transfer strategy meaning «many sources and many recipients» [7, p. 189]. Traditional media, in its turn, uses a unidirectional strategy meaning one source and many recipients.

There is no generally accepted definition of the term «social media» in Ukraine and abroad. In our opinion, the most concise, simple and relevant definition of this phenomenon belongs to the English researcher D. Merty: «Social media is broadly defined as a lot of relatively inexpensive and widely available electronic instruments that allow any person to publish and receive information, collaborate and build relationships with other people» [12, p. 7-8].

Social media is an online communication in Thornley`s terms with express understanding that a person can smoothly and flexibly change their role, to appear either as an audience or participant. Social software is used for this purpose which makes it possible anyone (without specific coding expertise) to post, comment, move, edit information, create communities on their interests" [12].

Ya. Azhniuk, Head of Social Media Marketing at Prodigi, defines social media as an online service intended for the mass distribution of user-generated content, wherein anyone could be an author as opposed to traditional media wherein authors are pre-selected and limited audience [2]

Some researchers consider the concepts of "social media" and "social network" as synonymous. However, we feel that this is incorrect. We are on board with the statement of American online marketing expert D. Scott that "social media is a superset and social network is a subset" [8, p. 126]. Thus, social networks are just a specific instance of social media albeit the most popular one.

3. Social media classification

Ya. Azhniuk breaks up social media into 3 categories: 1) social networks; 2) blogs (including standalone, blog hosting, microblogging, etc.); 3) content hosting (photo services like instagram and flickr, video hosting services like Youtube, hosting for slides, documents, music like slideshare, scribd, soundcloud, etc.). However, he notes that online media intended for personal contact or group communication, rather than for mass publication should not be relegated to social media, in particular, e-mail, messengers, online games.

M. Zhdanova identifies 7 types of social media in the study "Social Web: Social Media Types":

1. Social networks are online services that prompt you to make new acquaintances and form interest communities. A user has an online profile and several ways to interact with others (through groups, events, polls, games, etc.) on such sites. Facebook and LinkedIn are the most famous examples of social networks.

2. Messengers are online messaging services where users interact through personal correspondence. Messenger applications are available on mobile devices such as Telegram, Viber, WhatsApp.

3. Social bookmarking sites help users save and share interesting information as a link to other resources. For example, the Pinterest network allows you to store a large number of images in different categories in order to facilitate the search later.

4. Blogs and forums offer comments to many users at the same time. Medium, Blogger and WordPress are well-known blogging platforms.

5. Microblogging lets you send short updates (140 characters) to everybody subscribed to such updates. The most outstanding microblogging, Twitter, has gained a lot of attention among journalists, as it allows you to quickly track developments and get information on what's happening on the spot.

6. Social news services allow users to create or publish links to news from other sources. The main element is voting, the community chooses this way which news will become the most important and visible to the rest of the users. The most famous example is Reddit.

7. Multimedia hosting is services possessing most of the social network peculiarities (user profile, circle of friends, opportunities to ditribute and comment on information), but it is primarily focused on the ability to download video, photo and audio files. Examples include YouTube, Vimeo, Flikr [10].

4. The role of social media in school management

One key task of the educational management is to ensure the development of the educational institution as an independent organization through establishing interaction with all participants of the educational process, partnership with public organizations and support of local business. Relationship networks take a position of one effective interaction model for all participants of the educational process. Skills of active communication through social networks are currently necessary for everyone. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and other networks have moved beyond a framework of face-to-face interaction and it is powerful communication platforms facilitating both to build your brand and be a virtual representation for government, business, and public organizations.

Using social media, the schools can:
- quickly respond to the needs of the audience: hear the parent, student and the public community (highlight the main topics for discussion, get feedback);
- prevent conflicts due to operational coverage of problems in the activities of the school;

- through social networks learn more about the activities of other schools and build own strategy for activities in social networks;
- fill vacancies and provide the school with highly qualified personnel by searching for personnel in social networks. For example, the group "Jobs for educators" on Facebook. The goal is to post messages about available vacancies in schools and for teachers which find work.

In the school social media are primarily an external communication tool. For large schools with a large number of participants in the educational process, social media can be a tool for interaction between participants in the educational process among themselves (for example, quickly obtain the necessary information and provide mutual assistance). The social media allow to the teaching staff, and especially to the director, to quickly resolve issues related to the adaptation and rotation of personnel.

Let us illustrate the possibilities of using social digital media as exemplified by Ukraine and the United States of America.

5. Key Aspects of Using Social Media in School Management in Ukraine

It is for the purpose of enabling local educational managers to communicate quickly, correctly and clearly, not to be afraid of criticism and be able to turn to crisis situations, an online course "Effective Communications for Educational Managers" has been developed by the public organization "Smart Education" powered by the EdEra online platform and viewed by 4,400 people during 10 months of 2019 [https://courses.ed-era.com/].

The top 10 Facebook thought leaders periodically writing on education have up to 60,000 followers and former Minister of Education Liliia Hrynevych leads the list with 52,000 subscribers. Serhii Kvit, former Minister of Education, Head of the National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance, has 30,000 subscribers. Hanna Novosad, current Minister of Education has the ability to deliver education news to up to 26,500 followers via Facebook. Educational Ombudsman Serhii Horbachov inform 7,700 followers on his personal page on a regular basis.

It was Serhii Horbachov at one time while being a school principal who was one of the first to propose his own plan of action to resolve any school conflicts through prompt coverage of problems on social networks.

1. Firstly, do not slur over the problem, acknowledge its existence.
2. Secondly, immediately and effectively begin its solution.
3. Thirdly, keep advised of what actions the institution is undertaking to resolve it.
4. Fourthly, report the result: if the problem is solved, "good job everyone" and if the problem is not solved, we should solve and work harder [3].

Thus, all participants of the educational process engage in activities, heavily empathize or vice versa through social networks, but awareness guarantees the reduction of negative manifestations of individual autonomy. Therefore, social networks become one of the leading information sources for participants in the educational process, a means and a special space for communication, an area of various activities.

Nevertheless, social networks are equally threatening. The freedom of the information distribution through social networks and communities regardless of its content and quality particularly transforms the virtual Internet space into a risk zone for the spiritual and moral sphere of the individual shifting classical values and developing a new virtual culture.

An interesting transformation was occurred to Facebook community "Parents SOS" founded in June 2014 due to the initiative "talk on the social network" in order to discuss problems related to education, assistance to parents in the case of mistreatment of their children in school or kindergarten and initiate systemic changes in education.

The community works according to a simple plan:
- the situation is announced (at school or in education in general)
- it is discovered how this situation complies with the law,
- the conclusion what should be changed whether the situation or the legislation, and they change it together!

Despite the fact that the public organization initiated many changes in the education system through civic initiatives during the its existence, its members often resorted to systematic violation of netiquette, resorting to rude, obscene, evaluative expressions and personal affront in the beginning. Instead of solving a problem, sometimes it was possible to be sunk in the information rain of value judgments supporting a particular message have not received a solution to the problem in the real world.

It should be noted that the group's administrators are currently working hard to address these shortcomings, as evidenced by the article's content analysis of the group's 2019 publications. In particular, publications are increasingly focusing on situations of success as systemic changes, concrete victories over bureaucracy in education and extortion; legal clarification of the rights and freedoms of participants in the educational process; clear algorithms for solving the most common educational problems for all participants.

Another area of the social network usage being actually the origin for its popularity in Ukraine was the involvement to solve socially important issues of participants of the educational process. In particular, Facebook has been used to inform, mobilize and raise funds for volunteers during the Revolution of Dignity since November 2013. Therefore, the school administration resorts to this tool in order to continue this work to assist and support the ATO warriors and report on the done work. In addition, content analysis of the pages of the administration and teachers of educational institutions of Ukraine shows the effectiveness of similar charitable work in collecting assistance among participants in the educational process supporting socially disadvantaged sections of the population or volunteers as orphanages, elderly people, rural libraries, hospitals, etc.

In addition to it, not only prompt information but also targeted support directly to the participants of the educational process are provided through the Facebook network and messengers, among which Viber is the most popular for the management of the educational institution. It is about involving a large number of indifferent people to help the participants of the educational process who were in an emergency like fire, accident, surgical treatment, etc. Such assistance massively reduces fraud and disillusionment with charities through direct personal contacts.

Another example of the social networks usage in the educational process is the establishment of successful cooperation and communication between educational institutions of municipal ownership and its public within the framework of project activities aimed at repairing or arranging the territory and premises of educational institutions, as well as build-out of a creative, development or inclusive environment. The key to the success of such projects is the proper organization of its advertising on social networks by the author of the project, in particular, the administration of the educational institution, as well as high activity of participants in the educational process to support projects in social networks. 663 educational projects have particularly won according to the results of the "Public Budget 2020" project out of 1564 projects in 13 categories having passed the stage of planning and implementation in Kyiv that, which is 42% of all projects [https://gb.kyivcity.gov.ua/projects].

There are a number of impressive blogs by heads of schools in Ukraine on the Internet, the number of which is impressive. In particular, the Google request "blog of a school principal" represents 19 million search results. However, it should be understood that the use of blogs in the management of general secondary education is often due to external circumstances as a requirement for certification. For this reason, the Internet is full of blogs formally created with the glut of popular articles, elements of plagiarism or unstructured content. Quality content could only be seen by those executives who are passionate about this type of work and update the materials systematically. However, interviews with more than 400 education executives show that blogs in Ukraine are currently an outdated tool and can be completely replaced by social networks.

6. The Experience of Using Social Media in School Management in United States of America

Principal Eric Sheninger, 2013 American "Best Director Award" winner, bestselling author of Digital Leadership: Changing Paradigms for Changing Times [9], allowed his teachers to submit their daily reports

using blog. Eric Sheninger's blog was viewed by 6,500 people worldwide and over 600 are constantly following the life of the principal and his school in September 2019. It is interesting that it was an incentive not only to report to the administration on their work for teachers, but also to share with others the experience they have gained by introducing gadgets into teaching, as well as the success stories achieved by the students in these lessons. The topics of blog posts began gradually to expand, teachers shared the system of grades in school, their rubrics, how they interact with children outside of school, how the use of gadgets improves academic performance, and so on. A new perspective on education and blog creation has transformed the lives of teachers and students. Firstly, the US government purchased the latest equipment at the school Eric Sheninger writes proudly about on his blog. Secondly, teachers from all over the world came to the school in New Jersey to learn about the experience. In addition, the virtual reality company provided a program that allowed New Milford school students and their teachers to attend virtual space meetings where children could ask questions, and virtual training courses were provided.

Director of Renner Elementary School Teresa Tulipana embraces the social media as a communication tool. Facebook and Twitter accounts keep families abreast of school events and happenings. She envisioned them as systems to provide calendar reminders. She thinks the Facebook is also a great tool for sharing our school's academic and behavioral focus areas in an efficient, fun and engaging manner. Recently a kindergarten teacher posted an Animoto highlighting pictures from Writer's Workshop, which communicated the importance of writing at our school. When the fourth grade completed Famous Missourian research projects, these were posted so parents were able to understand the value and importance of their research. Social media has also allowed to deploy important professional development content in Renner Elementary School. Recently they used Blackboard, an educational social media tool, to host a virtual faculty meeting. Through Blackboard, staff watched a short Rick Wormeli video on defining mastery, and then responded to reflection questions on a discussion board. This flexible format allowed staff members to learn at a time that was convenient to their own personal calendars and increased engagement by assuring that every voice was heard [12].

Director of Tomahawk Creek Middle School says that the teachers of her school utilize social media whenever they can. They currently have a Facebook page for school and PTA. She have found that this was a great way to get messages out to parents and students. There are several teachers who use Edmodo to post discussions and assignments for their students, and they have reported remarkable success using this tool. For example, one teacher had 25 kids on Edmodo the day he started using it. They are looking at implementing a Twitter account next year to help get information out to the community. Although this is not a replacement for standard means of communication (Web sites, letters home, etc.), it is a great additional way to share information with community. As far as discipline issues go, they attempt to address those who cause the issues. The technology is here to stay, so they try to implement it where they can and deal with the trouble issues when they arise. Thus far, they have had no problems using these means of communication [12].

We have analyzed a number of websites of US schools. We have determined grounding on our analysis that US schools use the following types of social media:

Blogs. A blog is a 21st century newsletter. Blogs provide a two-way interaction and allow the school administration to integrate multimedia content in order to make the school popular. There is no better way to share strategies, ideas and success stories. Teaching blogs are no less popular, with the help of which teachers can effectively manage the independent extracurricular work of students, as well as create tasks aimed at improving the skills of speech activity. Learning different types of letters (search, viewing, familiarization and studying) is facilitated by the unlimited ability to post links in any quantity to materials different from each other. Also, blogs are in no way inferior in the possibility of acquiring speaking and listening skills. This happens through the use of podcasts, through educational texts of radio programs, and videos that are freely available on the Internet. Integration of all the listed training methods into a blog allows you to listen to files repeatedly, and if necessary, stop and revise files. American Schools use *Google Blogger*, *Wordpress*, *Edutopia* (San Rafael, California), *FreeTech4Teachers* (Maine), *Rubicon* (Portland, Oregon), *Hands On As We Grow* (Iowa), *Class Tech Tips Blog* (New Jersey), *The Applicious Teacher* (Orlando, Florida), *Teaching Heart Blog* (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania) and other platforms. For example, Eric Sheninger in addition to his official blog as Principal of New Milford [1], has created a professional blog to tell the story of the digital transformation of the school and learn from others interested in digital leadership.

Digital photo sharing. Photos can quickly depict and share student work, improvements and achievements. American teachers take pictures of student projects and then post it on *Instagram*, *Pics4Learning* during classroom observations. They share photos with other accounts such as Twitter from their Instagram account.

Video platform. Creating a *YouTube*, *TeacherTube*, *SchoolTube* channels or *Vine* account for school allows you to record and share educational and social processes. Teachers and administration of American schools share live events such as school concerts in real time using such tools like *Ustream*, ClassVR etc.

Twitter. Twitter, the best-known free microblogging application, is particularly useful for fast exchanges of thoughts, ideas, and information. American scientists were among the first users of the social network Twitter. During the first years of existence, it was dominated by reports of scientific conferences, symposiums, research citations, etc. 140-

character tweets are a dynamic combination of text, images, videos, and website links. Having created a hashtag for the school you could share a conversation with related parties with the ability to search for any problematic topic identified through *Twitter*. At the beginning of each school year American school leaders send parents a letter describing, how to create a Twitter account and to set up options for receiving text messages. Ability to receive Twitter updates on its own terms makes it unlike any traditional communication tool [5].

Facebook. World famous resource Facebook has emerged as an academic social network. Initially the website was available only for students at Harvard University. Then registration was opened to other universities in Boston, and later for students of all educational institutions in the USA. All the above tools could be integrated or published on the Facebook page [9].

7. Conclusion

So, the educational opportunities of social media among Ukrainian specialists are very underestimated. The value of social media as an instrument of the educational process is undeservedly belittled. Many educators treat them with neglect and skepticism, considering social media exclusively as an entertaining resource.

Using of social media for educational purposes is perceived by American students, teachers, researchers as self-evident and inalienable function. The American didactic experience reveals that social media can be successfully used to arrange the work of the teaching staff and students, hold individual and collective consultations enhancing intellectual and creative potential of students.

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