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## Self-presentation as a Component of Personal Identity in Cyberspace

### Abstract

Personal identity in cyberspace is a complex concept based on an intuitive or deliberate communication effort that mediates the intra-personal and inter-personal contexts of one's own digital living space. The idea of self-presentation directly affects the construction of identity and immediacy in interpersonal relationships and at the same time, enables the creation and maintenance of self-concept and self-image in the online environment. This study aims to identify the extent and directions of the use of the self-presentation in the context of virtual personal communication strategy. The visual, audiovisual and textual form of online interactions with the outside world is an integral part of human discourse and social interaction. A personal reputation strategy influences the structural and content aspects of self-presentation in cyberspace. The management of individual presentation is associated with various limitations and reputational risks, which we try to clarify using methods of logical and hermeneutic analysis. This

study explores Personal Reputation Management's conceptual structure, which includes a range of strategies and tools for shaping a positive self-image in cyberspace.

### Key words

Cyberspace. Personal Identity. Personal Reputation Management. Self-Image. Self-Presentation. Visual Identity.

### Introduction

Self-presentation is based on the human desire to form and control the impressions of oneself created in other people, what happens to gain something or to create an image that is in harmony with personal identity. This phenomenon takes place through self-disclosure, i.e. conscious but also unconscious disclosure of personal information that is consistent with the desired image of oneself in society<sup>1</sup>. In this context, we perceive self-presentation as a deliberate series of creative activities, interactions with oneself, and self-disclosure of individual behaviour.

Thus, it is a personal communication strategy, an integral part of which is the deliberate creation of textually or visually rendered information content, the existence of which is based on two pillars. The first pillar is the individual's desire to form a personal identity by creating a series of actions that strengthen their personal identity. The second pillar is the socialization effect, which, according to Huang, allows a person to gain social support and enhance interpersonal intimacy<sup>2</sup>. The most common variant of the self-presentation strategy is based on

attention seeking, communication, archiving, and entertainment<sup>3</sup>. The function of self-disclosure through textual or visual communication makes it possible to gain a sense of connection with the outside world<sup>4</sup> and at the same time, create opportunities for gaining positive feedback and new social interactions. The implementation of self-presentation strategies also includes self-approval, belonging, and documentation<sup>5</sup>. The opportunities for online interaction and the positive online feedback that self-presentation brings to individuals can fall into the category of successful experiences. Therefore, self-presentation through a social network can positively affect the social ability of an individual in the network<sup>6</sup>. In this context, the visual component of self-presentation is essential, which mediates the perception of oneself in the eyes of external percipients, but at the same time is a kind of mirror for the individual that "produces or maintains a desired

self-image"<sup>7</sup>. The image mediated through visual presentation becomes part of human discourse and penetrates the process of social interaction through textual, audio and visual content<sup>8</sup>. In this context, presentation becomes part of cyberspace and has the potential to influence an individual's identity in real life.

Textual, visual and audiovisual presentation is also a tool to shape our own digital living space. On the one hand, this tool is creative. It provides efficient and easy-to-use mechanics for the arbitrary creation of visual content, which we produce towards the external environment. However, the creative process of using it for self-presentation also has its downside in cyberspace, which is the possibility of intentional manipulation of one's image (e.g. through filters, photo editing in Photoshop, etc.). We perceive this as a deliberate manipulation of our real image's representation, driven by an effort to present an idealized version of one's character or face to the world. However, manipulative self-presentation may not only concern the body image but may also have a social dimension. The human desire to construct the best possible impression of the environment in which we find ourselves and the interpersonal

<sup>3</sup> SUNG, Y., LEE, J. A., KIM, E., CHOI, S. M.: Why we post selfies: Understanding motivations for posting pictures of oneself. In *Personality and Individual Differences*, 2016, Vol. 97, pp. 260-265.

<sup>4</sup> UTZ, S.: The function of self-disclosure on social network sites: not only intimate, but also positive and entertaining selfdisclosures increase the feeling of connection. In *Computers in Human Behavior*, 2015, Vol. 45, pp. 1-10.

<sup>5</sup> ETGAR, S., AMICHAH-HAMBURGER, Y.: Not all selfies took alike: Distinct selfie motivations are related to different personality characteristics. In *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2017, Vol. 8, No. 842, pp. 1-10.

<sup>6</sup> ZHU, Y., SHEN, Y., ZHAO, Q.: Self-Presentation and Adolescent Altruistic Behaviors in Social Networks. In *Complexity*, 2020, Vol. 2020, Article ID 1719564, p. 2.

<sup>7</sup> LEARY, M. R., KOWALSKI, R. M.: Impression management: A literature review and two-component model. In *Psychological Bulletin*, 1990, Vol. 107, No. 1, p. 34.

<sup>8</sup> HERRING, S. C.: *Discourse in Web 2.0: Familiar, reconfigured, and emergent*. Washington DC : Georgetown University Press, 2013, p. 1.

<sup>1</sup> KAPLAN, A. M., HAENLEIN, M.: Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media. In *Business Horizons*, 2010, Vol. 53, No. 1, p. 61.

<sup>2</sup> HUANG, H. Y.: Examining the beneficial effects of individual's self-disclosure on the social network site. In *Computers in Human Behavior*, 2016, Vol. 57, p. 122.

interactions in which we participate also plays a role in this process.

According to this approach, we can perceive the concept of self-presentation as a complex communication strategy that intentionally affects intimacy and immediacy in interpersonal relationships and at the same time provides an opportunity to keep the self-concept in cyberspace under relative control. Rääkkä argues that it is “valuable to be able to govern the impression one gives, as the capacity to govern impressions is an instrument by which people take care of their various social relationships”<sup>9</sup>.

Velleman claims that one can create an impression of oneself because he believes that this impression is correct and reasonable. It is a kind of desire for the social environment to correctly perceive a predefined self-concept that a person creates<sup>10</sup>. Cyberspace offers virtually unlimited opportunities for self-presentation. At the same time, it provides individuals with a relatively high degree of freedom to structure their own visual identity, which can manifest itself in various ways. Self-presentation does not always have to be only selfish. Still, with the appropriate use of available tools, it can also be useful in forming one's own opinions, attitudes and opinions about social events and

processes at the interpersonal level. A virtually permanent presence in a virtual environment can also influence personal values, attitudes and decision-making mechanisms related to everyday life.

### 1 Self-presentation in Cyberspace

One of the features of self-presentation in cyberspace is the effort to make the characteristics and expressions of the presented person look as effective as possible. The pursuit of perfectionism in visual and audiovisual communication sometimes encounters the limits of the presented person's actual appearance. The barrier caused by different types of imperfections can be confronted by the pressure of the virtual environment, which brings many visual stimuli on a daily basis, with which adolescents in particular often compare themselves and do not realize that perceived visual impressions can be false and misleading. Hewitt et al. proposed three dimensions or facets of perfectionistic self-presentation. The first dimension is perfectionistic self-promotion; a self-presenting style based on maximizing the effort to appear to others as if one is perfect. This dimension is associated with all sorts of desires to be perfect, and this motivation is present even if it is not built on realistic foundations. The second dimension (non-display of imperfection) reflects the need to avoid any imperfection evidence and is often associated with excessive concerns about

their detection. Considerations of this type may relate not only to body image but also to behaviour in various situations and attempts to hide one's mistakes from others. The last aspect (nondisclosure of imperfection) is directly related to self-presentation in cyberspace. It contains various unrealistic and uncritical expectations regarding how self-presenters will be perceived by the social environment and the negative consequences of these imperfections<sup>11</sup>.

Individual differences in perfectionist self-presentation are related to the fact that one can only influence one's virtual representation in cyberspace because it does not physically occur in the online world. According to Šmahel, the virtual design of personality is only a partially conscious effort, because it is combined with idealization, which is independent of human consciousness and will. This type of formation of postmodern identity relates to representation in virtuality, i.e., how we perceive and define impressions and practical implications of portraying ourselves online<sup>12</sup>. In their research Strimbu and O'Connell found that self-presentation is the process by which we portray ourselves to others to make the desired impression.

11 HEWITT, P. L., FLETT, G. L., SHERRY, S. B., HABKE, M. (eds.): The interpersonal expression of perfection: Perfectionistic self-presentation and psychological distress. In *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 2003, Vol. 84, No. 6, p. 1303.

12 ŠMAHEL, D.: *Psychologie a internet*. Praha : Triton, 2003, p. 37.

9 RÄÄKKÄ, J.: Privacy and Self-Presentation. In *Res Publica. A Journal of Moral, Legal and Political Philosophy*, 2017, Vol. 23, p. 213.

10 VELLEMAN, J. D.: *How We Get Along*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2009, p. 67.

Although age and self-concept were significantly correlated, self-concept continues to be a better predictor for online self-presentation. Based on the results of this study, it can be asserted that “self-concept is playing a significant role in whether or not individuals present a divergent self online and the practical implications of these findings help create a foundation of understanding for online behaviour”<sup>13</sup>. In this context, we consider it essential to strengthen the consistency between the feeling of free will and the level of personal self-control, which is also reflected in the visual self-presentation. If this relationship is inconsistent, it can affect the current status of self-awareness and predict social anxiety<sup>14</sup>.

Lee et al. distinguish two basic types of self-presentation. The first is tactical self-presentation, which focuses on the specific behaviours of the individual in different situations. The second type is strategic self-presentation, which is not associated with particular actions, but instead focuses on building one's own identity. Strategies and tactics can be part of creating an individual's own

identity<sup>15</sup>.

The technical and resulting psychological aspects of cyberspace enable (often simplify) socialization processes in time and space. Man as a social being sought the possibilities of socialization, communication and realization of his ideas in reality and at the same time in virtuality. The expansion and development of digital media, the Internet, and social media have caused self-presentation in cyberspace to take on new dimensions and forms. Gáliková Tolnaiová speaks of the concept of identity as a collective set of characteristic properties, through which a given thing is recognizable and definable in relation to other items and entities<sup>16</sup>. Part of this concept is also the need to establish and maintain relationships, integrate into social groups, the formation of values and attitudes to oneself, to their immediate surroundings and society as a whole. Especially in young people, visual self-presentation in cyberspace is often associated with searching for their identity and experimentation with different types of identity. The individual's honest effort to create identities by belonging to a social group or subculture also supports the effort to follow current trends

13 STRIMBU, N., O'CONNELL, M.: The Relationship Between Self-Concept and Online Self-Presentation in Adults. In *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking* 2019, Vol. 22, No. 12, p. 807.

14 HIGA, C. K., PHILLIPS, L. K., CHORPI-TA, B. F., DALEIDEN, E. L.: The structure of self-consciousness in children and young adolescents and relations to social anxiety. In *Journal of Psychopathology and Behavioral Assessment*, 2008, Vol. 30, No. 4, pp. 261-271.

15 LEE, J. S., QUIGLEY, B. M., NESLER, M. S. (eds.): Development of a self-presentation tactics scale. In *Personality and Individual Differences*, 1999, Vol. 26, No. 4, pp. 701-702.

16 GÁLIKOVÁ TOLNAIOVÁ, S.: „Ja“, identita a digitálne sociálne médiá. In GÁLIK, S. a kol.: *Premeny človeka kyberpriestore digitálnych médií*. Łódź : Dom Wydawniczy Michał Koliński, 2016, pp. 24-47.

and topics. Cyberspace enables disseminating personal, ethical, environmental or other types of messages and ideas that result from a preferred lifestyle. The reach of these communications is much stronger when they are disseminated through visual content. A suitable platform for spreading the visual identity outputs is, for example, Instagram, which is a platform that allows you to create and share various types of self-presentation strategies indefinitely.

### 2 Reputation Contexts

Visual, audiovisual and textual content in various formats is spreading in the Internet environment at lightning speed and in all directions. Gálik states that digital media's basic structure consists of several aspects, such as “network structure, multimedia nature, interactivity, communication speed and dominance of images”<sup>17</sup>. One of the risks of creating and sharing online content is to damage the positive reputation of an individual, group, or organization. Online reputation is an increasingly valuable commodity, and any attempt to disrupt or discredit it can be dangerous. Publishing and disseminating real, distorted or utterly misleading textual, visual or audiovisual content can have fatal consequences for reputation.

17 GÁLIK, S.: Philosophical Reflection of the Influence of Digital Media on Current Education. In *Media Education (Mediaobrazovanie)*, 2020, Vol. 60, No. 1, p. 102.

“Reputation is a social construct that is formed by people”<sup>18</sup>. Gaining a good reputation immediately is almost impossible. It is acquired over time and is based on the character, words and actions that one communicates and shares with one’s surroundings. However, cyberspace brings a new dimension to this content sharing – it creates a digital footprint that can be partially eliminated but is virtually impossible to get rid of. A good reputation in cyberspace is difficult to build and very easy to lose. Online reputation is often the result of our previous presence in the online environment, where we leave various kinds of evidence of our movements and activities. Some traces are positive, some negative. Which of them prevails contributes to the formation of the final personnel sentiment. In particular, visual traces remain on the Internet very long, and it is very complicated to erase them. It’s naive to think that personal reputational risks on the web will solve themselves. For example, photos from the past that show us in an unflattering light can be deleted from our social media profile. Alternatively, ask Facebook to delete the entire account. However, we will never get rid of the risk that someone has saved these photos on their PC or mobile phone. Such compromising materials can subsequently be misused and

endanger our reputation at work, in the family, when finding a new job, etc.

Personal reputation in cyberspace has, on the one hand, a social dimension, which is defined by the extent to which users identify and evaluate the position of other participants in online communication. “The new cultural situation is entangled in a network of attractions that both combine human nature and the commercial focus of the cultural industry”<sup>19</sup>. Reputation is determined mainly by technological solutions and algorithms that collect information about the user. Content is often rated by other users, such as comments, video views (YouTube), status shares, liking volume (Facebook), and more. On the other hand, we perceive a personalized dimension of reputation in cyberspace directly related to self-presentation and its quantitative and qualitative parameters.

The degree of self-presentation can vary in intensity – from very low to very high. The power of individual self-presentation can be under relative control, and it also has the necessary technological tools. No one is forced to participate in social networks, share visual or audiovisual content, communicate through instant messaging applications, etc. “Media entertainment surrounds us

and binds us together, continuously disrupting other matters we have to attend to”<sup>20</sup>. However, if we are interested in such a form of self-presentation, cyberspace offers us virtually unlimited possibilities that are not limited by space or time. In many cases, the limits do not apply to finance, as many social media platforms’ economic model is based on free use. Thus, the social network user does not pay any usage fee, but “pays” indirectly – with their attention and the time they spend using social media and the data that the social network collects about them.

Clark describes the character of cyberspace using a four-layer model that has the following characteristics:

- “The people who participate in the cyber – experience – who communicate, work with information, make decisions and carry out plans, and who themselves transform the nature of cyberspace by working with its component services and capabilities.
- The information that is stored, transmitted, and transformed in cyberspace.
- The logical building blocks that make up the services and support the platform nature of cyberspace.
- The physical foundations that support the logical elements”<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> KVETANOVÁ, Z., RADOŠINSKÁ, J.: Expressions of Postmodernism Within the Dimension of Digital Games. In *European Journal of Media, Art and Photography*, 2020, Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 86.

<sup>21</sup> CLARK, D.: *Characterizing cyberspace: past, present and future*. ECIR Working Paper. Cam-

Personal reputation in cyberspace can be affected significantly in the first three layers, which are near interconnected. Within the platform economy, cyberspace becomes a part of our textual, visual or audiovisual self-presentation and penetrates all areas of individual, social, economic and political life. Personal reputation is the result of personal branding, which needs to be systematically built and maintained. Botha argues that the following measures are essential for maintaining quality personal branding:

- “Audit your search results – Google yourself, so you know what others see when they look you up.
- Clean up any content that doesn’t fit your desired image.
- Define yourself and your personal brand to guide what you need to build into your profile.
- Build an online presence that reflects your brand and expertise.
- Follow a personal branding strategy and stick to timelines. With a little bit of focus and the help of free resources at your disposal like Google alerts or the Brand Yourself DIY tool, take control of how you look online step by step”<sup>22</sup>.

bridge : Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2010, p. 1.

<sup>22</sup> BOTHER, F.: How To Build Strong Personal Brands And Manage Your Reputation. In *Forbes*. [online]. [2021-01-25]. Available at: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/francoisbotha/2019/02/20/how-to-build-strong-personal-brands-and-manage-your-reputation/?sh=35ab44e324f7>.

According to Karalekas, the Personal Reputation Management (PRM) concept is grounded in “certain actions engaged in by persons who are given to maintaining an online reputation or image that may or may not be distinct from their real-world reputation or image”<sup>23</sup>.

### 3 Attributes of Reputation

Personal Reputation Management is a term that defines the essential characteristics, functions, processes and relationships of forming and maintaining a positive image of an individual. Personal Reputation Management’s conceptual structure defines the interrelationships between the individual components and attributes on which this type of management is based. Personal Reputation Management’s effective operation requires that the processes on which it is found to be long-term and sustainable. The goal is to gradually and purposefully create a positive image, using a range of strategies and tools that shape the individual’s identity.

The concept of Personal Reputation Management is based on four basic principles. Each of the tenets consists of several attributes, i.e. the following characteristics and features:

#### Authenticity

Authenticity is the principle on which a personal reputation is built. The cornerstones of authenticity are expressions and actions that are credible. This principle is fundamental in cyberspace, where an individual can capture and maintain attention only if their communication is unique and original. Therefore, the personal image should be as authentic as possible because the textual, visual and audiovisual communications that one creates and shares with others contribute to the formation of evaluative judgments that other people make about us. Authenticity has many interfaces with personal identity, which manifests itself primarily in the intra-personal application of values and attitudes, which should be under our personality’s specific settings. Authenticity penetrates social discourse and strengthens the positive perception of the individual in the eyes of percipients. If our attitudes and opinions are not internalized, they will be hard to believe for external audiences. In this context, the role of manipulative techniques that have the potential to enhance our authenticity should be noted. If manipulative techniques are correctly applied, a person can act authentically and credibly even if their attitudes are not internalized, but only purposefully pretended. However, such a strategy to achieve authenticity has its limits. Over time, and with changing circumstances, manipulative intentions may be revealed, and the audience

<sup>23</sup> KARALEKAS, D.: *Image online: Early adopter behaviour and personal reputation management*. Calgary : International Telecommunications Society, 2011, p. 5.

<sup>18</sup> PORTMANN, E.: *The FORA Framework. A fuzzy grassroots ontology for online reputation management*. Berlin : Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg, 2013, p. 65.

<sup>19</sup> PRAVDOVÁ, H., HUDÍKOVÁ, Z., PANASENKO, N.: Homo corporalis as the communicated muse and centrepiece of commercialized culture. In *European Journal of Media, Art & Photography*, 2020, Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 79.

may become convinced that our authenticity is false and only fake.

### Credibility

An excellent personal reputation in cyberspace depends above all on the extent to which we manage to build our credibility. Credibility is manifested in the sincere ability to present that we are honest and respectful. The basis of credibility in the online environment is that we only create and share information whose quality and truth we are convinced of. Our relationships with the online community depend on our ability to trust each other and not offend others. It is also important not to look amateurish. This can be ensured by carefully thinking about and considering the content and form of our communication. Credibility is a direct result of trying to make the right decisions at all times that are consistent with our integrity. A positive personal reputation in cyberspace is formed in such a way that we are as receptive as possible to our surroundings. We try to listen to the opinions of others and respond to those opinions judiciously and sensitively. We should be aware that all our visual, audiovisual and textual communications are scrutinised by many people in the online environment. The same goes for any of our reactions to communications made by other people. According to Kačínová, an essential factor is the ability to distinguish and assess information resources' veracity,

especially media sources<sup>24</sup>. A trustworthy reputation is, above all, a comprehensive set of positive experiences that other people have with the person in question. If these experiences enrich our online audience, we will be convincing, and our actions will guarantee positive energy that we share with other people.

### Reliability

Reliability is the ability to keep commitments and deliver on promises. Within Personal Reputation Management, it has an irreplaceable place and is directly related to credibility. Being trustworthy means that we only communicate information that we have verified and whose accuracy we do not doubt. This principle is especially important for influencers, whose activities and success depend directly on their reliability. Reliability can have a time and material dimension. The time dimension of reliability is related to the regularity of online communication activities. The only influencer will build a good reputation, communicating at regular intervals and continuously publishing fresh media content. Material reliability concerns the content of the communication - that is, what we share. The audience should perceive

24 KAČINOVÁ, V.: The Topic of Media-Disseminated Mis-Information and Dis-Information as an Integral Part of General Education in Slovakia. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2020, Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 23.

communicated content through the lens of reliability because untrusted communications reduce the communicator's reliability of the communicated link. A communicator can quickly lose its reliability if it presents unreliable opinions, products or services. Reliability in the context of personal reputation management is based on compliance with the rules and principles of the online community. Adherence to the agreed rules is the best guarantee of maintaining a positive personal image. The social structures created and operated in cyberspace are susceptible to how the participants express themselves and how reliable they are in their speeches to the online community members.

### Persuasiveness

An important principle that is part of Personal Reputation Management is the ability to be persuasive. Specific actions and speeches realized in cyberspace have a chance of success only if the communicator manages to get the audience on their side. An important attribute is the ability to convince percipients of the correctness and truthfulness of our arguments. Thus, part of persuasive action is the ability to argue effectively. Only in this way is it possible to deliver strong enough messages to persuade the recipients to accept our views, beliefs and ideas. Persuasiveness in virtual communication is based on a fluent and sophisticated approach. The successful persuader should have an overview and awareness

of the target audience's values, attitudes, and behaviours that they want to focus on.

The following principles are the basis of persuasive communication in cyberspace:

- We should know at least the basics of the language code, which is common and acceptable in our target group.
- We should have similar interests, ideals, norms and values to the audience we want to reach.
- We should routinely use discursive practices that the target group is accustomed to and accept<sup>25</sup>.

For an individual to convince another, he or she should have a personal premise, the essence of which is to successfully act to change or form the belief in other people. Thompson recommends that the persuader observe ten points:

1. Clarify the concept of the subject of persuasion.
1. Analyze the persuaded's personality and adapt to them in the style of formulating ideas and presenting the report.
2. Behave so that the recipient accepts us as competent and credible.
3. Demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the issue during persuasion.
4. Formulate ideas clearly and informatively.
5. Speak fluently, directly and with appropriate voice variability.
6. Compile a strategic plan for a given interpersonal situation.
7. Seek to gain and retain the attention and direct the listener's interest in line with the main ideas of the content of the persuasive.
8. Make fair use of existing persuasion methodologies and techniques.
9. Respect social norms<sup>26</sup>.

Bettinghaus and Cody describe persuasion as "a conscious attempt by a person to change the attitudes, beliefs, or behaviours of another person or group of people through the transmission of information"<sup>27</sup>.

People interact with each other without realizing it. We interact with each other daily without realizing it. Influencing is a part of

everyday life and is not primarily an activity of specialists, experts or teachers. Persuasion takes place in the process of communication using textual, virtual or audiovisual communications. The complex of these characteristics includes visual and verbal components and the involvement of different types of emotions. It is characteristic of persuasion that intellectual arguments are postponed to the detriment of emotional involvement. In this context, Kanižaj and Lechpammer emphasize the "need for media literacy and the public's competence to recognize credible content from multiple sources"<sup>28</sup>.

### 4 Procedural Aspects of Personal Reputation Management (PRM)

The PRM strategy is a process by which a personal brand's necessary elements are identified, which we communicate creatively towards the target group. Fichnová, Wojciechowski and Szabo state that the role of creativity is self-expression related to the specific personality characteristics and traits of the people<sup>29</sup>. The goal is proactive and tactical communication, which leads to creating a relevant and unique

28 KANIŽAJ, I., LECHPAMMER, S.: The Role of Organisations of Journalists in Promoting Media Literacy - Building Credibility and Trust. In *Media Literacy and Academic Research*, 2019, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 28.

29 FICHNOVÁ, K., WOJCIECHOWSKI, Ł. P., SZABO, P.: A reflection on the citizens attitudes to the political situation (and their creative renditions). In *Communication Today*, 2019, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 78.

26 THOMPSON, W. N.: *The Process of Persuasion: principles and readings*. New York : Row Publishers, 1975, p. 22.

27 BETTINGHAUS, E. P., CODY, M. J.: *Persuasive communication*. New York : Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1987, p. 3.

25 PETRANOVÁ, D., VRABEC, N.: *Per-suázia a médiá*. Trnava : FMK UCM v Trnave, 2013, p. 140.

personal identity that has a vision and can reach its full potential. A prerequisite for the effectiveness of PRM is its close connection to stimuli that work simultaneously and support each other. Elements of PRM are often used simultaneously to promote the transfer of positive associations that reinforce key aspects of personal identity in cyberspace. The personal online identity reflects the balance of individual elements in their textual, visual and audiovisual context to maximize their contribution to successful positioning in cyberspace.

The procedural aspects of PRM can be summarized in the following key characteristics:

#### Monitoring

The first step in the PRM process is to monitor the current state of the person's presence in cyberspace. Its essence is to evaluate the current state of digital assets. In particular, it includes an analysis of search results associated with a person's name and other keywords that relate to the person. Monitoring of visual and audiovisual components – especially photographs and videos – is also essential. An important part is the analysis of social networks (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and others) and platforms for sharing videos and photos. The monitoring result is a map of the current state of the presentation of the relevant person in cyberspace.

#### Sentiment Analysis

Based on the monitoring results, it

is possible to perform an analysis of personnel sentiment, which reports on the number of positive, negative and neutral mentions of a person in the Internet environment. Not only textual content, photos and videos are evaluated, but also comments, posts in discussion forums and other forms of online interactions related to the person. Sentiment analysis is an important basis for assessing the current state of reputation in cyberspace and implementing a strategy to improve it and maintain a credible personnel image.

#### Development of Reputation Strategy

The third step in managing a personal reputation on the Internet is the development of a strategy. It is crucial to propose specific procedures for maintaining the strengths of personnel sentiment, developing them further, and creating suitable conditions for maintaining a long-term sustainable positive reputation. On the other hand, it is necessary to propose corrective steps aimed at eliminating possible negative sentiment. Even if the overall reputation balance is positive, this may not be the case forever. Therefore, it is appropriate to propose preventive measures to eliminate potential risk factors and purposefully build a positive personnel image.

#### Promotion Based on a Reputation Strategy

A systematic effort is needed to create valuable content that will contribute to improving personal reputation. Content promotion is

a must if you want to deliver your content to your target audience in the online space to achieve increased traffic and conversions following SEO principles. A well-designed content promotion strategy is to provide valuable content to the right eyes at the right time. Systematic efforts are also significant, based on the planning of articles, videos, social media posts and other content that we want to publish.

#### Feedback

The last step is the feedback, i.e. monitoring the effectiveness of the personnel reputation management process. These steps can help identify strengths and weaknesses, as well as opportunities and threats related to the personnel image. Feedback is an important element in planning further activities and procedures to increase the reputation strategy for the future and evaluate the effectiveness of previous steps.

#### Conclusion

As a personal identity component in cyberspace, self-presentation is a tool that we use to shape our own digital living space. Textual, visual and audiovisual presentation is a creative process that enables the creation of media content that the individual shares with their environment and at the same time leaves various types of footprints in cyberspace. *“If a significant part of our life, for example, our visions and ideas, is reflected in cyberspace, then we*

can say it becomes a new extension of our life. If we daily spend a few hours in cyberspace, then the bond with our life will be very strong”<sup>30</sup>. The concept of self-presentation can be more or less random, or it can be a deliberate and systematic communication strategy. In each case, however, it affects personal identity in the context of online communication. On the other hand, self-presentation is manifested on the intrapersonal level in the creation of one's attitudes and values, as well as on the interpersonal level in the presentation of opinions and opinions on events, phenomena and people in the external environment. The possibilities of self-presentation in cyberspace can come across barriers that arise at the intersection of the real world and the online environment. This applies particularly to the visual and audiovisual presentation, where the effort to present a perfect self-image can be confronted with the individual's actual appearance, expression, or behaviour. Of course, these barriers can be overcome by using various filters that improve the visual impression of the person presenting and using other technological solutions (e.g., video editing). Self-presentation in cyberspace cannot be perceived as a closed system, as it has a socializing dimension. It

is connected with the individual's effort for virtual socialization, associated with preferred lifestyles, values and ideological concepts. So it has not only an egocentric character but is also related to the formation of one's own identity and the effort to follow current social trends and topics. The reach of self-presentation communications is much stronger when they are created, disseminated and shared through more or less complex presentation strategies. In this context, it is vital to examine the PRM concept's role, which directly affects the essential characteristics, functions, processes and relationships of forming and maintaining a positive image of the individual. The long-term and sustainable personal image in cyberspace results from this specific type of self-management, which is conditioned by a balanced relationship between individual components, attributes, strategies and tools of the PRM.

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