

Chapter 20

Transmedia Storytelling as a Corporate Communication Strategy and Its Effect on Corporate Culture

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ABSTRACT

In this study, transmedia storytelling is considered as a corporate communication instrument. The aim of the study is to question the impact of the use of transmedia storytelling in corporate communication on the corporate culture. The study, which uses literature analysis and case studies, emphasizes that concepts such as participation, collaboration, symmetrical communication, and dialogue play an important role in the formation of strong corporate cultures through transmedia storytelling in the new corporate communication scene created by new communication environments.

INTRODUCTION

Transmedia storytelling expresses the different elements of a story in different communication channels to meet the interests and expectations of the target audience. Within the corporate communication strategies, transmedia storytelling plays an active role in enabling each communication platform to form its own language according to the characteristics of the target audience groups to be reached, and to be transferred to different target groups such as employees, customers and media members.

Today, the increasing importance of corporate stories in corporate communication strategies puts them in the position of the defining actors of corporate culture and identity. In corporate communication, transmedia storytelling as a means of public relations is the art of creating coherent narratives that have the elements to bring corporate culture to life by appropriately using the media channels in order to transmit the corporate messages. Transmedia storytelling is, from this point of view, the product of corporate communications programs aimed at delivering key messages in multiple formats to each target

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group. One of its main objectives is to establish symmetrical, dynamic and interactive communication with the target groups. The use of narrative techniques to allow emulation of narration by the target audience in transmedia storytelling will contribute to the formation of corporate philosophy that focuses on transparency by transforming dialogic communication into a part of the institutional cult.

In this study, items related to the concept of transmedia storytelling will be discussed within the strategies of corporate communication from the perspective of public relations. The role of corporate stories in the creation of corporate synergies and transforming them by transferring corporate cultures to internal and external audiences will be examined. From this point of view, the subject will be analyzed through theoretical perspectives and sample applications, transmedia storytelling techniques and contributions to the creation and adoption of corporate cultures nurtured by symmetrical communication efforts of these techniques will be analyzed. Participation culture, the main element of Transmedia storytelling, will contribute to achieving the goals of symmetrical communication, along with the role of transmedia storytelling as a component of corporate communication in creating a transparent corporate culture.

CORPORATE COMMUNICATION AND ITS CHANGING FRAMEWORK

According to Jackson (1987), corporate communication is “a total communication activity generated by a company to achieve its planned objectives. According to Cornellisen and Cornellisen (2017, p.5) corporate communication is “a management function that offers a framework for the effective coordination of all internal and external communication with the overall purpose of establishing and maintaining favorable reputations with stakeholders groups upon which the organization is dependent”. Van Riel and Fombrun define corporate communication “as a set of activities involved in managing and orchestrating all internal and external communications aimed at creating favourable starting points with stakeholders an which the company depends” (2007, p. 25). Corporate communication refers to a management approach which takes its origins from the discipline of the people, but requires the integration of the communication and public relations efforts into the management strategies of the institution (Özgen and Akbayır, 2017, p. 481). Starting from these definitions, we can say that corporate communication is a management function for internal and external target groups, orchestrating public relations and communication efforts in order to achieve corporate objectives. According to Pelsmecker et al. (2001), corporate communication is influenced by corporate culture and corporate personality and corporate identity elements formed by corporate strategy. Corporate identity, corporate behavior, visual identity, and corporate communication items become visible and affect the formation of image and reputation. In other words, it is a concept related to the identity that we can express as the form of self-definition of corporate. Institutions also have personalities like individuals. In this context, corporate personality is affected both by strategic priorities and by corporate culture (Peltekoğlu, 2016, pp. 541-542). Therefore, we need to consider corporate communication in a holistic way. Corporate identity, corporate personality, corporate culture and corporate behavioral elements are important components that both form corporate communication and are influenced by the corporate communication activities of an organization.

In the twentieth century, developments in the professional realities of the concept of corporate communication have evolved in terms of concepts, models, dynamics, philosophy and applications. First of these is the changes in conceptual terminology. Public relations activities that started with the concept of the press agency evolved into corporate communication activities today. This has brought about a necessary transformation in the communication departments’ planning, implementation and evaluation

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