

СОЦІАЛЬНІ КОМУНІКАЦІЇ ТА ЖУРНАЛІСТИКА

УДК [070.1:2-675]"19"(477+100)

<https://doi.org/10.23939/sjs2022.02.055>

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INSTAGRAM STORIES AS A TOOL FOR PROMOTING AND SHARING CONTENT IN MASS MEDIA

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Social media are a popular channel for promoting and disseminating media content. They help attract audiences, retain them and increase traffic to the media site. The social media Instagram is one of the most popular in the world and media editorial offices often use it for attracting young audiences and popularisation media productions. But on Instagram, hyperlinks are not active in regular posts, which worsen traffic on the media site. Therefore, it is worth looking at a tool like Stories. This is an opportunity to tell the most important things with the help of a picture or a short video (up to 15 seconds) and attract the audience's attention to the news. You can also place an active hyperlink to the published material in a photo or text.

Today, stories are a popular function not only on Instagram but also on Snapchat, Facebook, Facebook Messenger, Youtube, LinkedIn, TikTok. Firstly, Stories appeared on Snapchat, but it gained popularity thanks to Instagram, where the tool appeared in 2016 and has been constantly evolving and improving ever since. Stories are easy to create and post, published stories are at the top of the feed and immediately attract the attention of social media audiences. After all, quickly and concisely communicate the most important information. Therefore, this tool should be used for media reactions to increase, interest and reach new audiences, as well as to increase traffic to the media site. But Instagram Stories has features about the placement of the content itself.

This research demonstrates the popularity of Instagram stories is among the well-known Ukrainian online media, as well as the strategies they use and distribute content through this tool. The content analysis was conducted from a sample of the 10 most popular online media that use Instagram Stories.

Key words: stories, instagram, sharing content, mass Media, online media.

Relevance of research. Currently, actively fighting reigns in the media market for the audience. Many readers/viewers/listeners of the media spend a lot of time on the most popular social networks. As a

result, social networks such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram have become promising media channels that allow you to quickly communicate information, find sources and ideas for materials, advertise content, and increase website traffic [2]. Ukrainian media are learning to use all the instrumentality offered by popular social networks to distribute content and attract audiences.

The social network Instagram has long gone beyond the entertainment platform where you can only share photos and short captions to them. Now it is a full-fledged resource for popularizing your own content and sharing it on other social platforms [12, p. 79]. Mass media now use social media, Instagram in particular, as one of the platforms in distributing their news [13, p. 61]. It has more tools. One of them is Instagram stories, which allows you to publish photos and videos for up to 15 seconds, which are available for viewing for the next 24 hours.

On August 2, 2016, Stories was launched on Instagram. The prototype of it was a similar tool on the social network Snapchat. Users liked the new tool on Instagram so much that the audience of the social network began to grow rapidly. Today, it is used daily by more than 150 million users worldwide [5]. But not all Mass Media working on this social network use this promising tool, and those who use it don't always use all its available benefits.

The purpose of the research is to prove that Stories on Instagram for the media is a promising tool for disseminating and promoting content. The goal is to perform the following tasks: analysis of Stories instrumentality on Instagram, which is promising for the media; research of mass media content in Instagram Stories; highlighting promising media tools available in Stories on Instagram.

Historiography of research topics. Social media are the subject of research in the works of many domestic and foreign scientists. Research on social media can be divided into several areas. The first direction includes research on the peculiarities of social media development and their use to promote their products (R. Abdeev, S. Afanasyev, A. Bobkov, V. Inozemtsev, L. Massimov, T. Fisenko, A. Toffler, A. Turin, J. Kim, S. Tong, L. Langwell, S. Myers, etc.). The second area includes research on the impact of social media on the audience (N. Semen, M. Kitsy, B. Kovalevich, V. Vus and others). The third area includes works that cite the peculiarities of the journalists' work in social media (O. Medinska, D. Bodnenko, O. Zhovnych, O. Fedorova, A. Mordyuk and others). The fourth area includes research that would analyze the features of a particular social media. Instagram is the most popular photo capturing and sharing application, it has attracted relatively less attention from the research community [14, p. 595]. The following scientists have researched Instagram: J. Miles, L. Manovich, J. Linashke, F. Handayani and others. But there is virtually no research on the use of Stories on Instagram by media. Only a scientific article by Jorge Vázquez-Herrero, Sabela Direito-Rebollal and Xosé López-García could be found [3, p. 1–13], which analyzes how 17 foreign media use Stories on Instagram. No scientific works related to the activities of the Ukrainian media in the distribution of content in Instagram Stories were found. What makes our research relevant and interesting for further research in this area.

Presenting the main material. Firstly, many users of the social media Instagram view all the Stories and then go to the news feed. Stories are like mini-reports with a limited time. The particularity of this in social networks is that the posted posts attract attention because they convey information brightly and originally. Also, not everyone creates and edits stories on Instagram, so this section is not as full of commercial posts as the feed. The advertising content placed in Instagram Stories is perceived more positively. This is evidenced by the results of research [1]. Likewise, social media users are increasingly looking for an opportunity to briefly and concisely obtain information [4, p. 760], so the media should look for opportunities to meet this need of the audience. One of these tools is Instagram Stories, as well as the opportunity to engage and collaborate with young audiences.

Instagram Stories is a function that lets you post photos and short videos for up to 15 seconds, add text tags and emojis. A key feature of Instagram Stories is that it disappears after 24 hours. Stories can be of two types: video or photo. But in the photo, you can add polls, tests, votes, and more. As well text,

various effects, masks are added, which makes them original and attracts attention. Instagram allows posting images in 9:16 format. In the vertical position of the screen, the image size is 1080×1920 pix. Videos can be downloaded in MOV, MP4 or GIF format. Its expansion should be at least 720 p. The file size should not exceed 2.3 GB [11].

Also in 2021, Instagram in Stories allowed placing hyperlinks for all commercial pages. Because formerly this feature was allowed only for commercial pages that had more than 10,000 subscribers. Hyperlinks have increased media interest in Instagram and Stories. After all, Instagram did not have active hyperlinks (except for the profile header), which made it less interesting for media editorial offices that aim to increase traffic to the site of Mass Media from social networks.

Besides, by posting Stories on Instagram, you can immediately share them on your Facebook account (provided it is connected to your FB account). You can publish 100 stories per day – the maximum number of posts that Instagram can save, but you can download Stories further, just previous entries, starting with the first published, will be deleted prematurely [10]. But for the media is not needed so many Stories, because not all of them will be viewed by the audience. 10–15 stories published by the media on Instagram are not seen by everyone and can even scare the audience. In the results of research published jointly by Buffer in Delmondo, during which 15,000 stories of 200 leading brands in the world were analyzed [9]. The results are convincing that it is already uninteresting for the viewer to watch 7 stories.

Subdivide Stories on Instagram for:

§ **Ordinary.** Standard mode, with which you can post both photos and videos. You can make a photo or video in the application yourself, or download ready-made and then add effects.

§ **Live broadcast.** The option is located slightly to the right of normal mode. This tool allows you to run a live broadcast and communicate important information to the audience during or immediately after the press conference/rally/round table and communicate with your subscribers in real-time, answer their questions. And this instrumentality can be used for direct communication with the audience about the activities of the media.

§ **Text.** With this mode, you can place textual content. Can be picked the background colour on which the text will be published.

§ **Boomerang.** Via this option, you can publish looped videos. When the video reaches the end, it will be launched again immediately.

§ **Superzoom.** The option allows you to record three-second videos with enhanced dramatic effects. After starting the record, the camera's focus gradually zooms on the subject. It is also possible to add special sound effects.

§ **Reverse recording.** The option has a lot of similarities to Boomerang, with the only difference being that the video is shown in reverse order.

§ **Hands-free mode.** By selecting this mode, you can record a standard 15-second video in Stories, in which case you will not need to keep your finger on the circle. It will be enough to click once to start recording.

§ **Library.** Allows transferring images and videos from the memory of your device [8].

Stories on Instagram have several benefits for the media. First of all, you can quickly tell important news to the audience, stories have a minimum of text, so this is a tool just for those who do not like to read long posts. Also, the information in this section is arranged in chronological order.

Stories on Instagram are also an amusing tool to interview audiences and find out their opinions. As well, Stories allows you to create game content and various raffles, which helps to attract and entertain the audience.

Research results. Ukrainian Mass Media have been distributing their content through social networks for over 15 years. Many of them have Instagram pages. They publish posts that appear in subscribers' news feeds.

Ukrainian Mass Media have been distributing their content through social networks for over 15 years. Many of them have Instagram pages. They publish posts that appear in subscribers' news feeds. Also, Stories and videos are often published on IGTV. The object of our research is the content published by Ukrainian popular Internet media in Instagram Stories. For the analysis, we chose Mass Media from the ranking of the most sought-after Ukrainian online media, which was published by the Internet Association of Ukraine together with Similarweb for the second quarter (April–June 2021) [7]. This list includes: censor.net, today.ua, obozrevatel.com, pravda.com.ua, rbc.ua, 24tv.ua, tsn.ua, nv.ua, strana.ua, liga.net. But not all of these media outlets have Instagram pages. The following media was not found on this social network: censor.net and today.ua. And strana.ua and rbc.ua do not update their pages from 2020, so they are not suitable for research. Therefore, for analysis, 6 more well-known Mass Media (obozrevatel.com, pravda.com.ua, 24tv.ua, tsn.ua, nv.ua, liga.net) were added 4 most popular Internet media, namely: bbc.ua, hromadske.ua, gazeta.ua and radio.svoboda. During the week (January 11–17, 2022), all Stories that were posted selected for research media on Instagram were analyzed at the same time each day.

Consequently, those selected to study the media publish Stories, but not all of them do it every day. The main purpose of such stories is to increase traffic to the media site.

Frequency of publication. Stories were posted every day: obozrevatel.com, tsn.ua, nv.ua and bbc.ua. During the research, it was noticed that some media (pravda.com.ua, liga.net, hromadske.ua) do not publish any Stories on Saturday and Sunday.

The number of stories. Most Stories per day are published by obozrevatel.com, liga.net and tsn.ua. The least posted by hromadske.ua and 24tv.ua. Most stories are published by obozrevatel.com: on weekdays 14–16, on weekends a little less – 7–11. At the second place – tsn.ua (10–6 stories). The fewer stories in a week were published by: hromadske.ua and pravda.com.ua. “Ukrayinska Pravda” publishes only one of the most important news in Stories and their invites to the site to read more. The exception was January 12, 2022, when the editorial office advertised its own branded products and books that readers could purchase. And “Public” generally does not distribute stories, except for very considerable materials. Also, all media studies publish fewer stories on weekends. Similar results of the study were published by the following scientists Jorge Vázquez-Herrero, Sabela Direito-Rebollal and Xosé López-García [3, p. 1–13].

In the own study. Its results suggest that often the media publish only one story a day. And also more stories are published on weekdays from Mon.–Fri., on weekends less often (Table 1).

Table 1

Number of Stories published by Ukrainian media on Instagram (January 11–17, 2022)

Name of online media	Tue 11.01	Wed 12.01	Thu 13.01	Fri 14.01	Sat 15.01	Sun 16.01	Mon 17.01
obozrevatel.com	16	14	15	15	11	7	16
pravda.com.ua	1	10	1	1	0	0	1
24tv.ua	4	0	2	1	0	2	8
tsn.ua	8	10	8	7	6	7	7
nv.ua	2	5	1	3	3	3	7
liga.net	2	8	7	7	0	0	7
bbc.ua	4	4	5	2	1	2	7
hromadske.ua	0	7	0	0	0	0	3
gazeta.ua	5	5	4	7	1	0	7
radio.svoboda	0	3	8	0	3	0	5

Published content. The analyzed Mass Media mainly post photo and add hyperlinks to the publication, which can be read on the media website. It is rare to see short videos. And even less often place audience polls or game content. On January 13, the page of “Radio Svoboda” posted a story in which

a journalist Zbigniew Rau immediately announced after a press conference of the new head of the OSCE mission that one of his first visits would be to Ukraine and the Joint Forces Operation zone. Also, “Radio Svoboda” is the only media surveyed to live on Instagram Stories. On January 17, there was a stream from the airport in Zhulyany when Petro Poroshenko returned to Ukraine. They also supplemented their stories with the following questions: Are you watching the broadcast?

All researched media (except hromadske.ua) on the day of Petro Poroshenko’s return to Ukraine posted photos or videos of this event on Instagram Stories. And “Channel 24” asked its audience: Will Petro Poroshenko be detained at the airport? And the stories of hromadske.ua stood out against their background. They presented 3 stories on the issue of sexual harassment in the army on the example of the case of Chernihiv lieutenant colonel Derkach [6].

Themes of stories. On the themes of the content, it is different in the stories of the analyzed media. There is important and serious or entertaining and easy content. The media try to give other stories on the themes. But noticed that Obozrevatel posted recipes for various dishes on Saturday. After all, on the weekend subscribers may want to pamper their loved ones with something delicious. Recipes were published only by this media.

Using Media Stories tools on Instagram. Most often, the media applies the addition of hyperlinks. They also use the opportunity to interview their readers on a particular topic. For instance, “Radio Svoboda” in the form of a game decided to test the knowledge of followers in the news and asked them what is true and what is false.

The Mass Media conducted polls too. On January 17, Gazeta.ua was interested in the opinion of its subscribers as to what precautionary measure Petro Poroshenko would receive. The opportunity to write the answer in the story was added in the story.

Story design. “Gazeta.ua”, “Ukrayinska Pravda” and “Obozrevatel” design their stories in brand colours and their stories stand out and immediately identify the media, which posted them. Liga.net and TSN.ua have a universal exceptional template for stories that distinguish content and attract attention. Other analyzed media use different templates that are constantly changing.

During the research, it turned out that all Mass media outlets that spread their Stories posts on Instagram could also duplicate them in Facebook stories. But not every day and not in all of them. Only the following media constantly duplicate stories on Facebook: obozrevatel.com, 24tv.ua, liga.net and gazeta.ua.

Strategies. Analyzing the content of the media in Instagram Stories, we can identify 4 strategies, which the Mass media can use with this tool.

Informing. With Instagram Stories, you can quickly inform readers about something important, announce the release of new material or program.

Increase traffic to a website or blog on a social network. Placing hyperlinks in the story thus increases the number of visits to the site. After all, with the help of photos or videos, quickly increase interest the audience.

Interaction and cooperation audience. Instagram Stories has unique tools that help attract audiences, entertain them, ask opinions, conduct surveys.

Advertising and sales of its products. “Ukrayinska Pravda” publishes its branded products, which it offers to purchase. On January 12, the editorial office posted 10 stories with images of goods and the price for each. They offered to buy socks, a notebook, a T-shirt, a mask, an eco-bag, a bracelet, books and more. Even “Hromadske” created and published a series of stories on the topic of “Friendship” to ask for financial support from the media and become a friend of the Mass media.

Conclusions. To sum up, Instagram Stories is a promising tool for promoting media content and increasing traffic to the Mass Media site. With this feature you can quickly communicate information to the audience, draw attention to the news, increase traffic to the site and entertain readers. You can also interview subscribers on various topics and find out their opinion.

The media use Instagram Stories to sell and promote their branded products and call for financial support for the media too. Research shows that not all Mass Media use all the available tools provided by Instagram Stories. Not every researched media uses this tool every day. Furthermore, not all features of Instagram Stories are used. The vast majority post only a photo with a hyperlink to information published on a media site on the Internet. Polls are rarely posted, and even less often various games that could entertain, enliven content and teach audiences how to recognize misinformation and fakes. What is more, Instagram Stories is an opportunity to add cuteness, effects, humour, gain valuable information through interaction with the audience, as well as move away from the visuality of the profile [9]. Unfortunately, this was not seen in the analyzed media.

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INSTAGRAM STORIES ЯК ІНСТРУМЕНТ ПОПУЛЯРИЗАЦІЇ ТА ПОШИРЕННЯ КОНТЕНТУ ЗМІ

Соціальні мережі є популярним каналом для популяризації та поширення контенту ЗМІ. Вони допомагають залучити аудиторію, втримати її та збільшують переходи на сайт мас-медіа. Соціальна мережа Instagram є однією з найпопулярніших у світі і редакції ЗМІ її часто використовують для

залучення молоді аудиторії та популяризації своєї медіапродукції. Але в Instagram у звичайних дописах гіперпосилання не активні, що ускладнює збільшення трафіку на сайт ЗМІ. Тому потрібно приглядатися до такого інструменту як Stories. Це можливість за допомогою картинки чи короткого відео (до 15 секунд) розказати найважливіше і привернути увагу аудиторії до новини. А також можна розмістити активне гіперпосилання на опублікований матеріал на фотографію чи текст.

Stories нині є популярною функцією не лише в Instagram, а й в інших соціальних мережах. Нині її можна побачити окрім Instagram, ще у Snapchat, Facebook, Facebook Messenger, Youtube, Linkedin, TikTok. Stories вперше з'явилася у соцмережі Snapchat, але популярність свою отримала завдяки Instagram, у якій це інструмент з'явився у 2016 р. і відтоді постійно розвивається та вдосконалюється. Instagram Stories легко створити і розмістити, опубліковані історії знаходяться в самому верху стрічки і відразу ж привертають увагу аудиторії соціальної мережі. Адже швидко і лаконічно повідомляють найважливішу інформацію. Тому цей інструмент потрібно використовувати реакціям ЗМІ для збільшення, зацікавлення і охоплення нової аудиторії, а також для збільшення трафіку на сайт мас-медіа. Але Instagram Stories має особливості щодо розміщення самого контенту.

Це дослідження демонструє, наскільки є популярним Instagram Stories серед відомих українських Інтернет-ЗМІ, також наводимо стратегії, які вони застосовують та контент поширюють за допомогою цього інструменту. Контент-аналіз був проведений із вибірки з 10 найпопулярніших онлайн-медіа, які використовують Instagram Stories.

Ключові слова: stories, instagram, поширення контенту, мас-медіа, Інтернет-ЗМІ