

ONLINE BUSINESS JOURNALS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA AND THE MODERN DIGITAL FORMATS: MYBUSINESS. MD AND BUSINESSCLASS. MD

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Abstract

The business press represents a mass media segment designed to ensure the information needs of the representatives of the entrepreneurial field, ensuring an informational space that promotes business development. In the information space of the Republic of Moldova, increased attention is paid to economic journalism, measures to strengthen this segment of the mass media being initiated and implemented. Within the limits of the research initiated in this article, we propose to carry out a content-analysis and to investigate the particularities of business media in the online environment. In order to do so, we have identified two types of online content, specialized in the field of business, both highly rated on the domestic market: a niche information platform and the online version of a monthly print business journal.

Keywords: *business, media, digital.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The business press represents an indispensable element of a society with a market economy. It ensures business communication. The multitude of newspapers, journals and information platforms, cumulatively, creates a specific system that operates with different categories of audience, using different tools for this purpose. Primordially, the business press is a segment of the media, designed to ensure the information needs of the representatives of the entrepreneurial field, by publishing informative and analytical journalistic materials, statistical data, advertising, legislative content, etc., in order to coagulate an information space that promotes business development. However, it is worth noting that the business press is designed for a specific audience, that is, a less heterogeneous target audience. The researcher Ibrahim Seaga defines the business press as “a special information system, whose function is to coagulate business communication and whose

peculiarity is to reveal the economic nature of the subject under consideration.” (Seaga, 2015) As one can anticipate from the definition presented above, the business press is designed for an audience with higher education, with a social status, for whom the information provided is professionally significant. That is why the purpose of the business press is to strengthen an information infrastructure that meets the needs of entrepreneurs, in order to promote the ideas and principles of a market economy, to disseminate information regarding the legislation and the documents regulating the activity in the field, to create a positive image of businessmen and to widely inform readers about the business environment. By initiating this scientific endeavour, we aim to establish and evaluate the development trends of the business press in the Republic of Moldova, to trace the particularities of the business press in printed format, but especially in the online format, to analyse the topic types of the business press and to contextualize the specificity of the business press in the expansion era of digital technologies. In order to achieve the established objectives, we used several research methods, including: the historiographic method (to follow the development process of the business press); the method of systemic approach (the object of research is perceived as a system with peculiarities, objectives and specific functions); the analytical method (applied in the structural-discursive analysis of materials) and the comparative method (used to investigate the set of characteristics for two similar entities).

Using the term “business press,” Chris Roush refers to “a segment of journalism that tracks, records, analyses and interprets the business,

economic and financial activities and relationships that take place within a society.” (Roush, 2016) Therefore, business journalism itself deals with topics about people, phenomena, states and problems that cover the entire sphere of commercial activities. The researcher Keith Hayes also traces a synonymous relationship between the business press and its components, “newspapers and journals for specialists” (Hayes, 2013), but, according to the same author, business publications cover both economic issues and political, scientific and cultural topics. We access the stated desideratum, or, the entire information base with which the business press operates, refers to information that influences and analyses the behaviour and long-term decisions of market agents. Through market agents we mean entrepreneurs, civil servants, company managers, other people involved in carrying out economic activities and representatives of the business environment. Therefore, the business press is not only the presentation of specialized information, but also the presentation of a specialized view of general information. Given that it is nevertheless specialized press, the quintessence of the content of the business press, as researcher Jenny Luesby opines, is represented by a “complex of materials both in print and digital materials (infographics, tables, diagrams), oriented towards the development of entrepreneurship.” (Luesby, 2000) Currently, the business press represents a prominent segment of the print and online media production. In the Republic of Moldova, we have registered over 20 newspapers, journals (including online) and websites specialized in economic journalism, including: Capital-market, Banks and Finance, Business Class, Logos-press, logos.press.md, capital.market.md, infoMarket.md, myBusiness.md, moldstreet.md, agroexpert.md, businessclass.md, bani.md, etc. These publications and information platforms pursue several primary objectives:

- promoting the principles of a market economy;
- dissemination of legislative and regulatory information;
- informing the target audience about the activities and processes that occur in the business environment;

- strengthening the information base to meet the needs of entrepreneurs.

In the last decade, increased attention is paid to economic journalism in the local information space, and measures to strengthen this segment of the media have been initiated and implemented. For this purpose, the Economic Press Club (CPE) was established in 2019, with the mission “to support and encourage the development of economic journalism in the Republic of Moldova.” (Economic Press Club, n.d.) This non-profit organizational entity regularly organizes training sessions for experienced and inexperienced journalists and conducts article competitions on economic topics. In addition to the activities organized by the EPC, in support of journalists specialized in economics, the Academy of Economic Journalism Program was launched, implemented by the European Business Association, which aims to “improve the quality of economic journalism in the Republic of Moldova.” (EBA, 2022) This project carries out insights in the economic field, organizing public discussions with the involvement of journalists and offering them access to information sources and in-depth approaches to economic topics, assisted by specialists in the field.

Currently, in the media space of the Republic of Moldova the segment of printed economic press is represented by 4 periodicals, highly rated on the domestic market: Capital-market, Logos-press, Business Class and Banks and Finance, but a few decades ago the number of periodicals on this niche was much higher. The socio-economic conjuncture in which the Republic of Moldova finds itself during the last decades, coagulated with the low interest of the general public for journalistic materials on finance topics, have stimulated the disappearance of several periodicals from the media market. The configured situation resulted, of course, from the drastic decrease in advertising revenue, because those who purchase advertising space want a high number of hits in the case of online publications and a high print publication rating. In addition, the pressures put on the media institutions that have advertising contracts increase, or, economic agents that pay for advertising do not like to appear in journalistic materials in a negative context, terminating the

concluded contracts. This is why several private periodicals, not necessarily on economic topics, have disappeared. But there are also newspapers, including the financial press, that have maintained their presence on the media market since its inception. For example, the weekly Logos Press (private newspaper) was founded in 1990 and currently appears in both print and online formats. The topics approached in the pages of the newspaper emerge from the practical problems of economy and trade, both on the internal and on the external market of goods and services, several journalists conducting the analysis of processes and projects in the most important sectors of the national economy. The economic and financial information reflected in the pages of the publications aims at guiding and assisting the interested parties (industrialists, bankers, investors, businessmen, accountants, insurance agents, tax inspectors, experts, specialists at financial exchanges, etc.), in making independent management decisions, based not only on the journalistic discourse (author's reasoning) itself, but also on the opinions of specialists with a name in the field, who can analyse a situation or problem much more exhaustively. It is worth mentioning that press institutions, when developing materials, pay substantial attention to the analytical aspect, risk prevention and forecasting of the evolution of the sales market and legislative field. We can say that the financial press does not just write about business, it positions itself as a partner and ally in business development.

The democratization process of the society, the rapid development of economic and financial fields and not only, the escalation of innovative trends, the founding of new and new commercial structures, corroborated with the advanced development of information technologies, have increased taxpayers' interest in information on financial activities and economic processes in general.

In this sense, the Internet plays an essential role in the process of operative information and even professional training of the contemporary man. With its help we can find out data about the exchange rate, news, we can place sales ads, we can make transactions, we can order products, purchase goods and services, or, the Internet is

already part of everyday life, it assists us day by day, hour by hour. In this context, the number of publications that launched an online version has skyrocketed (an impressive number remained only with the online version), but also of specialized platforms for informing citizens.

Within the limits of the research initiated in this article, we aim to perform a content-analysis and investigate the particularities of the business press in the online environment, and the object of the investigation is the online version of the periodical publication "Business Class" - *businessclass.md* and the platform specialized in publishing economic and financial materials - *mybusiness.md*. The information content placed between 01.10.2023 - 01.01.2024 was analysed.

To begin with, we must specify that a new profile of the business press is currently profiling in the online environment, oriented towards several target audience categories, we would say even to the mass audience, not to a narrow, specialized audience, unlike periodicals in printed format, whose content is mostly read by the representatives of the business environment. As nuanced in the editorial policy, the mission of these platforms is to report, in a journalistic language as accessible as possible about, the phenomena that occur in the field of economy, so that even readers who have no interference with this field, as a result of reading understand how a certain segment of the economy develops and how these economic processes can influence its daily life.

Mybusiness.md positions itself as a "project created to help businessmen at the beginning of their path to enter and successfully position themselves in the entrepreneurial field of the Republic of Moldova." (My business, n.d.) The content of the online journal is based on the opinions and advice of businessmen, business leaders in the country and abroad, but also on operative and useful information about business in Moldova. The purpose of this platform is to "provide entrepreneurs with the necessary information to open, maintain and grow their own business." (My business, n.d.) The specialized platform has 19 headings, which certifies the intention of the editorial board to cover as many aspects of the business field as possible.

Table 1. Columns of the online journals mybusiness.md and the number of materials posted between 01.10.2023-01.01.2024 (more than 3).

Name	Content description	Number of materials
Business novelties	News regarding the macroeconomic and the microeconomic fields, at local and global level	382
Coffee news	News regarding entertainment, announcements, curiosities, "light information" that can be read while drinking a cup of coffee	540
Analyses and investigations	Analytical and investigative articles	10
Releases	Press releases belonging to different state organs, which refer to the economic, banking and business environment fields.	6
Interesting	Articles which offer interesting and unusual information regarding business, entrepreneurs and the local and international market	5
Money	Articles about bank loans, investment possibilities, account management and fiscal information	3

At the same time, during the investigated period, no new material was posted under the following headings: "Interview," "Training," "Home Business," "Internet business," "Health and rest," "Startup." A unique possibility of the platform concerns the section "Service in

Moldova," a real help for readers in the process of employment. Through the tools provided, readers can autonomously identify information about vacancies in various fields with the possibility of online application.

Table 2. Columns of the online magazine mybusiness.md and number of materials posted between 01.10.2023-01.01.2024 (less than 3).

Name	Content description	Number of materials
Legislation	all changes, abolishment and completions operated within the legislative framework on the field of entrepreneurship	2
Management	useful information on the management of all business segments	2
Success stories	The presentation of the experiences of successful entrepreneurs from the Republic of Moldova and from worldwide	2
Ideas	The development and implementation of a business idea	1
Technologies	Articles on innovations, discoveries from the field of scientific technologies, applied in the business environment	1
Marketing and advertising	Processes that take place in marketing and types of efficient advertising	1

Except for the actual news and press releases, 33 materials were placed on the site during the period under analysis, of which only 19 contained elements of analysis and forecasting. The results recorded certify that this specialized platform is oriented towards mass audience,

targeting several audience categories at the same time, and the design of the posted materials is combined with the tendency to attract more advertising.

The businessclass.md platform is the online version of the monthly business journal

“Business Class,” which publishes news in the field of economy and business, identifying itself as “the banner of the new Moldovan bourgeoisie” (Business class, n.d.). The journal has been published since September 1, 2006 and it currently has a circulation of 3500 copies and over 40,000 readers, which argues that it is the first economic journal in the media area of the Republic of Moldova, “a good friend and competent consultant of entrepreneurs, businessmen, managers and marketing specialists” (Business class, n.d.). The online platform aims to create a space for the exchange of knowledge, information and experience, by offering ideas for management, marketing, management of personnel resources and finances, helping readers make decisions related to career and business.

Businessclas.md journal published for a period of three months 85 materials, classified under 10 headings: “News Moldova,” (25) “Business health,” (3) “Lifestyle,” (4) “Topic of the issue,” (3) “Actual,” (5) “Interview,” (0) “Management,” (16), “Marketing,” (20) “Finance,” (9), “Advertising market,” (0)

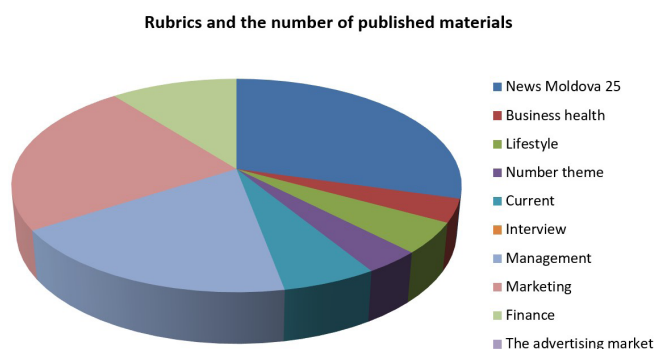


Fig. 1. The quantity of materials published in the sections of the businessclas.md journal between 01.10.2023-01.01.2024

As one can notice from the results above, the businessclas.md journal, unlike the information platform mybusiness.md published a significantly higher issue under the headings “Management,” “Marketing” and “Finance” (similar to the heading “Money”). At the same time, it is clear from the accounted results that businessclas.md published only 30 news items under the headings “News

Moldova” and “Actual,” compared to mybusiness.md, which placed over 900 news items under the headings “Business news” and “Coffee news”. This fact allows us to conclude that the mybusiness.md platform focuses primarily on the informative aspect regarding the activities and processes that occur in the business field, although it sporadically places analytical materials, while businessclas.md gives priority to the analytical aspect of the complex processes that occur at macro and microeconomic level regarding fiscal legislation, budget policy, budget deficit, inflation, gross domestic product, etc. “Easy” information such as curiosities and entertainment information is practically absent. The focus is on the analytical articles, investigating and analysing phenomena, situations, documents and initiating forecasts. Also, the businessclas.md site contains an archive of previous issues, but also special articles to which subscribers can have access, which is actually a public loyalty tool.

2. CONCLUSIONS

The structural analysis of the content of the two specialized information platforms allowed us to point out the following basic conclusions. The sites:

- contain information and analysis of key events at internal and external level (including technological innovations) and their influence on the business field, economic development and investment climate;
- make available to the target audience some operative information, passed through the analytical prism, from the business sphere and various related fields (legislative, fiscal, banking);
- disseminate business experience through the presentation of success stories and interviews with important businessmen, investors; entrepreneurs, experts in the field and practicing specialists (bankers, lawyers, insurance managers, etc.);
- forms business ideology, by displaying business ideas, offering advice and recommendations on management and marketing processes;

- implements the possibilities of information technologies on the following dimensions: to engage the process of interactivity with information consumers; to increase the attractiveness of the materials by visualizing data through tables, diagrams, sketches, maps; to assist readers in identifying job offers, giving them the opportunity to apply online for vacancies.

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