

Kraków, 18.05.2018

Michał Pałasz

Social media management in the perspective of actor-network theory

Abstract

Although social media has become an important research field, and media management is a dynamically developing scientific subdiscipline, available literature lacks the research on the social media management. The present dissertation, whose main goal is to create a humanistic, empirical and qualitative analysis of social media management in the perspective of the actor-network theory and to identify the processes occurring during the initial shaping period of Polish social media managers professional community, can fill this gap. Supplementary objectives are to propose social media management as a field of interest of media management and humanistic management, in which the dissertation is embedded, and to legitimize actor-network theory as a research method in the scope of above mentioned.

The subject of the study is social media management interpreted as intentional, coordinated and long-term representation of others on social networking sites, e.g. marketing agencies manage the social media presence of their clients. And in terms of research orientation it is as an actor-network constituted by social media management.

The empirical research material includes the contents of two Facebook groups, "Social media" and "PL Social Media (industry only)", and the content to which links published within their framework during the study period (6 October 2010 – 5 January 2011), forming the birth of Polish social media managers professional community, lead to. The study was conducted using virtual ethnography, autoethnography, text analysis and case study.

The general research problem covered the presentation of social media management as a dynamic network of heterogeneous relations – processes, actions and actors who create and sustain it – mediated by adequate empirical and theoretical material, referring to the areas to which the dissertation belongs.

Chapter 1 introduces the study and proposes the recognition of the actor-network theory as an independent paradigm. Chapter 2 discusses the areas of the dissertation as well as research techniques and tools. Chapter 3 provides a synthesis of the actor-network theory. Chapter 4 presents the empirical study.

As a result, a new approach to social media, social media management and activity of a social media manager was achieved – presenting the mentioned from the perspective of the actor-network theory.

Keywords: social media management, social media, actor-network theory, humanistic management, media management, virtual ethnography, autoethnography

Michał Pałasz