

American University Kyiv

A Capstone Project

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN DEVELOPING INDUSTRY LEADERSHIP AND
IMPROVING BUSINESS STRATEGIES IN THE B2B SEGMENT

РОЛЬ СОЦІАЛЬНИХ МЕДІА У РОЗВИТКУ ГАЛУЗЕВОГО ЛІДЕРСТВА ТА
ВДОСКОНАЛЕННІ БІЗНЕС-СТРАТЕГІЙ У СЕГМЕНТІ B2B

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the role of social media in fostering industry leadership and improving business strategies in the B2B segment in Ukraine. The object of the study is the social media and business strategies in the B2B segment in Ukraine. The research examines how platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, Telegram, YouTube and X contribute to building corporate reputation, strengthening stakeholder relationships, and driving strategic innovation. Through a comprehensive methodology incorporating platform analysis, content analysis, and surveys of B2B communication professionals, the study explores the intersection of social media and business strategy.

The findings reveal that social media serves as a critical tool for demonstrating thought leadership and industry expertise, enabling companies to position themselves as credible and innovative market leaders. Platforms allow businesses to engage directly with stakeholders, facilitating trust-building and transparent communication. Additionally, social media provides real-time insights into market trends and competitor strategies, supporting flexible decision-making and strategic adaptation. While many Ukrainian B2B companies leverage social media for opinion leadership and engagement, the potential to drive innovation and long-term partnerships remains underutilized.

Challenges such as algorithms variability, content oversaturation and the need for high quality, consistent content emphasize the need for strategic, platform-specific approaches. The study also highlights the growing importance of corporate social responsibility and reputation management in the Ukrainian socio-political context, with social media playing a key role in these efforts.

This research contributes to the understanding of social media's impact on B2B business strategies in emerging markets, offering practical insights for companies seeking to enhance their competitive edge and industry positioning.

Keywords: social media, business, leadership, strategy.

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CHAPTER 1. THE CURRENT TRENDS OF SOCIAL MEDIA DEVELOPMENT IN B2B SECTOR

In business environment, social media has become a key tool for shaping the public positioning of companies, including the B2B (business-to-business) segment. Ukraine is no exception. Social media are no longer just platforms for information exchange or entertainment. Their role has evolved into a strategic tool that can influence industry leadership and build reputation.

This is also facilitated by the active penetration of social networks into the Ukrainian information sphere. According to the "Digital 2024: Ukraine" Research (2024), there were 29.64 million internet users in Ukraine at the beginning of the year. Social media was used by 21.18 million Ukrainians aged 18 and over, or 69.3% of the total adult population. In total, 82% of all internet users used at least one social media platform (Digital 2024: Ukraine, 2024).

Social media is also an opportunity to communicate directly and publicly with partners and customers, which has become a catalyst and tool for optimizing a number of bureaucratic procedures that preceded changes in business strategies. Currently, the distance between the company and its stakeholders has narrowed to a "post on social media – comment" model on certain issues. This has brought additional useful functionality for managers. They began to use social media analysis to adapt business strategies to the rapidly changing environment. Public communication is becoming an integral part of corporate strategies. The speed of information in social media makes it possible to quickly test and adapt approaches, opinions and strategies thanks to direct feedback from customers and partners.

This is particularly valuable in B2B, where most business decisions are based on trust and reputation, not just price advantage, providing a unique opportunity to build trust, strengthen reputation and confirm expertise.

A recent State of PR Study shows that in 2024, Ukrainian PR professionals have focused more on business metrics. This highlights the desire to integrate communications activities with business goals. According to the same study, the most popular communications metrics include social media engagement, social media followers and publication views. And the top 5 KPIs that measure the success of corporate communications include social media audience engagement (State of PR, 2024).

The success of social media communication also stems from the fact that these communication platforms generate a high level of trust. According to a study conducted by the Ukrainian civil network OPORA in cooperation with USAD, in 2024 Ukrainians trust social media the most. This was stated by 47.3% of respondents (Research on media consumption of Ukrainians, 2024).

In the B2B segment, leadership is critically dependent on a company's ability to communicate effectively with key stakeholders, including through social media. Public leadership not only determines the perception of the company as a serious player in the market, but also helps to build long-term partnerships. After all, publicity often acts as a certain guarantee of the quality of the fulfilment of agreements between two companies.

The aim of this study is to investigate the role of social media in fostering industry leadership and enhancing business strategies within the B2B (business-to-business) segment in Ukraine. Specifically, the research seeks to understand how public positioning through social media can impact corporate reputation, strengthen partnerships, and improve strategic decision-making. By analyzing the unique functions and dynamics of social media in the B2B context, this study aims to provide actionable insights into leveraging digital platforms for long-term business success, trust-building, and reputation management.

This study is focuses on the business-to-business (B2B) market as it has significant differences from the B2C (business-to-consumer) segment in the context of social media and public communication. In B2C, the focus is on emotional interaction, attracting a wide audience and stimulating impulse purchases. In the B2B segment, social media is used to

build long-term business relationships, demonstrate professional competence and innovative approaches.

The study is organized into the following sections: Literature review – explores the theoretical background on social networks and their application in B2B companies; Methodology – outlines the research design, data collection methods, and analytical approaches used to achieve the aim of the study; Analysis of social media platforms — examines the key social media platforms utilized by B2B companies, evaluating their features, audience engagement mechanisms, and suitability for industry leadership and strategic communication; Content analysis of B2B companies’ social media pages — provides a detailed analysis of the types of content shared on B2B company social media pages regarding content themes, formats, engagement tendencies, and their alignment with strategic goals; Survey of PR representatives in B2B companies and its analysis; Insights from survey conducted with PR experts working in B2B companies — highlights the practical experiences, challenges, and strategies used by communication teams in leveraging social media for business objectives; Conclusions — summarize key findings, discuss their implications for industry leadership and their business strategies.

The digital age is creating new challenges and opportunities, and social media is becoming an indispensable tool for achieving business objectives in the B2B segment. Therefore, the study of social media in the context of its impact on the reputation model of companies and their business strategy is a relevant issue.

CHAPTER 2. THE THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF APPLYING SOCIAL NETWORKS IN THE B2B SECTOR

Building thought leadership through social media activity and creating quality online content has already become one of the top priorities in business-to-business markets (Barry & Gironda, 2017). And in recent years, creating content that builds opinion leadership for companies and sharing it through social media has been one of the four main trends that have shaped B2B communication (Neumeier, 2018).

In addition to leadership, the researchers also emphasize that equipped with online communication tools, brands can demonstrate their expertise and willingness to help as a way to earn the trust of their audiences (Barry & Gironda, 2017).

To build a quality connection with your audience through expert content, pay special attention to developing a unique and authentic point of view. By bringing something new to the conversation with your target audience, you will hold their attention more effectively and for longer, convincing them to interact with your brand and even learn more about it (Neumeier, 2018).

Beyond thought leadership, trust, and loyalty, researchers introduce another very important goal that companies can achieve through high-quality social media communications: inspiring audiences. Barry & Gironda (2017) argue that by inspiring the audience, companies can create a community that will actively support their brand and content. And this is what helps strengthen trust and loyalty among customers. It also helps brands stand out from the mass of information available and draw more attention to their messages. Ultimately, the authors of the article believe that an inspired audience becomes social capital on which you can effectively build your own expertise and leadership in the future (Barry & Gironda, 2017).

Thus, high-quality content, thought leadership, and trust development result in proactive engagement of partners or customers. It's about engagement in brand information platforms that arouse genuine interest, become an indicator of quality, and turn into not just social media, but a source of news, useful insights, and perhaps even, as

we've defined above, a source of inspiration. And it is engagement and loyalty in both B2B and B2C that can be a powerful boost to financial performance— an increase in sales or the ability to increase the margin of goods and services. A better brand reputation has been found to give the buyer a greater feeling of assurance of the product quality, which leads to a greater willingness to pay a price premium (Bendixen et al., 2004), and confidence that suppliers will stay the course of a long customer relationship (Glynn, 2012). This is because the company already has a stable, engaged community that values a broader concept than just the product offered. This customer community also values the information ecosystem created by the brand.

Therefore, engagement is a critical factor in leads generation and establishing authority in various fields (Magno & Cassia, 2019).

B2B brands with solid image positively influence customer satisfaction and behavioral loyalty, strengthening customer intention to continue the relationship with the supplier (Biedenbach et al., 2015). Similarly, a direct positive relationship exists between brand reputation and repeat purchasing and loyalty intentions (Van Riel et al., 2005).

Other authors also emphasize that social media communication has gone beyond the exchange of information and has actually become crucial for decision-making and changes in business processes. Therefore, they advise not only to share experience, but to sell it (Neumeier, 2018). And the catalyst for this is competition. As modern markets suffer from product parity, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find points of differentiation for goods, services or technologies. And the feeling of commoditized sameness makes it difficult to deliver the new level of exceptional experience that customers are looking for (Neumeier, 2018). And this is where social media communication can be used to move away from product/service messaging (advertising posts) and focus on the experience of using it. Customers don't always care about how services or products have been improved. But they are fascinated by the realization of how it will improve their lives and the experience they will have. This approach requires long-

term and in-depth observation of your stakeholders. And social media can be a great tool for finding a way to personalize your company's offering.

The intellectual firepower of a firm capable of earning the attention and trust of prospects and customers based on forward thinking insights, original ideas, novel perspectives or helpful education that passionately drives conversations, champions new directions or inspires actionable strategies (Barry & Girona, 2017).

Cawsey and Rowley (2016) summarized the challenges faced by B2B companies in developing their social media communications. Particular focus is given to the long sales cycle in this segment, which makes it difficult to get quick feedback and see the results of social media activities. Social media communications occur at a high point in time when the topic is highly relevant, which in turn can become a hook for a certain range of stakeholders. However, they take a long time to make a purchase or cooperation decision. There is therefore a time gap between communication and action. All this should be taken into account when a company plans and strategies its communications (Cawsey & Rowley, 2016).

Another important point to consider is the nature of the information recipient in B2B markets. In this segment, there are usually fewer customers, but they are larger — both in terms of the size of the companies themselves and the size of the contracts. Long-term business relationships involving co-operation and even collaborative innovation are key to organizational success. Both the company and its stakeholders have the same level of understanding, deeper knowledge and context. In other words, in B2B, the customer is also a professional with a high level of product and industry knowledge. This means that media communications require more effort and customization, and should be professional and focused. Therefore, in the B2B segment, a dedicated sales team (i.e. direct communication) has an advantage over superficial branding (Kotler and Keller, 2006).

Seeking a broader context for the impact of digital communication on business performance, Hoffman and Fodor (2010) conducted an in-depth study of the concept of "social media ROI". The authors emphasize that the concept refers to measuring the

effectiveness of social media activities. For businesses, ROI is difficult to calculate because brand awareness and relationship building are harder to measure in monetary terms. The article highlights that indicators of engagement, customer interaction and increased loyalty are indirect markers of ROI in social media communications (Hoffman & Fodor, 2010). And they are very important for business performance.

The authors link social media activity to business performance through indirect indicators that in one way or another affect the company's overall performance, certain operational optimization processes, changes in positioning, etc. According to the researchers, social media helps build trust and recognition in professional networks. And the strategic alignment between social media efforts and business results, such as increased customer engagement and loyalty, contributes to increased efficiency (Hoffman & Fodor, 2010).

The authors also describe an interesting concept of creating an online environment on social media, a kind of community based on common interests or a topic that is core to a particular business. In this case, companies become initiators, information providers and supporters of the audience, developing their own expertise and leadership (Hoffman & Fodor, 2010). Interacting with potential customers beyond the “sale and purchase” model, generate commitment on the part of the consumer, strengthening brand loyalty and increasing the likelihood that the consumer will be more likely to make additional efforts to support the brand in the future.

The issue of building opinion leadership through social media and the impact of such leadership on customer relationships in B2B environments has been considered in a positive context, in particular because of the long-lasting effect of stakeholder commitment. Thought leadership helps to maintain and strengthen business relationships, as companies demonstrate their competence and expertise through valuable content, unique insights and a willingness to speak openly and publicly. This ultimately becomes the key to long-term relationships, as a company's active presence on social media and constant generation of useful information turns brands into conditional trendsetters. This,

in turn, helps companies to remain relevant to their customers or partners for a long time (Magno & Cassia, 2019).

In addition, thought leadership in social media gives a company an advantage over its competitors by making it stand out and be 'louder' in the field. This, in turn, makes the brand more productive as it opens the door to new customers who were looking for useful content and recommendations and came across a particular company and its offerings.

When it comes to social media communication, one of its strongest characteristics is the dialog format, which is the most favorable for shaping persuasive and trustworthy rhetoric.

The value of social media communication in the B2B sector is mostly focused on the ability to build strong relationships with stakeholders (Nunan et al., 2018). In this context, social media is mainly aimed at strengthening the company's relationships and connections through two-way interaction through communication, i.e., when there is primarily a dialogue with stakeholders.

The approach to building relationships with customers in B2B sales described by Nunan seems to be highly beneficial. According to his findings, expanding the customer base and establishing quality contacts can be based on dual contact approaches that combine traditional CRM tools and communication with customers through social media. In this way, social media foster B2B sales relationships (Nunan et al., 2018). Far from being an information tool, social networks are becoming here a part of business strategy, including integration into operational processes.

The advantage of social media is the wide range of communication technologies and the increasing diversity of ways to interact through social media. This diversity can be seen from different angles: in particular, from the point of view of the device (mobile phone, tablet, PC), the platform (Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and many others) and the media (text, images, videos, files). As a result, in the B2B sector, the functions of social media can vary according to the needs of the company. For example, one social network may be used to make initial contact with a potential customer, while another may be used

to maintain a relationship or ensure the exchange of information within a business process. Furthermore, social media interaction can be dyadic (between two individuals) or team-based, with channels combining offline/online or synchronous/asynchronous communication (Nunan et al., 2018).

It is also important not to forget that the absence of a brand on social media is also a certain action, but it is a negative one. With the development of social media, it has become impossible to control who says what and how. Freedom of speech and the democratization of communication have created a wide field for conflict and reputation crises. Moreover, the communication power is no longer in the hands of public relations managers or social media experts; the right to speak about the company has passed to the people and communities that create, distribute and share information.

Communication about brands happens, with or without permission of the firms in question (Kietzmann et.al., 2011). It is therefore up to the company to decide whether to take the lead in communicating its own agenda or to allow the community to do so. However, a company's absence on social media during a crisis and its inability to defend itself through proactive public communication can be very costly.

Despite significant research on the topic, the role of social media in driving industry leadership and business strategies in Ukraine's B2B segment requires further study. This includes its impact on corporate reputation, partnerships, and strategic decision-making, aiming to provide insights for leveraging digital platforms to build trust and ensure long-term success.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY OF INVESTIGATIONS AND DATA

This section describes the approach used to explore the role of social media in building industry leadership and improving business strategies within the Ukrainian investment sector. The methodology consists of three interconnected stages: content analysis, primary data collection through surveys, and data synthesis.

3.1 Social media platform analysis

Detailed evaluation of social media platforms utilized by Ukrainian B2B companies (Figure 1). According to a number of studies and surveys (State of PR 2024; Digital 2024: Ukraine Research on Media Consumption of Ukrainians), the main social networks in Ukraine are Facebook, Instagram, Telegram, YouTube, TikTok, LinkedIn, and X (ex-Twitter).

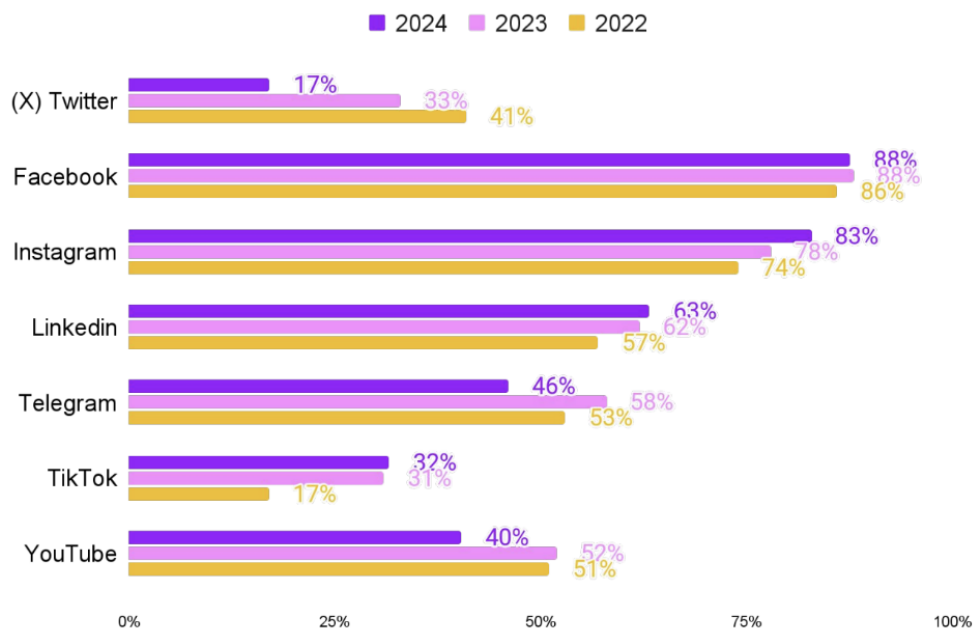


Figure 1. Using social media in Ukraine for public communications

Source: State of PR 2024.

Based on the past studies (Siddiqui et al., 2023; Azzahra et al., 2024) the SWOT analysis was applied to summarize the internal and external factors that influence the effectiveness of social media communications in different contexts. By identifying

strengths (S) and weaknesses (W), this approach highlights the internal characteristics of the media environment. Opportunities (O) reveal potential for growth and innovations, while threats (T) highlight external challenges. This holistic analysis allows not only to develop an overall view of the specifics of each social network, but also to compare all platforms against a specific set of comparable characteristics to understand their similarities, interchangeability, unique roles and critical differences in the context of B2B communications and their impact on industry leadership and business strategies.

3.2 Social media content analysis

The study employs content analysis to evaluate B2B companies' communication strategies across key social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, Telegram, YouTube, TikTok, LinkedIn and X (formerly Twitter). The approach involves collecting, categorizing and analyzing text posts, images and other content formats to identify trends, engagement tactics and message effectiveness. Metrics such as frequency of posting, content type (e.g. informational, promotional, interactive), topics, message rhetoric, visual appeal, and audience engagement (likes, comments, shares) are assessed. The analysis aims to uncover platform-specific patterns, determine the alignment of content with audience preferences, and assess how companies are using the capabilities of social networks to develop industry leadership and integrate public communications and its results into the decision-making process and business strategy improvement. This approach also provides a comprehensive understanding of how B2B companies are using social media to increase brand visibility, build trust and foster professional relationships.

3.3 Surveys analysis

Survey analysis is a key element of this research, providing the collection, categorization and interpretation of primary data from B2B communications professionals. The data collection process was carried out using Google Forms, a widely recognized tool that ensured accessibility and ease of participation for respondents. The survey included a series of Likert-type questions designed to assess the level of agreement with the assumptions and their relevance to the goals and guidelines of specific B2B

companies' social media communications. Respondents were asked to rate their agreement or perception on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This gradation allowed for a detailed understanding of the intensity and variability of opinions among participants. The survey involved 20 respondents working in communications in B2B companies. The social and demographic portrait of the respondents is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The portrait of the respondents

Parameters	Number	Share, %
Gender		
Male	4	20
Female	16	80
Total	20	100
Age		
25-34	12	60
35-44	6	30
45-54	2	10
Total	20	100
Industry		
the finance/investment	4	20
the legal sector	3	15
service companies/IT	6	30
the manufacturing sector	3	15
consulting	4	20
Total	20	100

Source: developed by the author.

The respondents comprised 80% females and 20% males, with ages distributed as follows: 60% were between 25-34 years old, 30% were between 35-44 years old, and 10% were between 45-54 years old. Survey participants represented various industries: 20% in finance/investment, 15% in the legal sector, 30% in service companies/IT, 15% in the manufacturing sector, and 20% in consulting. The respondents occupied various positions, from communications director to social media manager, offering a wide range of professional expertise. Most of them have 7-15 years of professional experience in the field.

The survey was conducted in December 2024, providing timely and contextually relevant data. The full list of survey questions is presented in Annex 1.

CHAPTER 4. SOCIAL MEDIA: PLATFORM ANALYSIS

In this section, we will conduct a detailed analysis of various social media platforms commonly used by businesses, focusing on their features. Each platform — such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Tik-Tok and X — will be evaluated through a SWOT analysis.

4.1. Facebook, link/URL: <https://www.facebook.com>

Considering Digital 2024: Ukraine (2024) in Facebook number of users in Ukraine is 13.85 million users. It confirms that Facebook continues to be one of the most popular platforms in Ukraine. Its audience includes middle-aged and older people. The platform supports a variety of content formats: text, photos, videos, live broadcasts and event announcements. Facebook offers powerful advertising tools that allow businesses to target audiences based on a variety of criteria including geography, interests and demographics Table 2 contains the results of SWOT analysis of the Facebook social network.

Table 2. SWOT analysis of the Facebook social network

Strengths:	Weaknesses:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide audience coverage in Ukraine. • Favorable attitude to long-form texts. • High level of expertise and depth of communications formats. • Powerful advertising tools with detailed targeting. • Integration with Instagram and WhatsApp for cross-platform campaigns. • Ability to create business communities and interactive groups. • Support for direct communication with customers via Messenger. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declining popularity with younger audiences. • Difficulty in achieving organic reach without paid advertising. • Perception of the platform as outdated compared to TikTok or Instagram. • Dependence on algorithms that limit the visibility of content. • Advertising overload, which can lead to users becoming 'ad-blind'.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use interactive features such as polls and live broadcasts. • Grow business and find new audiences through advertising. • Build brand communities through groups. • Use Messenger automation for support. • Raise brand awareness through educational or socially responsible content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition from more modern platforms such as TikTok or Telegram. • Growing user demand for privacy. • Regulatory restrictions on advertising. • The possibility of changing algorithms that reduce the ROI of advertising. • Content overload, making it difficult to attract users.

Source: developed by the author.

4.2 Instagram, link/URL: <https://www.instagram.com>

According to Digital 2024: Ukraine (2024), the number of Instagram users in Ukraine is 12.40 million users. This highlights Instagram's significant role in the digital landscape of Ukraine, particularly among younger audiences and businesses focused on aesthetics. The platform emphasizes visual content, with Stories and Reels being key interaction tools. Business accounts have access to analytics and store features, allowing them to sell products or services directly through the platform (Table 3).

Table 3. SWOT analysis of the Instagram social network

Strengths:	Weaknesses:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis on visual aesthetics that help shape the brand image. • Support for interactive formats (reels, stories, polls). • High audience engagement with content. • Integration with Facebook for ad management. • The growing popularity of video content (reels), which allows you to extend your reach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The difficulty of promotion without paid advertising. • The dominance of B2C content, which makes it difficult for B2B brands to position themselves. • Constant need for high quality visual content. • High competition for feed attention. • Algorithms that can limit the visibility of new accounts.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use reels to quickly reach the audience with trending videos. • Engage influencers to promote a company or services. • Educational content focused on specific industries. • Use shopping features for e-commerce. • Create interactions through Stories to engage audiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependence on ever-changing algorithms. • Rapidly changing content trends. • Increased competition from other video platforms. • Decreased advertising effectiveness due to oversaturation. • Potential regulatory restrictions on the use of user data.

Source: developed by the author.

4.3 LinkedIn, link/URL: <https://www.linkedin.com>

Considering Digital 2024: Ukraine (2024), the number of LinkedIn members in Ukraine is 5.10 million. LinkedIn is a professional network focused on business communication and career development. In Ukraine, LinkedIn is actively used by companies to find partners, employees, and customers in the B2B segment. The platform supports the creation of personal and corporate pages, the publication of articles, videos, and other professional content formats. LinkedIn is particularly effective for business

networking, PR, and building expertise through participation in topical discussions (Table 4).

Table 4. SWOT analysis of the LinkedIn social network

Strengths:	Weaknesses:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaching a professional audience. • Targeted advertising based on positions and industries. • A powerful networking tool. • Development of a personal companies' experts brand through articles and posts. • Opportunity to showcase cases and business achievements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively low activity among the Ukrainian audience. • Limited visual functionality compared to Instagram or YouTube. • High competition for attention among company content. • Expensive advertising compared to other platforms. • Difficulty in engaging users in long-term interactions.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use LinkedIn Learning to train employees. • Running B2B campaigns focusing on company expertise. • Participating in thematic groups to raise awareness. • Use analytics to improve business-strategy. • Attracting foreign partners through the multinational nature of the platform. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uneven distribution of active users across industries. • Competition from local professional communities. • Efficiency dependent on frequency of content updates. • Possible technical limitations for Ukrainian companies. • Possible reduction in organic reach due to changes in algorithms.

Source: developed by the author.

4.4. Telegram, link/URL: <https://web.telegram.org>

According to statistics, the number of Telegram users in Ukraine is 10 million. (Slovoidilo, 2024). Telegram is an instant messaging platform used in Ukraine not only for communication but also for creating thematic channels. Channels are becoming an important tool for informing the audience, PR and even sales. Due to the high level of audience engagement, Telegram is very popular in B2B communication, especially because of the convenient format of filtering information flows and the speed of receiving messages from channels (i.e. companies, brands, experts). Table 5 contains the results of SWOT analysis of the Telegram platform.

Table 5. SWOT analysis of the Telegram platform

Strengths:	Weaknesses:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fast and direct access to audiences via channels. • No algorithms to limit reach. • Possibility to communicate directly with the audience in chats. • Possibility of automation through bots. • Integration with CRM systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of targeted advertising. • Limited analytics functionality. • Difficulty retaining subscribers without regular content. • Underdeveloped visual content compared to Instagram. • Less interaction than other platforms.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use channels for educational content. • Create exclusive communities for partners or customers. • Use bots to automate communications. • Easily conduct surveys and collect data. • Engage young audiences with interactive content. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing competition from other platforms. • Distribution of low quality or fake content. • Introduction of special measures in Ukraine regarding the use of the Telegram messenger and the possibility of its complete blocking in the country in order to protect information and strengthen control over the media space.

Source: developed by the author.

4.5 YouTube, link/URL: <https://www.youtube.com>

Based on Digital 2024: Ukraine (2024), the number of YouTube users in our country is 24.30 million. This substantial user base highlights YouTube's position as the largest video content platform in the country, catering to a wide audience. For the B2B segment, it is an effective tool for building expertise and long-term interaction. YouTube is growing in popularity as video as a communication format becomes increasingly popular (Table 6).

Table 6. SWOT analysis of the YouTube platform

Strengths:	Weaknesses:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large audience reach. • Powerful search algorithm (second only to Google). • Support for different video formats (short videos, long videos, live broadcasts). • Ability to monetise the channel. • High level of trust in video content as a source of information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High cost of creating quality content. • Competition with big brands for viewers' attention. • The need to regularly update the channel. • High dependency on algorithmic changes.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use YouTube Shorts for trending videos. • Build a brand through educational or entertaining content. • Host webinars and presentations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty in attracting an audience without a significant budget. • Increasing competition from TikTok and Instagram Reels.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate with other platforms (e.g. Google Ads). • Finding partners by showcasing success stories. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulatory restrictions on content. • Risk of copyright infringement. • Rapid content obsolescence in highly competitive niches.
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Source: developed by the author.

4.6 X, link/URL: <https://x.com>

According to Digital 2024: Ukraine (2024), the number of X (formerly known as Twitter) users in Ukraine is 4.55 million. X is a microblogging platform where users share short posts called tweets. It serves as a communication tool for real-time news, discussions, and direct engagement between businesses and audiences. Companies use it to promote their products, engage with customers, and establish brand authority. However, its public nature and fast-paced format come with both advantages and challenges, especially for B2B marketing (Table 7).

Table 7. SWOT analysis of the X platform

Strengths:	Weaknesses:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instant communication and updates make it ideal for time-sensitive announcements. • The public nature of posts allows brands to gain visibility from a wide audience. • A popular platform for sharing industry insights and establishing authority. • Hashtags drive trending conversations and expand reach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 280-character limit can restrict detailed messaging. • Constant flow of content can make it difficult for a brand to maintain sustained engagement. • Reduced organic reach due to algorithm shifts, requiring more paid promotions. • Public discussions and viral trends can sometimes damage brand reputation. • Oversaturation of content and spam can lead to audience disengagement.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth in global users offers new markets and demographics to engage with. • Twitter Spaces and communities allow for deeper engagement with niche groups. • Growing trend of partnerships with influencers for brand campaigns. • Detailed insights into user interactions can guide content optimization. • Integration with other platforms like Instagram or LinkedIn for greater reach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential restrictions on political or controversial content could affect brand freedom. • User privacy concerns could affect engagement levels. • Increased negative activity could harm brand reputation. • Over-reliance on ads for visibility might reduce organic growth and long-term sustainability.

Source: developed by the author.

4.7 TikTok, link/URL: <https://www.tiktok.com>

Digital 2024: Ukraine (2024) reports that TikTok has 16.47 million users in Ukraine. TikTok is a rapidly growing social media platform known for short-form video content, with a primary focus on entertainment, trends, and viral challenges. While it originally targeted younger demographics, TikTok has expanded across various age groups and business sectors, offering creative ways for brands to engage with audiences. For businesses, TikTok presents an opportunity to create viral marketing campaigns, but it also comes with challenges in terms of brand consistency and audience targeting, particularly within B2B sectors (Table 8).

Table 8. SWOT analysis of the TikTok platform



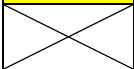




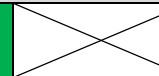
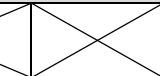



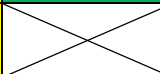

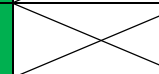
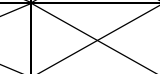






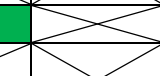








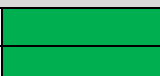

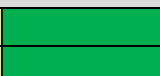
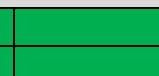
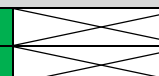
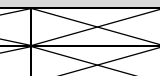





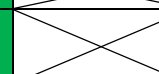
















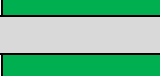
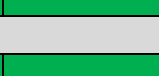
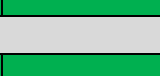
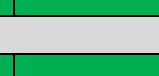
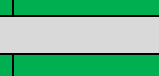






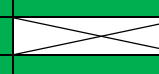






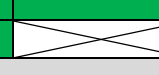
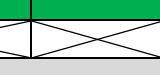





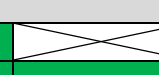






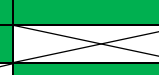
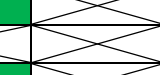








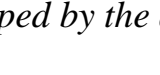
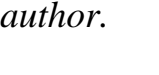


























Strengths:	Weaknesses:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TikTok’s algorithm promotes high user engagement, even for smaller accounts. • The platform is built around viral challenges and trends, making it easier for brands to gain wide exposure. • Popular among Gen Z and millennials, making it a great platform for targeting younger consumers. • Short, interactive videos allow for creative storytelling and brand visibility. • TikTok offers in-app editing tools that make content creation easy and professional. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited video length can hinder more in-depth content or complex messaging. • The playful, casual nature of TikTok may not align with some brands, particularly in B2B sectors. • TikTok’s core user base is younger, which might not always align with certain B2B objectives. • The fast-paced nature of the platform means content can quickly get lost in the shuffle.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing trend of influencer partnerships allows businesses to tap into established audiences. • TikTok’s advertising platform allows for targeting specific demographics and interests. • The increasing diversification of content opens doors for B2B companies to experiment with innovative marketing strategies. • Content created on TikTok can be repurposed across other platforms, expanding reach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing scrutiny regarding user data and privacy issues could limit brand engagement. • The potential for viral backlash or controversy could harm a brand’s image quickly. • With other platforms like Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts copying TikTok’s format, it faces increasing competition. • Overexposure to ads or branded content may lead to audience disengagement. • Brands need to be careful with cultural nuances, as TikTok's global audience may react differently to certain content or messaging.

Source: developed by the author.

CHAPTER 5. SOCIAL NETWORKS: CONTENT ANALYSIS

First, we analyzed the platforms used by Ukrainian B2B campaigns. To do this, we took a sample of 20 well-known companies (financial, investment, legal, service, consulting and manufacturing) and tracked which platforms they used to broadcast their communications.

Table 9. Overview of the use of social media for public communication in Ukraine

	Facebook	YouTube	Instagram	LinkedIn	Telegram	TikTok	X
	<i>The platform is actively used and updated with content on a regular basis.</i>						
	<i>The company has this social network as one of its communication platforms. However, the content is irregular and occasional.</i>						
	<i>The company does not use the platform for communication.</i>						
Investment sector							
SCM (investment group)							
BGV (investment group)							
ICU (investment group)							
Dragon Capital (investment group)							
Law firms							
Aequo (law firm)							
Asters (law firm)							
Sayenko Kharenko (law firm)							
Service sector							
SoftServe							
Sigma Software							
Intellias							
Consulting							
Deloitte Ukraine							
PwC Ukraine							
KPMG Ukraine							
EBS							
Manufacturing sector							
Interpipe							
ArcelorMittal UA							
Nibulon							
Zaporizhstal							
Metinvest							

Source: developed by the author.

In the B2B segment, companies prefer Facebook because of the quality of the audience, its activity, professional discussions in comments and groups, dedicated audience clusters and support for long-form text communication.

Despite the growing popularity of video formats, YouTube is not very popular among B2B brands. Companies have channels, but fill them with infrequent, ad-hoc content. Few companies, mainly in consulting sector, are developing expert content through video blogs and video interviews.

Social networks such as Instagram and LinkedIn are popular with B2B businesses, but the platforms have completely different audiences and objectives. LinkedIn is used by Ukrainian B2B companies that need to interact with an international audience. Therefore, communication in the Ukrainian segment of LinkedIn is mostly in English and has vivid connection with global trends. Instagram, on the other hand, is chosen by companies that have a strong visual component to their business and need to demonstrate something in terms of visual communication (such as large industrial companies). Instagram is also a tool for companies if their stakeholders include a younger, more active audience that needs to be kept up to date.

Telegram is used as a communication platform by 50% of the companies we studied. This platform is appreciated for its ease of use and the rapid distribution of information through the channel format. Such channels became particularly popular after the beginning of a large-scale war in Ukraine. Therefore, if the company's goal is to quickly share news on specific topics, the Telegram channel format is an obvious choice. The platform is also often used to communicate internal corporate information. Consulting and IT companies distribute educational content by organizing streams of this type of information into educational channels for employees to reach a wider audience.

TikTok and X are not popular social networks for B2B sector. TikTok has more of an entertainment purpose and requires significant effort to generate quality content. And X (formerly Twitter) generally has a small audience and has mainly covered social and political aspects in recent years.

With purpose to classify communications, we have developed a categorizer of social media posts based on topics: publications to develop an opinion leadership; publications to demonstrate industry leadership; publications promoting corporate and business culture; publications on charity and war. For each type of the posts, we outline main goal, objectives, formats and social networks (Table 10).

Table 10. Categories of publications by content component

Description	Formats	Social networks
<i>Type: Publications to develop an opinion leadership</i>		
focus on company-specific topics that provide plain-language coverage of newsworthy events that are important to the company and the industry as a whole.	Publications-Reviews/Video Reviews, Retranslation of top international news, Expert columns, Publications – Opinions, Ratings, Research articles, Interviews (video interviews).	Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, Telegram
<i>Type: Publications to demonstrate industry leadership</i>		
focus on the company's milestones, results, new projects, innovations, contributions to the economy, such as paid taxes, investments, partnerships, and other significant corporate activities; highlight the company's leadership in the industry, impact on the market, its role in shaping market trends and strengthening the Ukrainian economy or a particular sector in Ukraine.	Company news, infographics and text publications about business results, ratings with company presence, updates, announcements, short reports, before and after format, shared posts about new agreements or strategic partnerships, publications about participation in various conferences or forums, comments from company employees on business topics, short videos about effective business operations, storytelling (success stories), interviews with top management about development strategy, digital reports and digests.	Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, X
<i>Type: Publications promoting corporate and business culture</i>		
focus on showcasing the company's internal environment, values, team achievements, and the overall work culture. They highlight the company's commitment to creating a positive, inclusive, and innovative workplace	Announcements of new company hires, short interviews with team members, behind-the-scenes looks at company events and day-to-day work, stories about team achievements, publications about company initiatives and community involvement, texts and videos about company values and culture, celebrations of diversity and inclusion events, short videos and photo galleries of team-building events, publications about work-life balance, stories about employees' hobbies and activities	Instagram, TikTok, Facebook
<i>Type: Publications on charity and war (Ukrainian context, including broader CSR)</i>		
focus on the company's efforts to support humanitarian initiatives, provide aid during the war, and contribute to the broader social stability of Ukraine	Stories and reports on donations and aid provided, updates on partnerships with NGOs and charitable organizations, employee volunteer spotlights and interviews, infographics and videos about the company's CSR initiatives, posts about fundraising events and campaigns, communication about the company's long-term commitment to rebuilding and recovery efforts, celebrations of successful CSR projects and their outcomes, blog posts and	Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, X

	columns on the importance of corporate responsibility during crises.	
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Source: developed by the author.

The publications to *develop an opinion leadership* (publications on changing trends, legislative initiatives, recommendations on various topics, ratings, reviews of innovations, reactions to high-profile cases, etc.) have the following objectives (Fig 2):

- to develop the company's position as an opinion leader, demonstrating expertise in its industry and thereby increasing trust in the company and its initiatives.
 - to attract the attention of stakeholders through useful and relevant content.
- Conventionally, this looks like cross-selling: by selling experience and knowledge, B2B companies sell their own services and goods.
- another important aim of this type of message is to educate, i.e. to improve the knowledge base of the core audience. Through such social media posts, companies explain complex issues in simple language, helping readers to better understand the most important things about the industry and the company's position on a particular issue.

KPMG Ukraine
12,208 followers
4d ·

54% of Ukrainian CEOs are confident in the growth of their companies in 2024, in wartime.

Look for this and other insights in the new study by KPMG in Ukraine — "Ukrainian Business through the Eyes of Executives 2024", which reveals the strategies, prior and moods of the country's business leaders.

The study demonstrates how Ukrainian business:

- integrates ESG principles for sustainable development;
- invests in technology, including generative AI;
- rebuilds approaches to working with talents;
- remains optimistic even in the most difficult conditions.

"Even in the most difficult times, Ukrainian business demonstrates resilience and readiness for change. We believe in Ukraine's enormous potential and see opportunities for its recovery," Andriy Tsyymbal, Managing Partner of KPMG in Ukraine.

We are grateful to the leaders who shared their experience and vision.

Download the full report and learn more <https://lnkd.in/d/dukmXNtd>

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KPMG

Український бізнес очима керівників та керівниць
2024

EBS

Нові податки: що зміниться для громадян і бізнесу? 🤔

Сьогодні детальніше розберемося в новому податковому законі, який викликав чимал резонанс серед населення.

Основні зміни стосуються збільшення ставок військового збору, податку на доходи фіз осіб та нового підходу до оподаткування для різних груп платників податків. ... **Більше**

Минулого тижня Президент підписав закон і підписався податків, який вже вступає у з 1-го грудня.

Цей закон встановлює найбільше податків навантаження за останні десятиліття, за його вже виступили назвали історичним.

Далі розберемося, що зміниться

EBS

СТАВКА ВІЙСЬКОВОГО ЗБОРУ (ВЗ) ЗРОСТАЄ З 1.5% ДО 5%.

Збільшиться оподаткування осіб, які перебувають на військовій службі (ВЗ).

Наприклад, якщо пенсіяєр із зарплатою 20 000 грн сплачував 300 грн (ВЗ) за місяць, то після змін він має сплачувати 1 000 грн.

ФОП І І 2 ГРУП

Уточнюємо: якщо підприємство фізичної особи з оборотом 10% від попереднього періоду (100 грн на місяць), для них це будуть додатково 3000 грн на рік.

ФОП 3 ГРУПИ

Складає окремі платники податку.

Лінійні підприємці з оборотом до 100 000 грн на місяць.

Індивідуальні підприємці з оборотом до 100 000 грн на місяць.

+4

AEQUO Law Firm зараз тут: Касаційний Господарський суд у складі Верховного Суду
22 листопад о 14:38 · Київ ·

Судовий індекс 2024: відкритий діалог із судовою владою

European Business Association у партнерстві з AEQUO презентували щорічне експертне дослідження «Судовий індекс» у Касаційному господарському суді у складі Верховного Суду у фокусі обговорення були основні компоненти дослідження:

- оцінка факторів організації та діяльності судової системи;
- оцінка змін в судовій системі за останні 5 років.

Olena Pertsova, партнерка AEQUO:

«Бізнес має системний запит на ефективний, своєчасний та об'єктивний захист поруш прав. Дані Судового індексу демонструють, що очікуванням бізнесу більше відповідає господарський суди. При цьому значне поле для розвитку точно існує: прогрес в деяких показниках співіснує з регресом в інших. В цьому аспекті готовність судової влади до відкритого діалогу є особливо цінною, і цей діалог має продовжуватися».

Вже другий рік поспіль AEQUO виступає партнером дослідження ЕВА «Судовий індекс» барометром довіри бізнесу до судової влади в Україні. Детальніше про результати цього дослідження: <https://bit.ly/3CzoPyR>.

AEQUO

Судовий індекс 2024: відкритий діалог із судовою владою

Презентація дослідження

Безпечно заїжджаємо у зиму
читайте рекомендації в описі

Безпечно заїжджаємо у зиму. Завантаження та розвантаження в зимові умови. Дізнайтеся більше про правила безпеки та рекомендації щодо роботи в зимові умови.

Для рекомендацій та фактів для бізнесу: www.kpmg.com/ua

Figure 2. Examples of the publications to develop an opinion leadership.

Source: developed based on the open data of social networks

Such publications receive high engagement, more likes, shares and comments. The audience is eager to ask clarifying questions, challenge certain conclusions, discuss various issues and make adjustments. In general, the audience, which is also aware of the context, tries to complement such communication, to become part of it and to extend the information field of the newsworthy events.

Publications to **demonstrate industry leadership** highlight the company's leadership in the industry, impact on the market, its role in shaping market trends and strengthening the Ukrainian economy or a particular sector in Ukraine. Examples of the publications to demonstrate industry leadership are shown in Fig. 3.

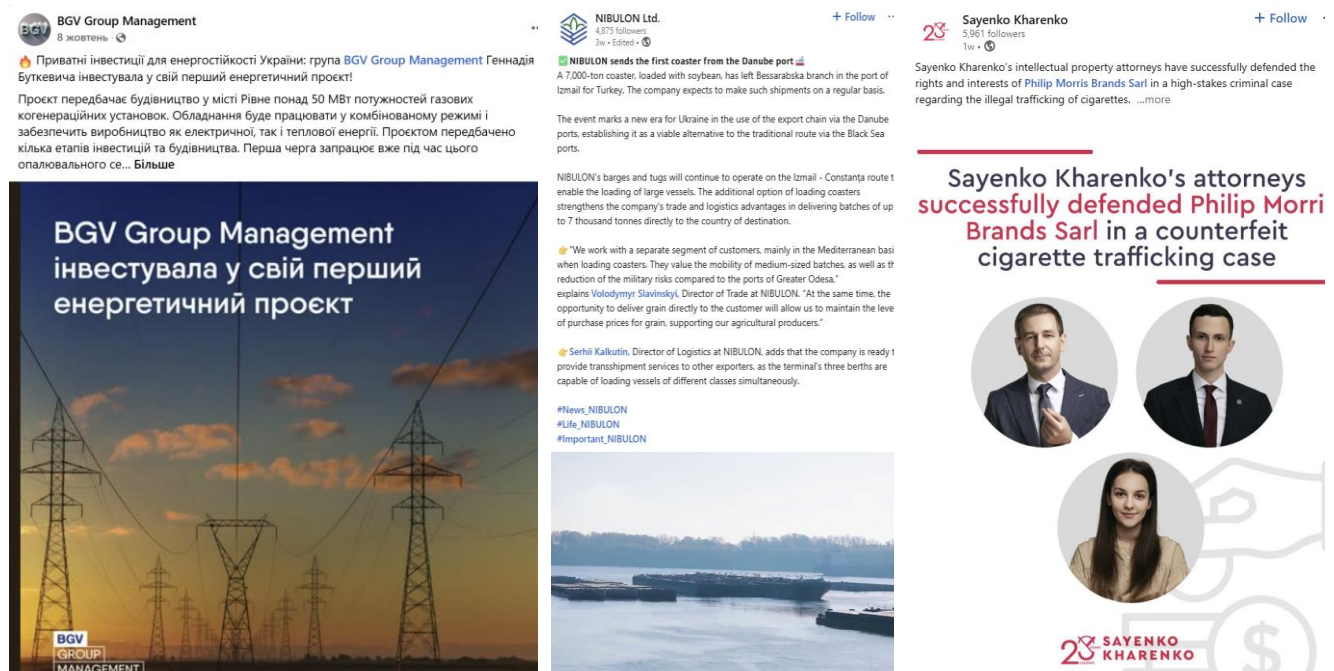


Figure 3. Examples of the publications to demonstrate industry leadership.

Source: developed based on the open data of social networks

The following objectives of such publications could be outlined:

- to strengthen or develop a position as a key player in the sector. The company reinforces its reputation as an industry leader by sharing its achievements and the scale of its projects;

- to reinforce the reputation of a reliable partner by highlighting the company's continuous development, stability, systematic communication and openness through the constant publication of business data;
- to attract the attention of existing and potential stakeholders and an unspoken invitation to collaborate by demonstrating the company's commitment, flexibility, strategic approach and constant desire for growth and innovation;
- similar to the publications used to develop opinion leadership, these publications also have an educational function, informing the public about the company's role in shaping the industry landscape and contributing to social development.

Such publications usually attract a high level of attention from stakeholders and competitors as they allow them to learn more about the company's agenda, strategy, positioning and key achievements. Such publications are closely linked to the business statistics and results that form the content basis of the communication. Audience engagement and trust grow through regular publication of achievements and the image of a transparent company that proactively shapes the information landscape. Such publications also help to find a common communication ground with potential partners, who receive signals about the company's ambitions and successes and may even become part of the information community of a particular brand. Sometimes the company's demonstration of transparency and openness encourages partners to make contact.

Publications *promoting corporate and business culture* often feature employee stories, team-building activities, HR initiatives, and other aspects that contribute to a strong corporate culture (Fig. 4).

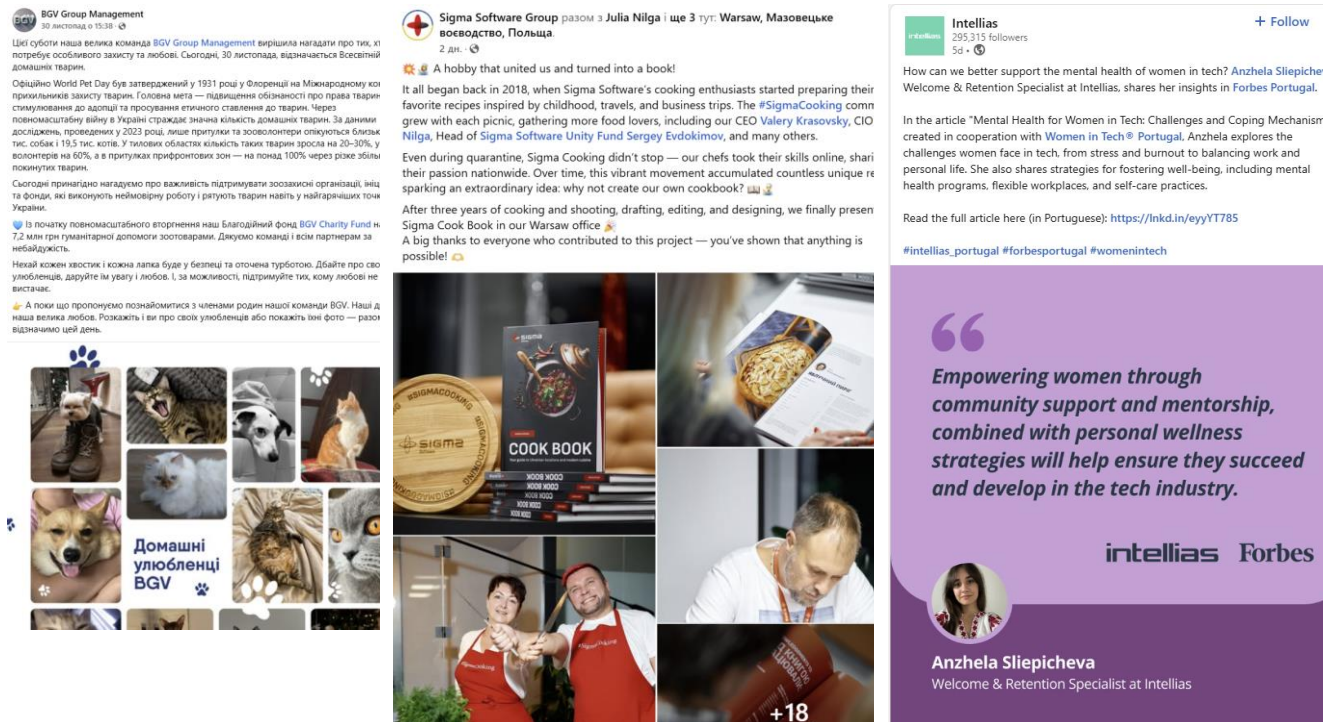


Figure 4. Examples of the publications to promote corporate and business culture.

Source: developed based on the open data of social networks.

The objectives of such publications:

- to enhance the company's image as an attractive employer by demonstrating a supportive and dynamic working environment. This helps to attract the best talent and retain existing employees, reinforcing the company's image as a market leader;
- to create an image of a strong corporate community and develop a sense of belonging among employees by recognizing their achievements, milestones and contributions. This helps to build loyalty and motivation within the team;
- to add an emotional context to rational B2B communications, which helps to 'humanize' messages and image, helps to develop trust in the company and brings it closer to the recipients of information through the informal positioning in such publications. By sharing information about its daily activities, values and culture, the company creates an atmosphere of openness with stakeholders and the public;

- to inform audiences about the company's values and mission by sharing stories and examples of how they are implemented in daily operations. This helps to align public perceptions with the company's core principles.

Such publications typically generate high engagement from both employees and external audiences. Regularly sharing content about corporate culture can enhance employee satisfaction and attract potential candidates who resonate with the company's values. Additionally, these posts strengthen relationships with stakeholders by showcasing the company's commitment to ethical practices. By promoting transparency and openness, the company can build trust and credibility, making it a preferred partner in the industry.

Publications on charity and war (Ukrainian context, including broader CSR) highlight the company's commitment to social responsibility, community support, and ethical practices during times of crisis. The objectives of such publications:

- to demonstrate the company's commitment to humanitarian aid by showing its contribution to relief efforts, support for displaced people and partnerships with charities.
- to present the company's story in the context of the impact of the war – both on the business (losses, recovery, risks, challenges) and on the people.
- to build a positive corporate image by highlighting the company's role in supporting the community and contributing to national efforts in times of war.
- to build trust and loyalty among stakeholders by demonstrating commitment to social goals and enhancing the company's reputation as a responsible and ethical business.

Such publications tend to resonate strongly with both internal and external audiences. They help create a strong, positive brand image and build a sense of community and solidarity. Regularly sharing charity and CSR content can enhance a company's reputation, attract like-minded partners and increase stakeholder trust. In addition, such posts underline the company's commitment to social goals and collective efforts to support in difficult times. Such publications have a high engagement rate among internal audiences, but global B2B audience is more reserved, especially in the area of military

support. As a result, companies are using very balanced communications on platforms with a large segment of the international business audience. Examples of the publications on charity and war are shown in Fig. 5.

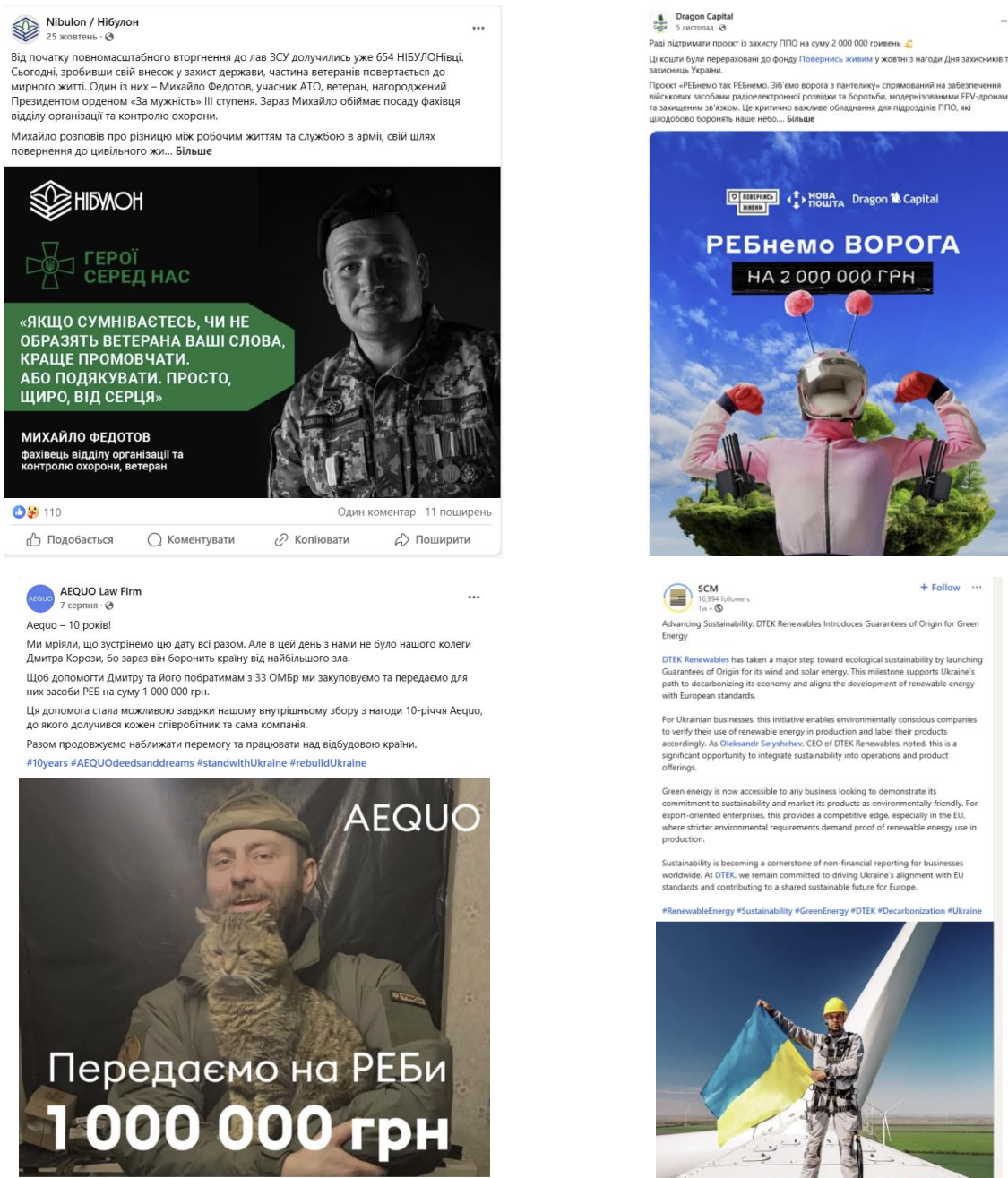


Figure 5. Examples of the publications on charity and war.

Source: developed based on the open data of social networks

CHAPTER 6. ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY OF COMMUNICATION EXPERTS ON THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY UKRAINIAN B2B COMPANIES

The survey was designed to confirm or challenge the hypotheses explored in this paper about the impact of B2B social media communications on industry leadership and the strategy of business.

6.2 Use of social media platforms

The most popular platforms among respondents were Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. Specifically, 90% of respondents use Facebook, 80% use Instagram and 65% use LinkedIn. YouTube is also a popular platform, used by 50% of respondents, and Telegram by 40%. Less popular are X (formerly Twitter) and TikTok, used by 25% and 20% of respondents respectively (Fig.6).

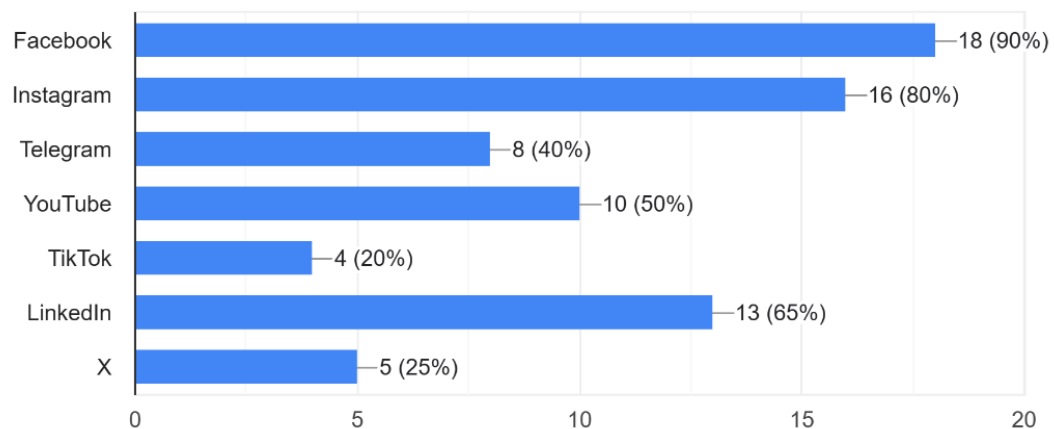


Figure 6. Use of social media platforms.

Source: Visualized by using Google Instruments. Based on survey results.

The service/IT sector prefers a wider range of platforms, including newer ones such as TikTok, while the manufacturing and legal sectors are more focused on LinkedIn and X. For example, 25% of service/IT companies use TikTok, compared to 5% of manufacturing companies. At the same time, 30% of manufacturing companies use LinkedIn, compared to 15% of service/IT companies.

These data suggest that different industries have their own preferences for social media platforms, which may be related to their specific needs and stakeholders.

6.3 Impact on competitiveness and brand image

The analysis of the survey data showed that social media plays an important role in enhancing the competitiveness and building a leading brand image of Ukrainian B2B companies. In particular, 85% of respondents strongly agreed or rather agreed that social media helps their company demonstrate uniqueness and differentiate itself from competitors (Fig.7). This shows that companies are actively using social media to create and maintain their unique positioning in the marketplace.

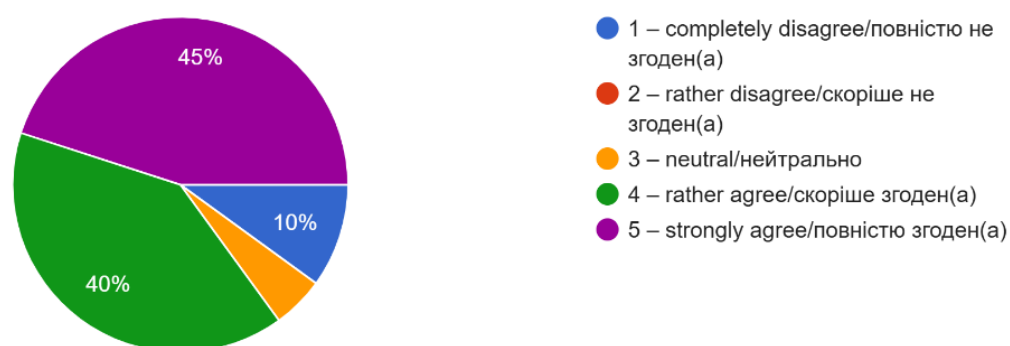


Figure 7. Social media as a driver of competitiveness and brand image for Ukrainian B2B companies.

Source: Visualized by using Google Instruments. Based on survey results.

In addition, 90% of respondents agreed that an active social media presence increases their competitiveness. This confirms that social media is an important tool for attracting new customers and retaining existing ones. 80% of respondents also said that social media plays a crucial role in building and strengthening their brand image as industry experts. This underlines the importance of social media in building thought leadership and increasing trust in the company.

6.4 Strategic use of social media

The survey data shows that Ukrainian B2B companies are actively using social media to achieve their strategic goals. 55% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they have a clear strategy for building industry leadership through social media. At the same time, no respondents completely disagreed with this question (Fig.8). This shows

that companies understand the importance of a strategic approach to using social media to achieve their business objectives.

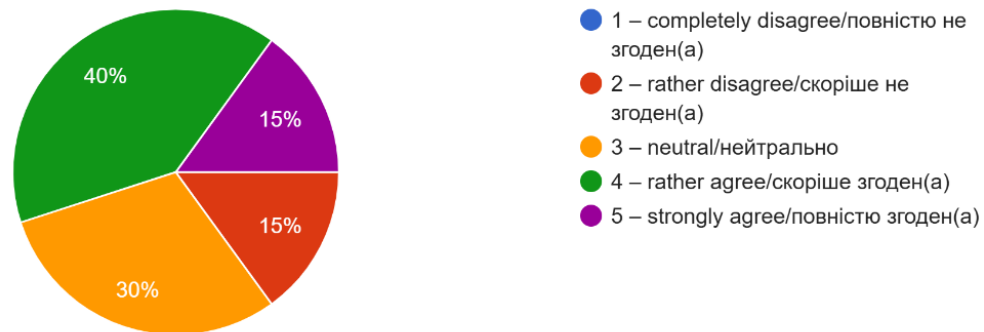


Figure 8. Strategic use of social media by Ukrainian B2B companies.

Source: Visualized by using Google Instruments. Based on survey results.

6.5 Building relationships and sharing knowledge

Social media also play an important role in sharing information. 75% of respondents agreed that social media provides a platform for sharing ideas and industry knowledge with stakeholders. This underlines the importance and effectiveness of social media as a tool for cooperation, contributing to the efficiency of both communication and business processes.

80% of respondents agreed that social media makes it easier to engage industry leaders in collaboration. This highlights the role of social media as a platform for building partnerships and engaging industry influencers.

At the same time, despite our assumption that social media plays an important role in building long-term relationships, analysis of the survey data showed that only 35% of respondents agreed that social media provides an opportunity to build long-term partnerships. 45% of respondents were neutral, while 20% disagreed with this statement (Fig.9).

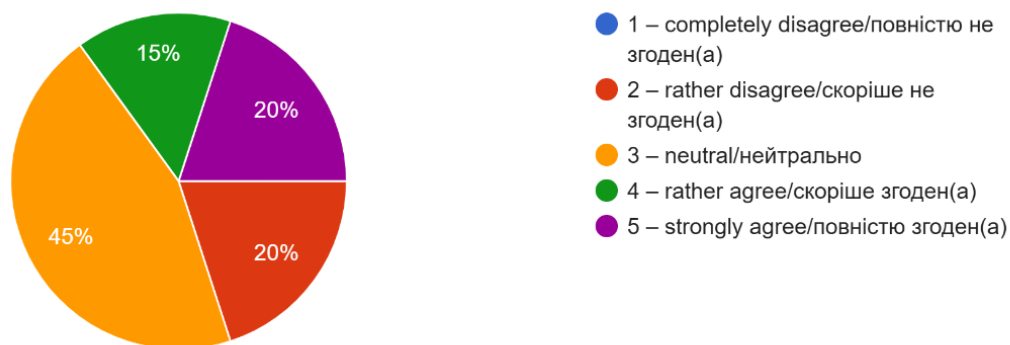


Figure 9. Social media's role in building long-term partnerships for Ukrainian B2B companies.

Source: Visualized by using Google Instruments. Based on survey results.

This suggests that while social media has the potential to facilitate relationship building, a long-term partnership requires deeper and more systematic engagement than just a social media presence. This is especially true given the oversaturation of the information space and the thematic distraction of public communications. Therefore, in order to strengthen long-term partnerships, companies will need to develop more targeted and comprehensive strategies, where the use of social media is only one of the tools.

6.6 Business strategy

The survey confirmed that social media play an important role in shaping business strategy and supporting innovation in Ukrainian B2B companies. 70% of respondents agreed that social media help them to monitor market changes and industry trends and to adapt their business strategies accordingly. This suggests that companies are using social media to monitor market conditions and adapt their strategies to changes.

85% of respondents agreed that social media is a tool for understanding competitors' strategies and adapting their own accordingly (Fig.10). This shows that companies are using social media to monitor the competitive environment and develop effective strategies.

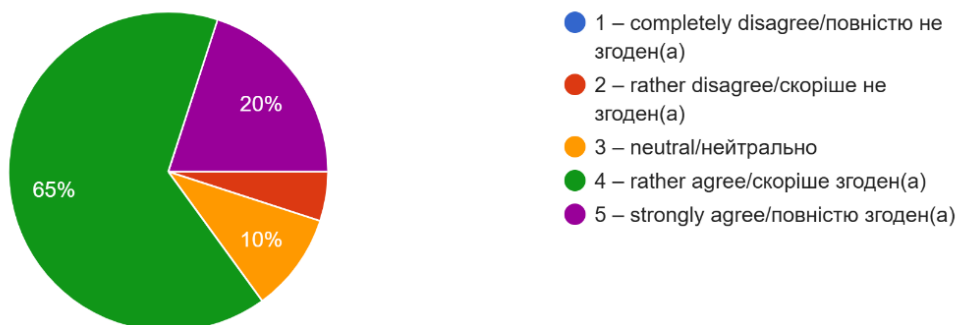


Figure 10. Social media for competitor analysis and strategy development.

Source: Visualized by using Google Instruments. Based on survey results.

6.7 Innovation

We had assumed that social media plays an important role in developing innovation in the business strategies of Ukrainian B2B companies. However, analysis of the survey data showed that only 35% of respondents agreed that social media influence the development of new offers, products or services. In particular, 5% of respondents strongly agreed and 30% rather agreed with this statement (Fig.11). At the same time, 35% of respondents were neutral and 30% rather disagreed. These results suggest that B2B companies are not fully exploiting the potential of social media to monitor opportunities and develop new products or services, particularly given the complexity of the B2B market and its offerings. The high percentage of neutral responses may indicate that companies need additional knowledge and strategies to effectively use social media in their innovation processes.

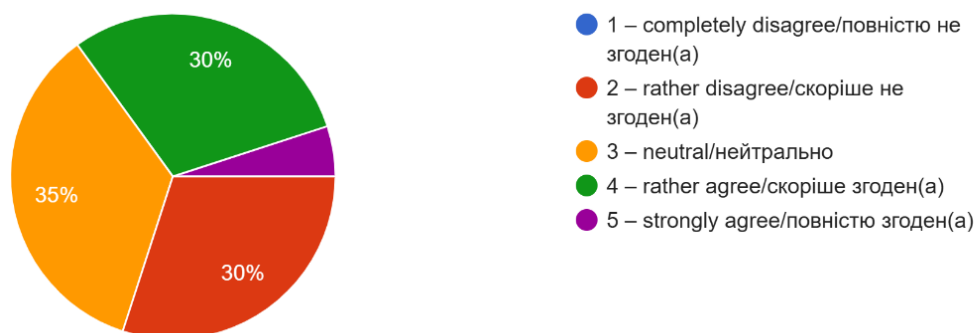


Figure 11. Impact of social media on development of new offers within B2B companies.

Source: Visualized by using Google Instruments. Based on survey results.

When asked about the use of social media to support business innovation, respondents' responses were distributed as follows: 35% of respondents agreed with the statement. In particular, 10% of respondents strongly agreed and 25% rather agreed. At the same time, 50% of respondents remained neutral and 15% rather disagreed. These data show that half of the respondents do not have a clear position on the use of social media to support business innovation. This may indicate that social media is not sufficiently integrated into companies' innovation processes.

6.8 Feedback and business processes

Social media also plays an important role in improving business processes, particularly by providing feedback from stakeholders.

60% of respondents agreed that feedback received through social media helps to improve business processes. This highlights the importance of social media as a tool for gathering feedback and implementing updates in business processes.

65% of respondents confirmed that the effectiveness of social media communications, stakeholder feedback on publications and tracking audience activity are important KPIs for their organization (Fig.12). This suggests that companies are actively using social media to evaluate the effectiveness of their communications strategies and make decisions based on the data they receive.

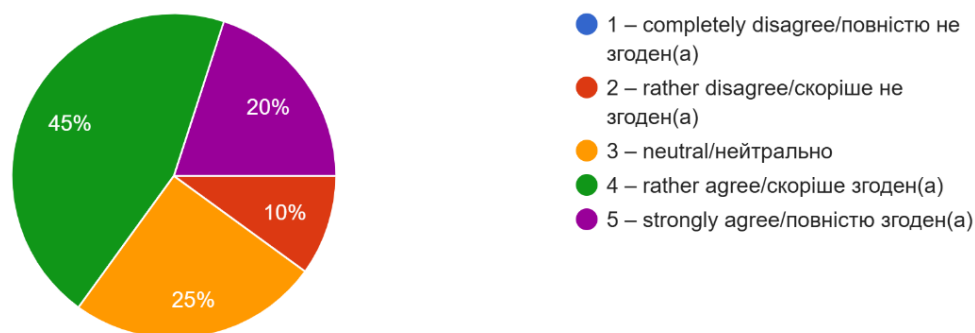


Figure 12. Importance of social media KPIs for B2B companies.

Source: Visualized by using Google Instruments. Based on survey results.

It is also interesting to note that 70% of respondents confirmed that they use social media to monitor potential business risks and find solutions. In other words, social media enables companies to respond quickly to changing market conditions, identify potential risks and develop effective strategies to overcome them. This underlines the importance of integrating social media into risk management and strategic planning processes.

CONCLUSION

The study highlights the significant role of social media in improving the competitiveness, leadership image and strategic positioning of Ukrainian B2B companies. The data shows that social media is not only a communication tool, but also a critical component of business strategy, risk management and stakeholder engagement.

First, the study demonstrates that strategic use of platforms like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, Telegram, and X supports Ukrainian B2B companies in achieving industry leadership. By leveraging these platforms for thought leadership and industry-specific content, companies can effectively position themselves as credible, trustworthy, and innovative market leaders. Engaging with audiences through tailored, high-quality content enhances corporate reputation and attracts stakeholders who value transparency and expertise. This is particularly critical in B2B environments, where decision-making processes prioritize trust and long-term partnerships over transactional benefits.

Second, the research highlights the dual role of social media as both a reactive and proactive tool in strategic business operations. On one hand, platforms enable companies to monitor market trends, track competitor strategies, and gather valuable stakeholder feedback in real time. On the other hand, they serve as active channels for driving innovation and influencing customer perceptions. Although the data indicates that many Ukrainian B2B companies have yet to fully integrate social media into their innovation processes, the potential for growth remains significant. Companies that effectively harness the insights from social media analytics can identify emerging opportunities, refine business strategies, and differentiate their offerings in competitive markets.

Moreover, the study underscores the importance of social media in strengthening stakeholder relationships. Platforms enable direct and transparent communication, fostering trust and collaboration with partners, customers, and industry influencers. However, while social media facilitates initial connections, the research indicates that building long-term partnerships still requires deeper, more systematic engagement beyond

digital interactions. This finding suggests that social media should complement, rather than replace, traditional relationship-building strategies.

Social media also plays a pivotal role in corporate resilience and reputation management, particularly in the context of Ukraine's unique socio-political environment. Companies that actively engage in charitable initiatives and demonstrate social responsibility through their platforms can build strong, positive brand identities. These efforts resonate with both domestic and international audiences, enhancing the company's appeal as an ethical and socially conscious business partner.

Finally, the study identifies key challenges that Ukrainian B2B companies must address to maximize the potential of social media. These include the oversaturation of digital content, the volatility of platform algorithms, and the need for continuous investment in high-quality content creation. Companies must adopt comprehensive and adaptive strategies that balance immediate digital engagement with sustained relationship-building efforts.

Social media has become an indispensable component of modern business strategy for Ukrainian B2B companies. By aligning social media efforts with broader strategic goals, companies can unlock its full potential as a tool for industry leadership, innovation, and trust-building. The integration of social media into strategic planning not only enhances corporate competitiveness but also positions businesses for long-term success in an increasingly digital and interconnected global market.

The findings of this research underline the transformative role of social media in the B2B sector, particularly in the Ukrainian business context. Social media platforms, once considered primarily consumer-oriented, have become critical tools for promoting industry leadership, improving strategic decision-making and building trust among stakeholders. This study shows that social media is more than just a communication medium — it is a dynamic driver of business strategy, competitiveness and innovation.

APPENDIX 1. SURVEYS

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COMMUNICATION TEAMS REPRESENTING B2B COMPANIES IN VARIOUS INDUSTRIES

A) Block: General questions

1. Select your company's industry:
 - Finance/investment
 - Legal sector
 - Service company
 - IT
 - Consulting
2. Specify your gender:
 - Male
 - Female
 - Other
3. What is your age?
/age scale/
4. Which social media platforms does your company use for communication? (*multiple choice*)
 - Facebook
 - Instagram
 - Telegram
 - YouTube
 - TikTok
 - LinkedIn
 - X

B) Block: Using social media to lead the industry

1. Social media helps our company demonstrate uniqueness in the industry and differentiate us from our competitors in the industry.

- 1 – completely disagree
- 2 – rather disagree
- 3 – neutral
- 4 – rather agree
- 5 – strongly agree

2. An active presence on social media increases our competitiveness.

- 1 - completely disagree
- 2 - rather disagree
- 3 - neutral
- 4 - rather agree
- 5 - strongly agree

3. Social media platforms play a crucial role in effectively shaping and enhancing our brand's image as an expert in the field.

- 1 - completely disagree
- 2 - rather disagree
- 3 - neutral
- 4 - rather agree
- 5 - strongly agree

4. We have a clear strategy for building industry leadership through social media.

- 1 - completely disagree
- 2 - rather disagree
- 3 - neutral
- 4 - rather agree
- 5 - strongly agree

5. Social media makes it easier to involve industry leaders in cooperation.

- 1 - completely disagree
- 2 - rather disagree
- 3 - neutral
- 4 - rather agree
- 5 - strongly agree

6. Social media facilitate building long-term relationships with partners.

- 1 - completely disagree
- 2 - rather disagree
- 3 - neutral
- 4 - rather agree
- 5 - strongly agree

7. Social networks provide us with a platform to exchange ideas and industry knowledge with stakeholders. And this exchange is often beneficial.

- 1 - completely disagree
- 2 - rather disagree
- 3 - neutral
- 4 - rather agree
- 5 - strongly agree

8. We actively engage with industry influencers and thought leaders through our social media channels.

- 1 - completely disagree
- 2 - rather disagree

3 - neutral

4 - rather agree

5 - strongly agree

9. Our stakeholders often learn about our new projects and achievements through social media.

1 - completely disagree

2 - rather disagree

3 - neutral

4 - rather agree

5 - strongly agree

10. Social media as a communication tool allows us to demonstrate our expertise in the field and build credibility.

1 - completely disagree

2 - rather disagree

3 - neutral

4 - rather agree

5 - strongly agree

B) Block: Impact of social media communication on business strategies

1. Social media activities influence the development of new offers, products or services.

1 - completely disagree

2 - rather disagree

3 - neutral

4 - rather agree

5 - strongly agree

2. Social media helps monitor market changes, industry trends and adjust our business strategies accordingly.

1 - completely disagree

2 - rather disagree

3 - neutral

4 - rather agree

5 - strongly agree

3. We use social media to understand the needs and track preferences of our stakeholders.

1 - completely disagree

2 - rather disagree

3 - neutral

4 - rather agree

5 - strongly agree

4. Social media is a tool for understanding competitor strategies and adapting our own accordingly.

1 - completely disagree

2 - rather disagree

3 - neutral

4 - rather agree

5 - strongly agree

5. Social media data supports decision-making in refining our B2B business strategies.

1 - completely disagree

2 - rather disagree

3 - neutral

4 - rather agree

5 - strongly agree

6. Our company uses social media to support business innovation.

1 - completely disagree

2 - rather disagree

3 - neutral

4 - rather agree

5 - strongly agree

7. Social media plays a role in shaping our business culture.

1 - completely disagree

2 - rather disagree

3 - neutral

4 - rather agree

5 - strongly agree

8. The feedback we receive on social media helps us make improvements in our business processes.

1 - completely disagree

2 - rather disagree

3 - neutral

4 - rather agree

5 - strongly agree

9. The effectiveness of social media communications, stakeholder feedback on publications, and tracking audience activity are important KPIs for our company.

1 - completely disagree

2 - rather disagree

3 - neutral

4 - rather agree

5 - strongly agree

10. We use social media to monitor potential business risks and seek answers on the best plan to respond to them.

1 - completely disagree

2 - rather disagree

3 - neutral

4 - rather agree

5 - strongly agree

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