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ON THE FORMATION OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES OF A PR-SPECIALIST

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Abstract

Relevance. Improvement of forms and methods of PR-experts preparation is of immediate relevance. The authors consider the instilling of communication management and information-analytical knowledge and skills to students in the learning process to be an effective alternative to the pandemic of “clip” thinking, the danger of which the President of the Russian Federation warned about in the strategic planning document (the Executive Order № 203 of 09.05.2017 “On the 2017–2030 Strategy for the Development of an Information Society in the Russian Federation”).

Goal is to cover the issues related to the development of the thematic content of academic disciplines of the information-technology unit to prepare PR-specialists (educational programme 42.03.01 “Advertising and Public Relations”), ensuring the formation of not only versatile, but also professional competences. In order to achieve this goal it is necessary to explore the PR-interaction field formed by both business interests and regulatory documents.

Procedure and methods. The research is based on the information modeling of the PR-interaction (communication) and systemic analysis of the information technology control of the PR-expert’s activity. The analysis of current regulatory documents in the PR-industry, projects and analytical materials of professionally-oriented communities ensured the relevance and practical value of the results obtained.

Scientific novelty and/or theoretical and/or practical significance. Regarding the information-technology training of future professionals, the research results allow optimizing the process of professional education to overcome the “gap” between the academic model of a graduate (supply model of an educational organization) and the demand model formed by the labour market. This trend is supported by the shift to the new generation educational standards (FSES 3++)¹. The results of the study can be extrapolated to the practice of more than 200 educational institutions with state accreditation in the educational programme 42.03.01 “Advertising and Public Relations”, and solve the problem of preparation of a specialist, professionally demanded in the labour market.

Conclusions. The authors offer the wording of corporate PR-specialist professional competencies, developed by the information-technology subjects; the structure-functional scheme of the “Information Technologies in PR-activities” academic discipline is given and the scope of practical exercises and laboratory works; aimed at forming the presupposed professional competencies is detailed.

Keywords: information technology, PR-activities, professional competencies, public relations specialist, communications, educational standard

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¹ The Federal State Educational Standard of Higher Professional Education.

О ФОРМИРОВАНИИ ПРОФЕССИОНАЛЬНЫХ КОМПЕТЕНЦИЙ PR-СПЕЦИАЛИСТА

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Аннотация

Актуальность. Совершенствование форм и методов подготовки PR-специалистов в современном мире становится всё более востребованным. Эффективной альтернативой пандемии «клипового» мышления, об опасности которой предупреждал Президент в плановом документе (Распоряжении № 203 от 09.05.2017 «О Стратегии развития информационного общества в Российской Федерации на 2017–2030 годы»), авторы считают привитие обучающимся коммуникативно-управленческих и информационно-аналитических знаний и навыков в процессе обучения.

Цель данного исследования заключается в освещении вопросов, связанных с разработкой тематического наполнения учебных дисциплин информационно-технологического блока для подготовки PR-специалистов (направление подготовки 42.03.01 «Реклама и связи с общественностью»), обеспечивающих формирование не только и не столько универсальных, сколько профессиональных компетенций. Для достижения этой цели необходимо исследовать пространство PR-взаимодействия, формируемое как бизнес-интересами, так и нормативными документами.

Методы исследования. Исследование проведено на основе информационного моделирования пространства PR-взаимодействия (коммуницирования) и системного анализа информационно-технологического среза деятельности PR-специалиста. Анализ действующих нормативных документов в PR-индустрии, проектов и аналитических материалов профессионально-ориентированных сообществ обеспечили актуальность и практическую ценность полученных результатов.

Научная новизна и/или теоретическая и/или практическая значимость. В части, касающейся информационно-технологической подготовки будущих специалистов, результаты исследования позволяют оптимизировать процесс профессионального образования для преодоления «разрыва» между академической моделью выпускника (модель предложения образовательной организации) и моделью спроса, формируемой рынком труда. Этот тренд подкреплён переходом к образовательным стандартам нового поколения (ФГОС ВО 3++). Результаты исследования могут быть экстраполированы в практику более 200 образовательных организаций, имеющих государственную аккредитацию по направлению подготовки 42.03.01 «Реклама и связи с общественностью» и решающих задачу формирования профессионально востребованного на рынке труда специалиста.

Выводы. Предложена формулировка профессиональных компетенций для корпоративного PR-специалиста, формирование которых осуществляется учебными дисциплинами информационно-технологического блока, предложена структурно-функциональная схема учебной дисциплины «Информационные технологии в PR-деятельности» и детализирована тематика практических занятий и лабораторных работ, направленных на формирование предлагаемых профессиональных компетенций.

Ключевые слова: информационные технологии, PR-деятельность, профессиональные компетенции, специалист по связям с общественностью, коммуникации, образовательный стандарт.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays the scope and nature of information technology application in business and administration is comparable to the application of special knowledge within the subject area, which causes revision of the role of information technology disciplines in the development of professional competencies and, consequently, their place in educational programs [1; 3; 4; 9].

The overall trend on strengthening the information technology component of professional activities, under the Strategy for the Development of Information Society in the Russian Federation for 2017–2030¹, is valid for the PR-industry. The main objectives of PR-activities are to build a company's image and reputation, as well as to provide information support for its operations.

In the context of the PR functioning, communication building should be seen as an information technology activity associated with the implementation of information processes: search, processing and analysis of information, synthesis of content and its external transmission. At the same time, the communicative management should cover all sectors of intergroup communication – commercial, social, public [5].

According to Rosobrnadzor, there are currently 203 educational institutions with state accreditation for 42.03.01 Advertising and Public Relations.

THE MAIN PART

The goal of this article is to discuss the development of thematic content of information-technology disciplines for the training of PR-specialists (educational programme 42.03.01 “Advertising and Public Relations”), which provides the development of not only universal, but also professional competence.

Objectives

In order to achieve this goal, it is necessary to research the PR-interaction formed

by both business interests and regulatory documents; to perform its “plane” projection defined by the “coordinate” axes: types of professional activity and professional tasks. It is the framework of this projection within which a road map of professional competencies development should be designed, and on its basis, the content of academic disciplines should be defined (regarding the information-technology disciplines).

Regulatory and methodological framework for the study. The Federal State Educational Standard of Higher Professional Education for the Educational Programme 42.03.01 “Advertising and Public Relations” (Qualification (Degree) “Bachelor”)² (hereafter – FSES HPE 42.03.01) sets only universal and general professional competencies, in particular, those of information technology nature:

- the ability to conduct search, critical analysis and synthesis of information, and apply a systematic approach to problem solving (UC-1);

- the ability to apply modern technical means and information and communication technologies in professional activity (BPC-6).

The educational standard does not formulate professional competences, referring to “relevant” professional standards and labour market requirements for specialists in the relevant field. Such approach features the new FSES HPE 3+++. Nowadays there is no professional standard for a “Public Relations Specialist” approved by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Russian Federation (Ministry of Labour of Russia) (fig. 1), though a draft standard has been proposed by the Russian Public Relations Association³.

² Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation on 08.06.2017 No. 512 “On Approval of the Federal State Educational Standard of Higher Professional Education for the Educational Programme 42.03.01 “Advertising and Public Relations” (Qualification (Degree) “Bachelor”).

³ Non-commercial partnership “Russian association of Public Relations” (RAPR) – a professional association of those involved in PR-activities. Available at: <https://www.raso.ru/profstandart.php> (accessed: 10.10.2021).

¹ Presidential Decree No. 203 of 09.05.2017 “On the Strategy for the Development of Information Society in the Russian Federation for 2017–2030”.

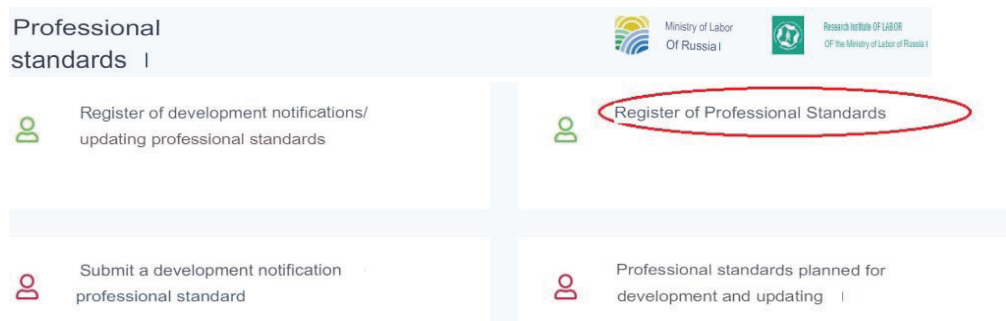


Fig. 1 / Рис. 1. Data bases of the Ministry of Labour “Professional standards” / Базы данных Минтруда «Профессиональные стандарты»

Source: Official website of the Russian Ministry of Labour.
Available at: <https://profstandart.rosmintrud.ru>. (accessed: 10.10.21).

The professional standard “Information Resource Specialist” is recommended by FSES HPE 42.03.01¹ (paragraph 3.4 of FSES HPE 42.03.01). It’s noteworthy that this standard focuses on information and communication technology specialists (RCO code № 010-2014–25)². Whereas public relations specialists (RCO code 010-2014–2432), are classified as “Professionals in business and administration”.

Research results

In order to formulate the professional competences (related to information technology) of a public relations specialist, let us compare the demands of the PR labour market (www.hh.ru, www.rabota.ru, www.superjob.ru) with the “Information Resources Specialist” professional standard (tabl. 1).

Thus, as far as the information support for company activities (information support for business processes) and building communications with consumers (B2C communications) are concerned, the “Information Resource Specialist” professional standard meets labour market demands of PR specialists. Nevertheless, it is not designed to deal

with the image and promotion of a company in the B2B and B2G communication sectors.

However, the specificity of PR activities is in their multifaceted nature³ [6]. In particular, the information-technology control of this activity should be considered from the logical levels of construction view point (tabl. 2).

The information and communication capabilities of the Internet allow us to characterize the informational PR-interaction field as a virtual [7], to put the PR-industry on the rails of the digital economy⁴.

The new generation of educational standards provides educational institutions with freedom of the educational programs “development” and, first of all, this refers to the establishment of professional competences.

The Qualification reference book for the inquiry of managers, specialists and other employees reveals professional tasks of PR-specialists through the wording of their job responsibilities⁵ and allows to determine the

¹ Order of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Russian Federation of 08.09.2014 no. 629n “On Approval of the Professional Standard “Information Resource Specialist”.

² Russian Classification on Occupations (RCO) 010-2014, adopted and enacted by Order of Rosstandart of 12.12.2014 no. 2020-st.

³ Classification of PR activities in Russia. Electronic resource of the Russian Academy of Public Relations. Available at: <http://pracademy.ru> (accessed: 10.10.2022).

⁴ Бардукова Е. Цифровой PR-сервис. Как ИТ-сервисы помогают управлять PR-процессами? Available at: <https://prexplore.ru/prtech> (accessed: 12.06.2021).

⁵ Qualification Reference Book for the Inquiry of Managers, Specialists and Other Employees (approved by the order of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of 21.08.1998, No. 37); Unified Qualification Reference Book for the Inquiry of Managers, Specialists and Other Employees (approved by the order of the Russian Ministry of Health and Social Development of 10.12.2009 No. 977).

Table 1 / Таблица 1

Comparison of labour market requirements for a PR-specialist and generalized labour functions of an information resource specialist / Сравнение требований рынка труда к специалисту по связям с общественностью и обобщённым трудовым функциям специалиста по информационным ресурсам

Functional map of PR-activity type	
Generalized labour market requirements	Generalized job functions according to the “Information Resource Specialist” professional standard
Development and implementation of a PR-strategy to build and maintain a positive image of the organization	
Content management of the official website and social media (creation, publication, promotion)	<i>Creating and editing of information resources:</i> – writing of informational material for the website; – edition of information on the website; – regulatory control over website content; – maintaining news feeds and social media presence
Building of communications with targeted audience (B2C communications), media and bloggers, advertising agencies and business contractors (B2B communications), authorities (B2G communications)	<i>Creating and editing of information resources:</i> – moderating discussions on the website, forum and social media; <i>Management of information resources:</i> – an analysis of the information needs of visitors to the website; – support of the website modernization and promotion processes

Source: compiled by the authors according to the analysis of the labour market requirements for PR-specialists and the “Information Resource Specialist” professional standard (approved by Order No. 629 n of the Russian Ministry of Labour dated 08.09.2014).

Table 2 / Таблица 2

The structure of the information interaction space of the company’s PR-service / Структура информационного пространства взаимодействия PR-службы компании

Level	Types of professional activity	Professional tasks
Missions (strategic goal designation)	organizational and managerial forward-looking and analytical	– development of a company promotion strategy; – SMM-strategy building; – objectives formulating other than profit-making (environment, charity, sponsorship, social commitment);
Roles (functional scheme for achieving the goals revealing and characterizing the mission)	marketing information technology market research	– shaping of the corporate culture; – working with target audience on electronic platforms: communication, subscribers attraction and account activity maintenance, account moderation, processing of negative reactions; – internet marketing tools applying: parsers; Mind Map; social media monitoring

Окончание табл. 2

Capabilities (controllable factors and resources)	advertising and information information technology marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – automation of data collection and systematization (parsing, social media monitoring), creation and use of Mind Map; – creating and structuring of the organization's web resources; – content management, its uniqueness protection; – promotion opportunities through public reporting implementation; – business identification means applying; – advertisement customization to the target audience
Behaviour (conducting tactics)	organizational and managerial forward-looking and analytical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – corporate governance standards; – communication channels filling and development (SMM); – building of effective interaction patterns with competitors, counterparts, customers; – social responsibility of a company
Environments (external environment, government regulators)	communication information technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – interaction with the authorities – interests lobbying – participation in business or professional associations – collaboration with bloggers, opinion leaders, use of viral marketing

Source: compiled by the authors according to the analysis of the labour market requirements for PR-specialists and the "Information Resource Specialist" professional standard (approved by Order No.629n of the Russian Ministry of Labour dated 08.09.2014).

following professional competencies (for training of a corporate PR-specialist):

- the ability to provide information and advertising support for business activities;
- the ability to provide communicational management in order to create a sustainable, positive public perception of the organization;
- the ability to interact with public administration on an e-government platform when dealing with and resolving issues related to the organization's activity.

Conclusion

The abovementioned competences, as far as knowledge and skills are concerned, are formed by means of practical exercises and laboratory works according to Table 3 [8].

According to the abovementioned statements and the FSES HPE 42.03.01 the authors offer a structure-functional scheme for the thematic content of the "Informa-

tion Technologies in PR" subject curriculum (fig. 2).

The developed structural and functional scheme (fig. 2) covers:

- the field of professional activity is advertising and public relations (paragraph 1.11 of FSES HPE 42.03.01);
- the following types of professional tasks-project, marketing (paragraph 1.12 of the FSES HPE 42.03.01).

The discipline "Information technologies in PR activity" should be focused on students' mastering of special tools for tackling real problems related to professional activity¹. Studying of such a toolkit without sufficient "immersion" in the sub-

¹ AKOS Memorandum on Methods for assessing the quality of PR-activities (KPI). Electronic resource of the Association of Consulting Companies in the Field of Public Relations (AKOS). Available at: <http://www.akospr.ru/standarty-industrii/kpi> (accessed: 12.06.21).

Table 3 / Таблица 3

Formation table of professional competencies / Таблица профессиональных компетенций

Professional competences	Topics for practical exercises and laboratory work
The ability to provide information and advertising support for business activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – creation and registration of information objects for business individualization; – HTML5 and CSS3.Modern web-development means; – Internet -marketing in search engine: SEO website optimization; – Internet marketing in contextual advertisement: Yandex.Direct and Google Ads; – the basis of website analysis (web-analytics). Yandex.Metrika and Google Analytics; – search and processing of statistic information for projects implementation in the PR-field; – marketing methods aimed at creating of a unique brand. Identity development
The ability to provide communicational management in order to create a sustainable, positive public perception of the organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – use of the platforms of professionally oriented communities to implement the PR-function; – information processing for business interests lobbying. Information technology for public discussion and examination of draft regulations; – processing and visualization of information in a company's corporate identity creation; – use of social media and blogs to communicate with target audiences (consumers)
The ability to interact with public administration on an e-government platform when dealing with and resolving issues related to the organization's activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – information technologies to provide organization with access to e-government information systems; – information Technology electronic document management in a company's communication management; – business information processing for system changes management in the business environment; – information technology for disclosure of information about a legal entity

Source: author's data.

ject area of professional activity. Therefore, students should not study this professionally oriented information technology discipline before the third year of a Bachelor's degree (sixth semester) [2]. In this case

“Information Technologies in PR-activities” allows shifting from rigid specialization to diversification of skills and abilities. The combination of professional competencies to work at the intersection of func-

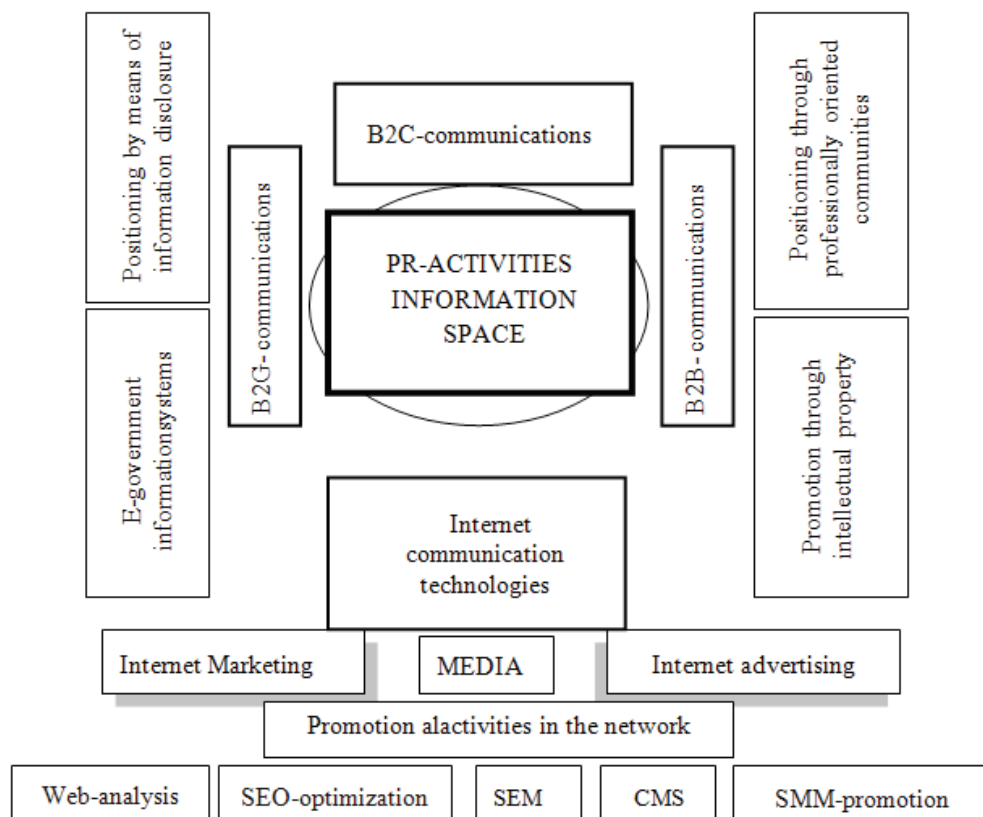


Fig. 2 / Рис. 2. Structure-functional diagram of the training discipline "Structural and functional scheme of the academic discipline "Information technologies in PR-activity" / Структурно-функциональная диаграмма учебной дисциплины «Структурно-функциональная схема учебной дисциплины «Информационные технологии в PR-деятельности»

Source: author's data.

tions (advertising and marketing, business administration, information technology), the ability to "combine" knowledge, the

possession of analytical skills become a competitive advantage of PR specialist in the labor market.

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