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DOI 10.5937/kultura1339091V
UDK 316.774:654.19(439)"199/..."
654.197:352(439)"199"

pregledni rad

COMMUNITY RADIO STATIONS: UNEXPLOITED PR OPPORTUNITIES ON LOCAL LEVEL

Abstract: *In modern Hungary – since it joined the European Union – concepts like communication, modernity, identity and social dialogue have been re-valued. The change in publicity structure was an important transformation process in the system changeover. During democratic transition, the role of mass media also changed. Old tools got a new role, thus enabling the appearance of new actors as well. For many years, the local media (serving democracy better on local levels than their national counterparts) seem to have been re-valued as a local, self-defining forum trying to build local communities and support their participation. Following the system changeover, opportunity was provided in Hungary to establish local commercial and also local community radio stations. The range of the local media became increasingly colourful. Existing county newspapers, local papers, advertising brochures and the newly established local television stations easily attracted the firms and organisations operating in their area, offering advertising and PR opportunities. On the other side, it can be observed that the PR staffs of these companies and civil organisations scarcely exploit the opportunities provided by the local community radio stations. When they do consider the radio, they usually (nearly always) consider commercial radio. Within the frames of accessibility and pluralism, a determinant characteristic of the community radio is the manner in which people participate in the operation of the station. Volunteers consider this “work” a mission, are strongly devoted to the area and possess a serious opinion-forming force on the local level.*

Researches have proven that the popularity of these stations is higher among audience with higher education. I believe that the community radios – owing to their specific features – could be an appropriate and attractive area for the PR, offering success opportunity primarily on local levels. This study and presentation places special emphasis on the features of the community radios that could promote efficiency of the PR, thus encouraging organisations to become part of the local communities.

Key words: *community radio, PR, Hungary, European Union*

In modern Hungary – since it joined the European Union – concepts like communication, modernity, identity and social dialogue have been re-valued. The change in publicity structure was an important transformation process in the system changeover. During democratic transition, the role of mass media also changed. Old tools got a new role, thus enabling the appearance of new actors as well. For many years, the local media (serving democracy better on local levels than their national counterparts) seem to have been re-valued as a local, self-defining forum trying to build local communities and support their participation. In this social environment, the new communication means are radically changing, quickening up the traditional processes of the information flow, at the same time modifying the opportunities for information organisation of the PR profession as well. Economical and social organisations have to reconsider their present communication strategy, and they have to renew their communication tools adhering to the challenges of the present. In a flood of information, we actually live in the authentic information and its accessibility becomes an increasingly determinant factor. This study endeavours to call the attention to the unexploited PR opportunities lying in the community radio broadcasting.

I

Reputation management offers organisational framework for this issue. It is well known that in the present time of explosive information growth, the reputation of a company, a product, a brand or persons directing an organisation is highly important. This reputation has to be consciously developed.¹ Organisations may influence their success not only by their activities or the means of marketing but – in an ever increasing extent – by the relations established with their environment. An organisation that is supported by its environment in achievement of its goals

1 Szeles, P. (1998) *A hírnév ereje. Image – Arculat*, translated title *The Power of Reputation. Image*, Budapest: STAR PR

is able to become successful with less expenditure, less energy and less time.²

The relationship between an organisation and its environment can be both positive and negative, though it may be consciously developed in both cases. We can say that this relationship is positive when the performance of the organisation is acknowledged and appreciated by its environment qualifying it positively. Then, the reputation of the organisation is positive, its image is good, the environment supports the organisation in achievement of its objectives, exhibits readiness for co-operation, understands and tolerates the problems or possible defects and, as a summary, has confidence in the organisation to rectify them. This relationship is negative when experience is to the contrary. Then the organisation has bad reputation or none at all, the environment shows distrust or is indifferent towards the organisation. Both relationships can dynamically change over time. Developing the relationship established with your environment is carried out through the contacts of your organisation, having the following means for this purpose: the activity itself, the conduct of the organisation and the communication. The activity of the organisation is valued by its environment first of all based on what the organisation makes and how it makes it, i.e. based on the activity of the organisation or more precisely, based on the information available on this activity. One of the pillars of PR activity is to deliver this information consciously to the target group. Contacts of the organisation with its environment are also of crucial importance. An organisation is able to act successfully on a long term if its environment sympathises with the organisation's problems, development, processes and endeavours, if it supports corporate objectives (not obstructing them), and, if an atmosphere of trust is established between the organisation and its different target groups and contacts. A harmonious and problem-free cooperation has to be established between the organisation and its environment, in which both of them will win and neither of them could lose in the relationship. In any given situation, this communication, that is the information on a given question or problem, has to be able to provide assistance for the solution of any given situation – beyond the organisation's approach, acts and activity.

“The PR is about reputation – it is the result of what you say and what others say about you.”³ The working process of the PR is a

2 Simon, H. A. (1982) *Korlátozott racionalitás*, translated title: *Limited Rationality* Budapest: KJK

3 Gregory, A. (2000) *Planning and Managing Public Relations Campaigns*, *Kogan Page*, London: Institute of Public Relations, p. 3.

planned and long-term endeavour in order to build and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between an organisation and its environment, to influence their opinions and their conduct.

Thus, the central objective of the PR is the organisation's reputation. In order to contribute to this objective, it is necessary to achieve certain semi-objectives, such as: understanding, trust, support, readiness for co-operation and consensus. When comparing the PR with a pie, then the largest slice of this is the media relations.

Slices of the "PR pie"⁴:

- media relations (printed and electronic press, TV,
radio, web tools),
- audiovisual instruments (movie, videos, etc.),
- conferences, symposia,
- events, exhibitions,
- support, sponsorship,
- personal communication,
- publications, and
- other various tools.

Since everyone has these at disposal in their work, nobody has secret weapons or technology ensuring a monopolistic position. According to an expert: "Everybody has the same elements, factors, means and methods for combinations. You cannot achieve exclusivity, patent ensuring competitive advantage or more productive procedures. Advantage can only be achieved by dexterity, inventiveness or by better, more ingenious ideas."⁵

II

My PhD field of research was to explore the Hungarian community radio stations in a wider social context. In connection with this, I have collected those ideas that could be thought-provoking for experts working in both "profit" and "non-profit" organizations, or in the PR domain.

Following the system changeover, the range of media in Hungary became more and more colourful. Apart from traditional national media and county newspapers, the local papers,

4 Barát, T. (1997) *Tolmács a hídon*, translated title: *Interpreter On A Bridge*, Gödöllő, pp. 67-68.

5 Information from Dr. István Matkó, president of the M&H Communications, Hungary. More about the firm: <http://www.mandh.hu/mandhus/>

advertising brochures and the newly established local television stations easily attracted the firms and organisations operating in their area, offering them advertising and PR opportunities. To focus on my field of research – opportunities arose in Hungary to establish local commercial and also local community radio stations apart from the public service radio broadcasting. On the other side, it can be observed that the PR staffs of companies and civil organisations scarcely exploit the opportunities provided by the local community radio stations. When they do consider the “radio” as a PR-tool, then they usually (nearly always) mean commercial radio. I believe that – at least partly – this could be the reason why they are unaware of the opportunities lying in the community radios: they ignore the radio properties that could easily be used for their own purposes. I believe that the community radios – owing to their specific features – could be an appropriate and attractive area for the PR, offering opportunity for success primarily on local levels. Let’s have a look why!

Community radio broadcasting exists in many forms all over the world. The first community radio stations started broadcasting more than sixty years ago in Latin America. In Europe, the situation is different in each country. Legal community radio broadcasting is well established in the Western European countries, and in some countries there are little differences between the licenses issued for the community radio stations and the local commercial radios. In Eastern Europe, the situation is different since new licenses are mostly issued for commercial stations operated by the Western European media companies or wealthy businessmen. Still, a strong interest is shown for the community broadcasting and numerous stations were established all over Europe. e.g. AMARC Europe has 230 members in 25 countries, and CMFE has 109 members in 25 countries.⁶

In Hungary, this kind of independent voice was heard for the first time in 1991. The “Tilos Rádió” (“Forbidden Radio”) started to broadcast on August 21, 1991, not hiding the fact that it started as a pirate radio, and became as they say “owing to a legal gap – the first samizdat of the system changeover”.⁷ The

6 According to members’ list of AMARC Europe (Association Mondiale des Radiffuseurs Communautaires – World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters-Europe) accessed 22. June 2013. http://www.amarceurope.eu/members/?sortstring=country&orderstring=asc&listpage=1&search_field=none&value=&operator=LIKE&sortBy=country&ascdesc=asc&submit=&sortstring=country&orderstring=asc#participants-list and according to database and webpage of Community Media Forum Europe, accessed 22. June 2013. <http://www.cmfe.eu/organisations/members>. The author is Member of Board and responsible for membership in CMFE.

7 History of Tilos Rádió, accessed 19. April 2009. <http://tilos.hu/history.html> and accessed 22. June 2013. http://tilos.hu/info_tilos_radio

first radio to broadcast with a permit was the “Fiksz Rádió”, launched on March 8, 1992.⁸ Here it has to be mentioned that since 2002, an opportunity – unique even in European terms – has been provided to Hungary: with a limited transmission range, establishment and operation of a large number of small community radio stations is permitted with relatively simple legal and technical requirements. This creates a possibility for the real social participation and a wide-scale accessibility to the media in small villages, city quarters, dormitories, schools, social institutions.⁹ Beyond the 3 minutes-per-hour advertising time¹⁰, the Broadcasting Fund provides further resources for their operation, enabling the possibility of financial support¹¹, at the same time exempting them from the obligation of paying a broadcasting fee.¹² This advantageous situation enabled the proliferation of the community radios in Hungary reshaping the media structure as new communication actors.

The Hungarian Organisation of Free Radios (a professional association for the domestic community broadcasting) had nearly 30 members and supporters in 2005 and provided a definition for the community radio stations in their Statutes, according to the Act I of 1996, as follows:

“Free radios are differentiated from the public service and commercial radios by:

independent operation from political and public organisations as well as from economical organisations interested in profit,

servicing the interests of well-defined communities (local, ethnical, religious, cultural or lifestyle communities),

endeavouring to get them to participate in the programme preparation,

decision-making that is carried out in a democratic manner,

the programmes which have maximum three minutes of advertisement per hour,

8 History of Fiksz Rádió, accessed 19. April 2009. <http://www.fikszradio.hu/pages/diohejban.htm>

9 The radio of the “Berzsenyi Dániel” College started its broadcasting owing to this, in March 2005. It is very important to emphasise that this Hungarian-type community radio broadcasting similar did not survive in the former socialist countries – the much-blamed Hungarian Act on Media provided a basis for that, enabling the non-profit radio broadcasting in an unique manner in Eastern Europe. /Act I of 1996, 2§ (34) and 42.§ (1)./

10 Act I of 1996, 16.§ (5)

11 Act I of 1996, 77.§ (1), as well as 78.§ (1) and (4-5)

12 Act I of 1996, 90 § (6)

incomes which are not distributed but are reinvested for maintenance and operation (non-profit character),

being operated mostly by volunteers,

a limitation of their business and advertising activity connected to broadcasting which can provide maximum 50% of the income.”¹³

By the end of 2010 there were already 68 small community radio stations across Hungary, working in fifty-three areas. A number of small community radio stations can be found in small villages or disadvantaged areas outside big cities where several mainstream local radio stations operate as well.¹⁴ Surprisingly, more small community stations have been launched in the eastern part of the country where people are struggling with economic and social problems than in the western, so-called ‘rich’ part of Hungary.¹⁵ After the general elections in the spring of 2010, life in Hungary changed in a number of ways. Legislation and enforcement have speeded up¹⁶ and non-governmental voices have had limited effectiveness during these processes. A new era began for community broadcasting in Hungary as the 2010 Law CLXXXV relating to Media Services and Mass Media was passed on 22 December and came into force on 1 January 2011.¹⁷ On the one hand, the sector was satisfied with the fact that the community media service as such was codified and recognized in the new Media Law, on the other hand, they realized that the definition, the criteria and the basic principles of community media were formulated inappropriately and too loosely in the regulations.¹⁸ Paragraph 66 of Chapter IV in the new Media Law gives a brief overview of the community media service category

13 Webpage of The Hungarian Organisation of Free Radios, accessed 19. April 2009. <http://www.kkapcsolat.hu/szabadradio/>

14 Origin of data: Register of National Radio and Television Commission, accessed 13 June 2008. http://www.ortt.hu/nyilvantartasok/1212656196kiskozossegi_20080604.xls.

15 Gosztonyi, G. (2011) *A közösségi médiaszolgáltatók a hatályos magyar jogi szabályozásban*, translated title: *Community media service providers in the Hungarian legal regulation*, Médiakutató, pp. 37-48.

16 150 new or amended acts came out during the first year.

17 Brouillette, A. and Beek, J. (eds.) (2012) *Hungarian Media Laws in Europe. An Assessment of Consistency of Hungary's Media Laws with European Practices and Norms*, Budapest: Central European University, Center for Media and Communication Studies

18 Velics, G. The changing situation of Hungarian community radio, in: *Community Radio in the Twenty-First Century*, eds. Gordon, J. (2012), Bern: Peter Lang AG, International Academic Publishers, p. 265-281.

and some criteria, but it lacks several important elements, which are distinctive features of the community radio activity¹⁹:

Community Media Service Provision

Linear community media services are intended to serve or satisfy the special needs for information of and to provide access to cultural programmes for:

- a) certain social, national, or ethnic minority, cultural or religious communities or groups, or
- b) residents of a given settlement, region or coverage area, or
- c) in the majority of their transmission time programmes aimed at achieving the objectives of public service media service provision set in Article 83.

III

Many different community radio stations are operating worldwide, however, they all correspond to each other in differing both from public service and commercial stations as well. Radio stations operated by the state or government as well as the commercial radio stations operated by investment groups have the main objective - to reach as wide public as possible and to increase their revenue from advertising activities as they try to operate the station with as little staff as possible, employing “experts” broadcasting to “audience” with which, however, they do not consider to be in the same social group. Community radios, to the contrary, are transmitting the feeling to the audience that “This is our radio. We are talking about our concerns, about our interests. You are a part of this radio.”

I have been teaching PR-press relations for many years, and I have been always asked by our students if it’s possible to use a community radio for PR purposes or not. As I have also a long-standing commitment to community radio, I have tried to arrange a “happy marriage” of these two. Let me introduce a list of characteristics - which can be read in nearly all theoretical books concerning community radio - that could inspire the experts dealing with organisational communication. I’ve put some ideas or implemented models to this in order to start a creative discovery.

Community radio stations endeavour:

- to stimulate the audience to participate in all tasks of the radio – including broadcasting and radio management.

¹⁹ Act CLXXXV of 2010 on Media Services and Mass Media. Chapter IV, Article 66.

It means: all may come to the station to prepare programmes and they are taught how to do so.

A problem (example): In my hometown, the only thing that most of the people know about a wood processing factory is that they are producing panels from which furniture can be assembled and that this process is fairly polluting to the environment. About another company most of the local people only know that it is producing “something” for cell phones. These companies – and they are not exceptions – are creating workplaces, but are not part of the local community since we don’t even know them.

A possible solution: Large enterprises and companies present in the community could start a joint programme dealing with the company’s history, development trends, explanations on the technology and current issues of the given sector.

- to serve a local community or a special group based on common interests.

It means: The audience can be given running time of the programme or can discuss programmes prepared by their group – if the quality is appropriate, then the programme can go on-air with professional and technical assistance. Topics raised there will consider their viewpoint as well.

An example: In my hometown, in 1993, a serious bus strike broke out. The negotiations between the bus company leaders and the trade union were unsuccessful, and at one point the entire process was stopped because the drivers did not have any more confidence in their own trade union, negotiating behind closed doors. The Szombathely Community Radio – watch the course of events – brought up the idea that all the negotiators should come to the studio and to carry on the negotiation in live broadcast. This unusual proposal surprised both the participants of the negotiation and the audience; nevertheless, the negotiators could come to an agreement in the live broadcast and the case has been closed to the satisfaction of all parties involved. So, a community radio broadcast was involved in the crisis management process.

- to stimulate diverse audiences to participate in broadcasting without prejudice to age, race, sex etc.

Organisations from the NGO sector often don’t find proper channels for cheap and efficient communication. The community radio could be the forum for these organisations where they could realise their communication strategy in programmes of their own. Programmes prepared by different minorities, religious groups, social service organisations provide an example for that,

dealing with particular issues and situations neglected by public and commercial media.

- to prefer the quality and diversity of information over the “soft” anchorman style.

Even within the local communities and their interest spheres, there is a great variety in preferences and opinions. Instead of limiting themselves to the homogenous image mimicking the large radio stations, the community radios encourage and recognize this kind of diversity. Listeners may contact the radio and the issues affecting them will be dealt with in the programme. More and more programmes are prepared in an interactive form. The community radio communicates with an active, attentive and responsive audience. Identity of such a station can be best characterised by the words of tolerance, variety and pluralism.

- to strengthen the local culture – in terms of music, language, literature, debates.

Cultural organisations could strengthen their own reputation by a programme element in which the guest lecturers, artists etc are asked for a conversation in the studio of the community radio; local artists are periodically presented in the programme.

- to acquire the material for majority of programmes from local sources, rather than from national or international sources.

The radio staff and the company’s PR staff could support the information flow as partners. On the one hand, the radio needs local information and the PR staff need a communication partner and a mediator. On the other hand, the corporate and organisational experts, as news commentators, could explain to the laic public the background, reasons behind and significance of events. Sharing their professional knowledge could easily increase personal reputation of such experts coming from and also representing the local company.

- to appoint as leaders such persons who are in close relationship with the community and the radio.

A professional relationship with the radio management could facilitate communication in crisis situations. Organisations often omit the community radios from their press lists, so they are not invited to the press conferences and are not supplied with newsletters. This must be altered since it is much better to invite and inform all of the operating media in a given settlement, without excluding any. Managing partner-like, supportive and “friendly” press-relations is essential for all responsible companies in order to behave efficiently in situations that may arise.

- to generate income from several resources without the need to produce great profit for the owners.

As NGOs, they are glad to receive donations whether in money or products or voluntary work. Beyond the usual money donations that can be spent on technical development, maintenance and training, there are contests and prizes financed by sponsors. Sponsorship is also an efficient PR-tool for many years in practice worldwide. Sponsoring a radio programme is not so common, but could be considered as a possibility to attract local listeners of a popular program or a program which is important for the company, as part of their own corporate social responsibility program.

- to achieve that the paid and volunteer workers carry out their activities equally and side by side.

Within the framework of accessibility and pluralism, a determinant characteristic of the community radio is the manner in which the people participate in the operation of a station. Volunteers consider this “work” a mission, are strongly fond of their area and possess a serious opinion-forming force on a local level. Working and communicating with this group means that, in contacts with the opinion-shaping and opinion-mediating core of the community, they are able – owing to their personal relations – to exert an effect to a scattered audience in an authentic manner.

Finally, we cannot avoid considering the efficiency of the community radio as a PR tool, given the size of the reachable audience. It is believed that the radio is the most practical and relatively cheap method used for the purposes of local communication. Their costs for accessing a person are presumably lower than in the case of newspapers.²⁰ However, owing to the limits set by technical parameters, most of the presently operating radios in Hungary can reach the population of a central settlement and its neighbouring area, at best – and this is the potential audience.²¹ Recognising this situation, these radios increasingly turn to online broadcasting, expanding their audiences to the Internet community. In terms of media

20 Establishment costs could be high, but operation expenditures could be more reasonable. However, this depends on whether the prospective radio has a room appropriate for studio purposes as well as technical installations since the offers for purchase or building might amount up to quite high. In several countries the National Media Authority provides financial support for operating community radio.

21 In the case of this small community radios the stereo reception is limited to a circle of maximum 1 km radius around the radio station (the mono reception is larger, the radius being about 3 km); the maximal effective power of the station may be a few watts, not exceeding 10 watts.

economy, the Hungarian radio market is very concentrated. Changes in the radio market are significantly influenced – beyond the national commercial channels – including the regional and local commercial radios that successfully compete in a number of regions. Despite of their regional character they often achieve a measurable coverage even in the national representative sample.²² It is measurable²³ that the radio listening habits show fidelity to the channel rather than choosing from different channels; the regional and local channels attract the population (40-60% of local people listen to them regularly) in a homogenous distribution among age groups; it is also evident that the public service and local radios are more popular in the audience groups with higher qualifications.²⁴

IV

Beyond all these, I recommend another theoretical approach by drawing a line between the information transmitting media and the media based on cooperation. This gives a good approach for argumentation in favour of the community radios as PR tools. This distinction was first mentioned by Hans Magnus Enzensberger in 1970, in his influential essay *Constituents of a Theory of the Media* (original title: *Baukasten zu einer Theorie der Medien*²⁵) which was introduced only many years later in Hungarian language by Szekfű in 2008. However, this scheme was used successfully in the meantime from international sources by the first Hungarian radio-activists. These activists established community radio stations in the early 1990s in Hungary and this basic theory has been used for teaching generations of community radio broadcasters, with the trust and help of Hungarian Organisation of Free Radios, for many

22 Origin of data: Ipsos-GFK. accessed 22. June 2013. http://www.radiosite.hu/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=46&Itemid=143 Although the market weight of the local and regional radios in an international comparison is surprisingly low.

23 Vásárhelyi, M. Médiahasználat, tájékozási szokások, médiumok presztízse, translated title: Media usage, orientation customs, prestige of the media, in: *Magyarországi médiumok a közvélemény tükrében*, translated title: *Hungarian media in the mirror of public opinion*, eds. Terestyéni, T. (2002) Budapest: ORTT, p. 24-27.

24 Audience rating data available on website of the National Media and Infocommunications Authority, Hungary. accessed 22. June 2013. <http://adattar.nmhh.hu/radionavigator/201212>

25 Enzensberger, H. M. (1970) *Constituents of a Theory of the Media*, *New Left Review* 64 reprinted in: *The Consciousness Industry*, eds. Enzensberger, H. M. (1974) New York: Seabury Press, reprinted in: *The New Media Reader*, eds. Wardrip-Fruin, N. and Montfort, N. (2003) Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press

years.²⁶ I assume that all of the community broadcasters in Hungary have taught the idea of free-radio by this scheme.

Information transmitting media (repressive use of media)	Co-operative media (emancipatory use of media)
Suppressing function	Relieving function
Centralised and controlled programme	Decentralised programme
One sender, many receivers	Any receiver is a potential sender
Holding the attention of isolated individuals	Mobilizing masses
Passive consumer approach	Interaction of the participants, feed-back
Process for apolitical programmes	Process for learning politics
Productions prepared by experts	Collective productions
Control by officials	Social control assisted by autonomous organisation

Let's analyse the terms used in the table in the terms of the community radio. The meaning of terms in the table is as follows:

a) The word “suppressing” means that the media are used for preventing communication of non-official opinions. We can imagine the background as a powerful entity – this can be either the state or the market. Their objective is transmitting and drilling unmistakable messages. It is implemented in a strong hierarchical organisational pattern; the antidemocratic historical conditions provide an advantageous space for them. In contrast, relieving function is manifested by facilitating the minorities in expressing their opinion, encouraging the participation of the audience. Thus, the access is supported both for the sender and the public since the sender can reach a selected public while the public can access certain messages or channels. Access in practice mostly means the openness of the media channels for a wide scale of participants especially in case of those having little power or limited resources.

b) A centralised and controlled programme assumes transmitting normative messages while a decentralised programme endeavours to widen the opportunities for expression of opinions. Since all communication announcements have a value of action, all announcements strengthen and, partly, slightly change the norms/environment. Centralised endeavours primarily

²⁶ Delaspre, P. Kommunikáció – fogyasztás vagy emancipáció, translated title: Communication – Consumption or Emancipation, in: *Szabadon*, translated title: *Free broadcasting. Learning material of Hungarian Organisation of Free Radios*, eds. Péterfi, F. (1999) Budapest, p. 18.

serve strengthening of the norms while the decentralised ones attempt to change the norms, promoting their redefinition. Therefore, different civil organisations are able to successfully communicate their messages in favour of a given cause to a receptive audience, stimulating their activity. Community radio audiences – according to the Hungarian experiences – consist of attentive and reflective persons, sensitive to social problems, which can be attributed to their higher qualifications when compared to the homogenous audiences of the commercial radios. It could be important for the PR experts if the target-group of communication consists of well-educated people.

c) At the information sender and mediating media, a single sender is entitled to speak to the audience while in the co-operation based media, the interaction between the senders and receivers opens the possibility for exchange of opinion, increasing freedom of speech, mutual adjustment, co-orientation and efficiency. As a peculiarity it can be mentioned that its language is colloquial - the newscaster is a “nonconformist”; their relation to the community suggests that the listener is a close “friend” - they are formally equal parties in a relationship. This endeavour for cooperation is not accidental and is not without a function. By this behaviour pattern, the community radio is able to stabilize its economical position, ensuring survival of the radio from the donations and contributions from the listeners. It is also significant that without volunteers the existence of civil radios would be questionable, since, apart from one or two paid staff - the radio manager and the technician - operation of this medium relies on volunteer work.

d) In case of the centralised and normative media, the receiver is alone with the sender (“armchair effect”), is deprived of a possibility for participation, or, sentenced to a minimal interactivity, while in the other the mass mobilisation and participation can also be achieved in actions. This is possible because a given issue or problem does not only raise awareness but – owing to the manner of addressing listeners as partners – raises their responsibility, stirs them up and motivates them into action.

e) The passive consumer habit is originating from receiving a programme which cannot be influenced by receivers. The interactivity and the feed-back enable establishing of a connection between the sender and the receivers, where the sender is also informed about the receiver’s opinion. The community radios are eager to hear the opinions of their listeners; they consider the self-realization and free expression of opinion. They encourage publication of anyone’s message, thus serving multiplication of knowledge and establishment of diversity.

f) The process for apolitical programmes is attributable to the fact that the masses are deprived of the opportunity to participate and control, while learning of the politics is ensured with participation. “Community broadcasters want to democratize the media: they hand over the microphone to the audience”²⁷. Community broadcasting is a practice venue for many participants to learn democracy. Joint setting of rules, tolerance, taking responsibility, ethical activity are all part of this set, the acquiring of which may be assisted both in audience and in sender.

g) A programme prepared by experts is the result of an activity carried out by professionals. This is a closed world, which is difficult to enter and easy to get out of. Professional records, appropriate qualifications and experience are a requirement. In contrast, a collective production is prepared by non-professionals for the purpose of expressing opinions. Community radios do not ask for qualifications from applicants wishing to broadcast (although having qualifications doesn’t bring any disadvantage...); anyone is allowed to prepare programmes, have a message or an idea as everyone accepts the principles specified in the statutes of the radio.

h) Control by officials means that the state apparatus exerts its power over the operation of the media. This is done in accordance with the Media Act. Next, the social control organised by masses could be more democratic – as it’s written in theory - but it should also be mentioned that this kind of democratic social control is still to come. Of course, all of the Hungarian community radios are working legally in accordance with the new Act CLXXXV of 2010 on Media Services and Mass Media.

In summary, the most important conclusion of my paper is that there is a local medium that, up to now, got little attention in the PR communication strategies. Despite of the fact that its utilisation requires a long-term commitment and an approach completely differing from the present schemes and practices, it is worth learning about this opportunity and how to use it for fulfilment of the organisation’s objectives. Creative explorers are always welcome in the PR field.

27 Bajomi, L. P. (2000) *Közszolgálati rádiózás Nyugat Európában*, translated title: *Public Service Broadcasting in Western Europe*, Budapest: Új Mandátum Könyvkiadó, p. 48.

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ЛОКАЛНЕ РАДИО СТАНИЦЕ: НЕИСКОРИШЋЕНЕ ПР МОГУЋНОСТИ НА ЛОКАЛНОМ НИВОУ

Сажетак

До сада, у Мађарској, такође повезаном са прикључењем Европској Унији, појмови, попут комуникације, савремености, идентитета и друштвеног дијалога се поново процјењују. Промјена у јавној структури била је важан процес промјене приликом преображаја система. Током процеса преласка на демократију, промијенила се, такође, и улога масовних медија. Стари алати су добили нову улогу, на тај начин омогућавајући појаву нових актера. Дуги низ година, локални медији, који су служили боље демократији на локалном нивоу него што су могле њихове колеге на државном нивоу, изгледа да се поново процјењују и то може бити локални, самоодређујући, форум који покушавају да успоставе локалне заједнице и подрже учествовање у локалној заједници. Након промјене система, прилика је пружена у Мађарској за успостављање локалних комерцијалних као и локалних радио станица заједнице. Палета локалног медијског система постаје све више и више шаренолика. Постојеће окружне новине, локалне новине, рекламне брошуре и новоосноване локалне телевизије привлачиле су фирме и организације које делују у својој области, нудећи рекламне и прилике за односе са јавношћу. С друге стране, може се уочити да је особље за односе са јавношћу предузећа и грађанских организација једва искористило могућности које пружају локалне радио станице. Када узму у разматрање радио, онда обично (скоро увијек) мисле на комерцијални радио. Унутар оквира приступачности и плурализма, одређујућа особина локалних радио станица је начин на који људи учествују у раду станице. Волонтери сматрају овај „рад“ мисијом и јако воле своју област рада и посједују озбиљну снагу стварања мишљења на локалном нивоу. Истраживања су показала да је популарност ових радио станица већа међу онима који имају високо образовање. Вјерујем да општинске радио станице, захваљујући својим специфичностима, могу бити одговарајући и привлачан простор за односе са јавношћу, нудећи могућност успјеха прије свега на локалном нивоу. Студија и презентација ставља посебан нагласак на особине локалних радио станица које могу унаприједити дјелотворност рада на односима са јавношћу, на тај начин подржавајући организације које желе постати чланови локалне заједнице.

Кључне речи: *Локални радио, ПР (односи са јавношћу), Мађарска, Европска Унија*