

Reviews

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Aspects of advertising and media communication.

Case studies

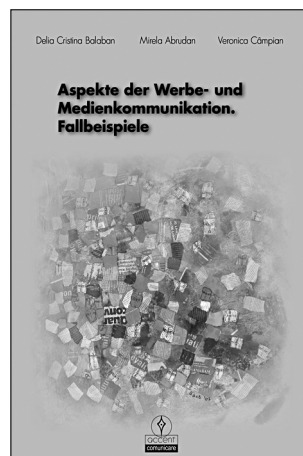
Accent Publishing House, 2007

The present book, coordinated by Assoc. Prof. Ph.D. Delia Cristina Balaban, Assistant Mirela Abrudan and Assistant Veronica Campian, consists of a total of seven articles which concentrate on a main theme: *advertising and media communication*. The authors are journalism and communication graduates, from the German line of study, Babes-Bolyai University. The case studies are very interesting and current: *TV shows with children from TVR*, *The media world market*, *Product placement in movies*, *Factors and strategies in the construction and production of advertising texts*, *Effects of children's appearance in advertising*, *A new communication strategy for Märklin*, *Advertising in video and computer games*.

In her article, Bianca Craciun speaks about the TV shows for children: *Lumea copiilor*, *ABC...De ce?*, *Întrebările lui Vladuț*, *H...ora prichindeilor*. She emphasizes the educational content of the broadcasts, which are a cornerstone in educating the young. Adrian Craciun, journalism graduate, presents a case study about Sony Bravia regarding outlet markets, advertising campaigns, images and music in advertising. There are also other captivating articles; for example, Meda Mucundorfeanu has analyzed some Romanian and German slogans, making a classification with those ads that kept the slogan's message from German. Julia Szambolics speaks about the identity of children in ads, analyzing the children impact in Opel Astra and Skoda ads. Iuliana Frank proposes a rebranding strategy for Märklin.

The book is not a theoretical one, it is not a textbook, but a collection of advertising and media case studies. The paper addresses to young researchers in the field and those who want to discover advertising through examples and researches.

Ioana Lepădatu



Delia BALABAN

Mediatic Communication

Tritonic Publishing House, 2009

For a long period of time, communication has been at the core of an epistemological debate regarding its position as a distinct scientific field. Its many connections and neighbouring paths with sociology, psychology and, of course, media studies, have sometimes contributed to the birth of the idea that communication cannot stand on its own, thus denying even the existence of such a concept as *Science of communication*. This fight for legitimacy seems to be a bit odd at a time when interdisciplinarity has become the mother of all paradigms.



However, Delia Balaban has decided to name her book *Comunicare mediatică*¹, showing that she is not afraid to deal with both media studies and communication in the same volume. Therefore, this may well be a volume for scholars from both areas. This argument brings me to another idea that I think is very important when discussing this book: its many audiences.

First of all, the author is not shy to show straight from the introduction that the main purpose of writing this book was that of offering the communication students (but I dare say also from other bachelor studies) a support for studying media, communication and the effects they have on the individual (thus, a psychological perspective) and, on a broader level, on societies (thus, a sociological perspective). So the first audience for the book is easily determined. The author uses at times some obvious, but effective tricks for catching this audience's attention. References to pop culture items such as *Pretty Woman* and *Dallas* are made throughout the book and they are useful for making a connection with the student. Also, discussions on new media and on user-generated content media are topics that will surely appeal to the younger generations.

But, there is also a second type of public to be taken into account: the academic community. As an academic researcher, one is sure to know that the most important step after deciding on a topic for one's study is that of thoroughly reviewing the existent literature on that subject. At this stage, there is always a lot of materials to go through. But, getting to the point, Delia Balaban helps us on this enterprise, as her book constitutes a vast literature review on many areas. Therefore, even though the academic community is seen by the author as a secondary public, I believe that the book represents a necessary item for researchers, also.

¹ Satisfyingly translating the title is very difficult as it can receive the meaning *Media communication*, but also *Communication through the media*.

After the first three chapters, which are more general, and bring forward a synthesis of the basic paradigms underlying communication studies and the media, and form a theoretical review that is not entirely new, but that is necessary for preparing the field for what is to come, there is a part which I believe is the most valuable for the reader: a chapter dedicated to briefly discussing the contributions brought to media communication by the likes of McLuhan, Baudrillard, Goffman, Luhmann, Giddens and other such important names from communication, sociology and social psychology.

This crucial synthesis is continued with reviews of media types, types of audience, theories regarding the process by which media messages are selected, theories of media consumption and an impressive chapter on theories on media effects. The latter (the 11th chapter) is also a vital part for the reader, as it carefully describes the *stimulus-response theory*, models of limited media effects, the two-step flow of communication, *cultivation theory*, the *third-person effect* and theories from the *agenda setting* perspective, where the author includes the *uses and gratifications models* and a well-known theory brought forward from sociology to help explain the way we understand and process the world of symbols that surrounds us: Goffman's theory of *framing*.

Schematic, synthetic and encyclopedical are three words that I believe describe this book. Within its pages there are an impressive number of authors mentioned, a nonetheless impressive list of major theories on media communication and many useful examples from empirical studies. Even though there is an obvious predilection towards authors from the German area, I do not believe it has led to any important name from other cultural backgrounds being neglected.

Overall, without any exaggeration, *Comunicare mediatică* is one of the most important editorial achievements on communication I have witnessed in the past few years in the academic society of Cluj-Napoca.

Mihai Deac

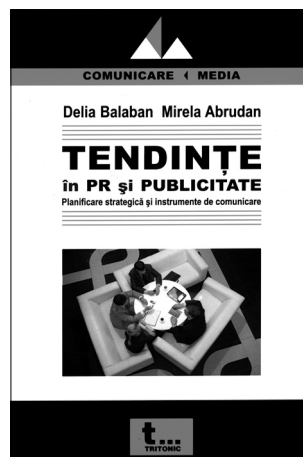
Delia Cristina BALABAN, Mirela ABRUDAN

Tendințe în PR și Publicitate. Planificare strategică și instrumente de comunicare

Tritonic Publishing House, 2008

The volume is the result of a collective effort to offer new instruments for use in advertising and public relations. The authors present the advanced issues from the perspective of the communication sciences.

In the beginning of the book, the connection between advertising and PR is debated in an integrating vision, beyond any other claim for precedence, the two fields working together for an efficient promotion. From the



multitude of issues discussed, attention could be drawn to the integrated marketing communication, strategic planning, crisis communication, the intersection of public relations with social responsibility and lobbying. Patricia Abrudan speaks about integrated marketing communication, using the American model as an example. Claudia Marinescu introduces us in the space of strategic planning, a new field in Romania. Another interesting article is the one of Laura Petrehuş, who discusses the media kit from the perspective of the industry professional. Mirela Abrudan's chapter revolves around contemporary PR and crisis communication. Where do public relations and CSR meet? This is the question Andreea Zsigmond answered. Paul Fărcaş's article shows essential elements which we need to take into consideration when organizing an event. Georgia Vâtcă introduces us in the political sphere, talking about lobbying, a communicational instrument applied in this field.

This book is recommended both to bachelor, master and doctoral students in the field of communication sciences, and to practitioners in the industry.

Ioana Lepădatu