Research

More findings & implications

Visual communication competencies of PR professionals (RQ3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Agree (scale 4-5)</th>
<th>Neutral (scale 3)</th>
<th>Disagree (scale 1-2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visual communication requires specific competencies by communication professionals</td>
<td>89.5%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even though the majority of the practitioners agree that visual communication requires specific competencies, only 12% of them are highly experienced, while 53.3% are below average.

Visual communication management (RQ4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Implemented in communication department/agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard corporate design guidelines</td>
<td>80.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outsourcing processes</td>
<td>72.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical infrastructures</td>
<td>51.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal management routines</td>
<td>45.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business processes</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced corporate design guidelines</td>
<td>36.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurement routines for visual communication</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of these</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Implications**

Communication departments and agencies are ill equipped in visual communication (management). The concept of strategic mediatization needs to take into account a network of (visual) agencies which work together for the agent’s goal (it’s communicative eco-system).

While most companies work in collaboration with their visual agency, non-profits are much more equipped and they have much higher visual competencies. This collaboration enables more innovation.

More research is needed in visual divide between gender and different age groups.

Watch 1 min clip of results here: bit.ly/2T7TkV6

Public relations beyond text

How communication professionals perceive the visual turn – from personal competencies to management routines

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Emergence of visual strategic communication

From a “pictoral turn” to a “visual society”

From strategic mediatization to strategic visual communication management (SVCM)

Mediatization as a concept tries to explain the interrelation between the increasing mediated communication, culture and society. The fact that the individual’s life is highly influenced and dominated by mediated communication is twofold. (Couldry & Hepp, 2017)

SVCM: Manage the visual communication of “strategic significance with regard to a focal entity” (Zerfass et al., 2018)

Visual rhetoric
Focus on mass media, everyday life, and popular culture (Barnhurst et al., 2004)

Visual communication
Focus on creation, presentation, and support of media works and visual messages | effects on audiences (Martin, 2011)

Visual studies
Semantic approaches on macro level | cultural studies (Barnhurst et al., 2004)

Visual Strategy
Emphasize on strategies of an entity (Goransson & Fagerholm, 2018)

From a “pictoral turn” to a “visual society”

Cisco VNI Global IP Traffic Forecast (2019): IP video traffic by 2022 (71% Internet Video / 11% IP VOD/Managed IP Video)

RQs, method, sample & findings

RQ1
How do communication practitioners perceive the proportion of visual stimuli in strategic communication?

RQ2
How do communication professionals rate the relevance of different visual stimuli for strategic communication and have their departments/agencies the in-house capacities to produce these elements?

RQ3
What are the visual communication competencies of communication professionals?

RQ4
To what extent do organization manage their visual elements?

Sample based on 50 European countries (ECM 2017 survey)

N = 3,387 respondents

> 10 years of experience

63.6%

40.4% 59.6%

22.4% 22.6% 15.8% 13.2%

Propositions of visual stimuli in strategic communication (RQ1)

Female agreement (4-5)
M = 4.41, SD = .664

95.4%

Male agreement (4-5)
M = 4.43, SD = .694

92.8%

Statement: Visual elements will be more important for strategic communication in the future. Scale 1 (Strongly disagree) – 5 (Strongly agree); t(3385) = 2.87, p = .004.

Relevance of visuals from the organization’s perspective (RQ2)

Females perceive the stakeholders’ demand for more visuals to a higher extent (t=2.93, p<.001). Practitioners working in non-profits report the highest approval regarding the usage of more visual elements (M=4.39, SD=7.35; F=11.00, p<.001).

Growing importance of visual elements compared to 3yr ago

Personal and technical capacities to produce visual elements are lagging behind except for instant photos & business graphics

Online videos
Infographics
Instant photos
Business graphics
 Signs & symbols

Online animations
Professional praco
Professional movie
Space design
Art