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**Social Networks as a Factor in Demand for Theater Goods: Experience of Moscow Theaters**

Creative industries, which are based on the production of goods and services based on creativity and talent[[1]](#footnote-0), have been hit hard by the pandemic. While the number of such organizations has continued to decline since 2016, the number of businesses declined by a record 20,100 in 2020[[2]](#footnote-1). The performing arts field has been particularly challenged, primarily due to event restrictions. And while we could observe the active introduction of digital tools into the life of concert organizations before the pandemic, for a large share of theatrical institutions this was an absolute novelty.

In 2020, theaters closed their shortest season ever and faced a total quarantine, thereby gaining momentum to integrate familiar theatrical life into an online format. Performances in the computer games Sims 4[[3]](#footnote-2) and Minecraft[[4]](#footnote-3), broadcasts of readings, concerts, rehearsals, archival recordings, and actors reading poems on YouTube, podcasts with the company, and interaction with the audience on social media are all new communications between the theater and its audiences.

Now theater managers are setting themselves an important task for the theater economy: to combine new online formats and the familiar audience stage, to provide all conditions to stimulate ticket sales for performances through the formation of a loyal audience in their social networks. The need for this is explained by the dramatic growth of the total audience of social networks: in the first quarter of 2021, the number of new accounts amounted to almost half a billion, and 42% of the Russian population seeks information about goods and services not in the browser, but in the search lines of social networks.[[5]](#footnote-4)

This is what Mr. Krok, the director of the Vakhtangov Theater, says. Today a person gets out of bed in the morning, turns on his phone and is already in touch with the theater through social networks, other people's reviews of performances, through photos and videos, through the official website. A person can instantly ask a question directly to the theater and get an answer through Instagram. And the light in which the theater is presented online largely determines how one will feel about hanging up his or her raincoat on that very rack in the evening. " [[6]](#footnote-5)

The growth of the audience of social networks may be due to the social aspect: during the quarantine, all communication between people has been reduced to the network space. It is important to note that social networks have the property of complementarity, due to which this economic good is used with other similar goods. Thus, consumers are not buying a single good, but parts of a single system of which they are now members. Therefore, the value of goods within the network is greater than outside it.[[7]](#footnote-6) But in order to harness the full power of social networks, specially trained people who know the algorithms of their work are needed.

This report examines the effectiveness of the integration of innovative approaches and the influence of user interest in social networks of theaters on the formation of demand for theatrical benefits.

The sample is based on the drama theatrical organizations of the regional subordination of the city of Moscow. Moscow drama theaters not only prevail over musical theaters by their number and variety of forms of organizations, they differ in audience, history and repertoire policy. Therefore, it would be biased to analyze the influence of social networks on the attendance of theater organizations within the framework of this study.

A unique array of data combining statistical indicators of the theaters' social networks functioning and real economic and financial indicators of their activities, created on the basis of indicators collected by MICC of MC RF, EMISS and FSGS, analytical programs LiveDune and TrendHero, as well as a representative system of network factors reflecting user activity in social networks of Moscow drama theaters is used as the information base of the study.

The basis of the empirical part of the work is the graphical and empirical analysis of time series of statistical data reflecting the influence of the development of organizations' social networks on the demand of the audience for the goods created by theaters using statistical and econometric methods of SPSS Statistics analysis package.

The report reflects the first results of modeling the influence of the main factors, reflecting the influence of social networks on the factor of additional demand for theatrical goods. Among the obtained regressions the positive correlation between the theatrical attendance figures and the number of subscribers in the social network Instagram, the audience engagement factor and its quality is clearly seen. Audiences gathered on Facebook and Vkontakte, on the other hand, have little significance. The data obtained will allow performing arts organizations to adjust the strategy of generating additional demand through social networks.

The report presents the factor model of the influence of online audience activity, ranking methodology and clustering of theaters, based on the following statistical metrics:

* theater audience size;
* engagement factor;
* potential audience;
* audience quality coefficient;
* number of quality audiences.

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