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Illustration in the In-flight Magazines of the European Airlines: Expansion of the Outlook or Aggressive Advertising?

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Abstract

In the article the contents and registration of in-flight magazines of three European airlines: Air-Berlin, Estonian Air, Aeroflot-Donavia which are considered as a means of informal education and factors of the forming impact on passengers are analyzed. In detail two types of graphic publications are considered: advertising graphic illustrations and didactic illustrations with educational contents which have a geographical component with a type of cartographical projections. Various funds of marketing communications are observed (advertising, illustrations of route networks, informative stories, plans). On the basis of the content analysis the consistent patterns characterizing interest of advertisers in in-flight magazines are determined; the increase in advertising materials and force of their influence is observed in the magazines' publications which combine useful cultural information from drawing attention to the promotion object by advertising media.

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1. Introduction

Modern world is characterized by the increase of opportunities for the movements of population with the most various purposes, acquaintance with cultural, social, business life in the places which are outside daily habitat.

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Technical capabilities of modern society allow making trips with the minimum expense of time thanks to the rapid development of civil aviation.

Modern air carriers are interested in the increase of the efficiency of their activity. The increase in volumes of transportations is limited to the capacities of airline, consumer demand, competition level. For the involvement of consumers air carriers use various marketing mixes, including the onboard periodic magazines for passengers which are a bright component of a trip for each traveler. Magazines of the European air carriers which edition demands additional financial and intellectual expenses, are saturated not only with interesting, but also useful materials which cause interest in the widest range of reader's audience and potentially strengthen them in the aspiration to use the services of this airline further. Various technologies of formation of the structure, contents and design of in-flight magazine are used for this purpose. These editions are an important component of informal education of the modern person who receives information from the most different indirect sources – public statements, illustrated magazines, posters, maintenance instructions of goods (Fedotova, 2013). Informal education gives the chance to the passenger to turn educational capacities of the society into effective factors of the development, using an intellectual resource of businessmen and turning the information received outside the standard educational environment into the benefit. In-flight magazines are not the standard objects of scientific research. At the same time research of this empirical massif gives valuable information on the orientation of the advertising contained in them from the position of representation of racial and gender factors in them (Conradie, 2013) and the condition of medical education for travelers (Leggat, 1997). Their potential is not settled yet. Therefore the appeal to the contents of in-flight magazines affords 1) to reveal and classify the didactic means of visual (graphic) presentation used in the in-flight magazines of the European airlines and 2) to define a target orientation for the use of the means of graphic representation in the in-flight magazines of the European airlines.

2. Method

2.1. Source based research

For the solution of the research problems the texts of the in-flight magazines of the European airlines making regular international flights are used – "the Airberlin magazine" (Air-Berlin, Germany), "InTime" (EstonianAir, Estland), "Aeroflot World South" (Aeroflot-Donavia, Russia). The analyzed magazines are issued during the period of active air transportation – from March to August. The time span includes respectively the periods of 2014 and 2015. All magazines are focused on the informing passengers on the existential features of territories – new countries, cities, districts, sights. The existence of geographical projections unites all editions, allows to show the objects located on the Earth surface or the phenomena in the certain system of conventional signs.

2.2. Instruments, procedure, data analysis

In this research the analysis, synthesis, comparison, interpretation, content analysis of graphic publications was used.

When carrying out research it was considered that travel or a business trip are always connected with the movement of the passenger and enough time for acquaintance with the illustrated printing editions offered by the airline. Therefore originally all available illustrations containing geographical connotation – a cartographical projection of the Earth and topographic maps of the district - were divided into two groups: advertising graphic illustrations and didactic illustrations having educational contents.

The content analysis category is the concept of "cartographical projection" including any option of the Earth display on the surface. An observation unit is a graphic representation containing data on the location of the object (a map, a plan etc. or their elements) irrespective of the drawing size. Art photos of natural and cultural landscapes and climatic phenomena were not included into the observation units.

The obtained statistical data were brought into the EXEL table for the creation of bar graphs. Graphically presented results became the object of substantial interpretation. Comparison was carried out on the basis of comparison of data on the equivalent objects. For the observance of this condition quantitative data are transferred into percents.

3. Results and Discussion

On the in-flight magazines pages various materials that extensively expand passengers' ideas about the modern world are represented both from the geographical and economic view point. In the drawing and substantial filling of

publications the fact of movement of the reader finding reflection in the active use of the means of geographical mapping is fully considered. With a certain degree of convention it is possible to allocate the following types of the marketing communications with the elements of geographical mapping used in the in-flight magazines: informative stories supported by the territory maps; advertising materials; graphic descriptions of the airline route networks and geoinformation cards, territory plans and structures.

On the basis of the content analytical research devoted to the representation of above-mentioned positions in in-flight magazines "Airberlin magazine" AIR-Berlin (Germany), "InTime" EstonianAir (Estland), "Aeroflot World South" Aeroflot/Donavia (Russia) the following bar-graph was made (Fig. 1).

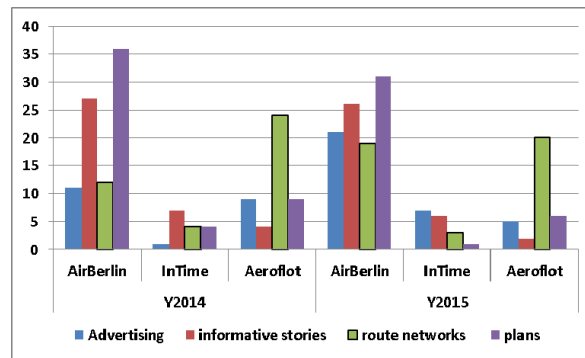


Fig. 1. Distribution range of the marketing communications' means in the *in-flight magazines*

As it is shown in the bar-graph, the allocated positions are presented in the magazines with various degree of intensity. Thus, the differences on the rate of the types of printing materials are significant when comparing the contents of the magazines, but in general they keep low variability in the chronological dynamics on the positions "route networks", "territory plan and structures", "informative stories". The greatest dynamics towards the increase of information saturation (only in the in-flight magazine "Air-Berlin") and its recession is shown in relation to the advertising position.

The analysis of the contents of in-flight magazines shows that magazines' design reflects various and sometimes very unusual design decisions allowing to draw attention to the edition and its advertising contents as well as to its founder. Design has the lines of respectability, creative approach to material supply, everything is done at the highest polygraphic level. All numbers of in-flight magazines by all means include the address to the readers from the representatives of the management - the level of airline Director-General and/or the editor-in-chief of the edition. Their portraits surely accompany texts of the address and almost always finish the address with the reproduced personal signature. These techniques create a context of openness, availability and recognition. In the welcome speech to the readers they always thank them for good taste which is reflected in the airline choice, they also report about the latest developments or new strategy of interaction with passengers. All these focus the representatives of any target audience (both skilled travelers and beginners using different service class) unless on further communication then on benevolent perception of the efforts and actions, for example the programs of loyalty realized by the airline managers. It potentially provides the airline with credibility.

Original decisions of the artists using techniques developed by the esthetics of postmodernist art method in their design arsenal offer bold ready images. They provide paradoxical perception of previously familiar subjects and phenomena. Font and color accents, rulers, blank material and other graphic elements are widely used. Illustrations, colourful high-quality photos and graphics having a strong forming effect are directed at the esthetic and functional influence. Besides, carefully studied creole texts are supported by high printing quality of images: practically any illustrations and photos are reproduced in the magazines extremely accurately, without distortions.

Bright visual elements facilitate texts' perception of any contents and target orientation (Fedotova, Latun & Okuneva, 2014).

Thus, in all in-flight magazines the strategy of the most colourful supply of materials is realized. The information component certainly drawing attention of the reader in the majority of magazines' issues does not undergo essential

changes. The plans for the arrangement of airport services, world maps as illustrations containing information on route networks of airlines or the fragments of search and information on cartographical services of the IT companies specifying the sites of the airports are transferred from issue to issue. It should be noted that the original decision allowing the readers to orientate in the contents of the magazine and studying the location of information objects is undertaken by the designers of "Air-Berlin magazine": the world map serves a general background where the readers are offered the content of each number through the system of references in the form of text and colourful pictures.

Being the editions focused on advertising, the magazines are interested in fixing and distribution of their influence effect. The factor of interest support to the edition and, as a result, to advertising materials, is considered by advertisers. Therefore there is a requirement to track, whether there is dependence between the number of actually advertising materials and information of developing character with sociocultural focus. On Fig. 2, 3 the results of content analytical research of materials' representation on "Advertising" and "Informative Stories" positions are reflected.

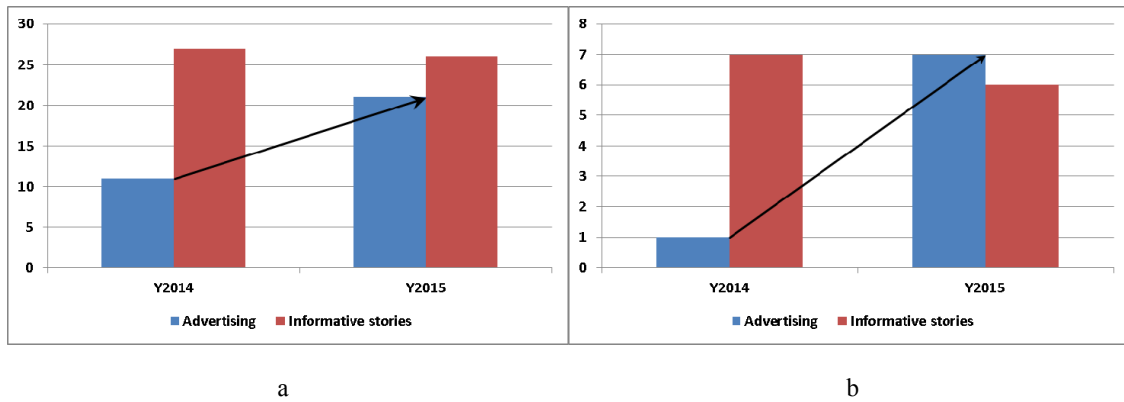


Fig. 2. Upward trends on "Advertising" position in the magazines a) "AirBerlin magazine" and b) "InTime"

As it is observed from the data provided on the bar-graph, the greatest activity concerning inclusion of informative materials of historical and cultural character into the contents of the magazine is shown by "AirBerlin magazine". Insignificant decrease in the amount of informative materials did not cause reduction of advertisers' desire to reduce the order of advertising which quantity of units increased. The same tendency is traced in the "InTime" magazine which increased the place for advertising for 190%.

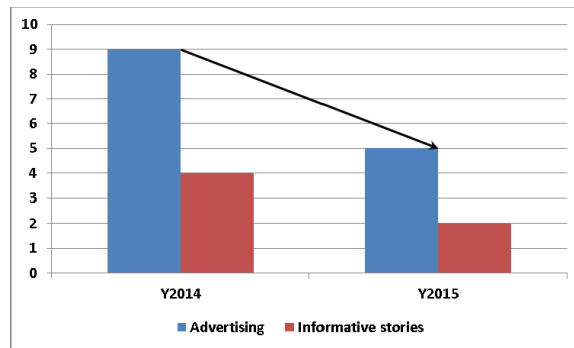


Fig. 3. Downtrend on "Advertising" position in the in-flight magazine "Aeroflot World South"

As the results presented on Fig. 3 show that the aspiration of the editorial board with advertising materials in the "Aeroflot World South" edition to the prejudice of cognitive information does not lead to the growth of the number

of advertisers. The minimum quantity of information of the developing character is totally presented in the magazines issued March-August 2014 and 2015. The stylistics of the advertising materials tend to the information representation in the imperative mood (*modus imperativus*), indicating the need to urgent purchase, use of service or making something important from the point of view of the advertiser. Advertising obtains aggressive lines, convincing that only losers cannot use the advertised goods. The consumer does not like when something is imposed on him. He is inclined to consider as good advertising only information, useful personally for him. The purposes of the seller do not correspond to the lifestyle of the modest Russian consumer who does not feel the need for examining the plans of expensive apartments inaccessible to him or route maps of inclusive flights even if advertising looks as a trick, farce or game of meanings. After acquaintance with many pages of advertising the magazine ceases to interest the reader, he/she at least has a feeling of disappointment that he/she is not able to afford anything from the offered positions and spends time for the acquaintance with useless information.

4. Conclusion

In the contents of in-flight magazines two groups of illustrations - the didactic illustrations expanding the idea of readers about the world and advertising graphic publications of various type are allocated. On the basis of the content analysis of the images including cartographical projections of the Earth and topographic maps of the district, plans of territories and other elements of geographical tools it was stated that that their use was actively promoted for 1) geographical and culture education of passengers; 2) their acquaintance with geography of airline flights and its commercial partners; 3) advertizing and promotion of goods and products. It is established that the fragments of maps are the illustrations of stories about the sights which in combination with highly artistic photos induce the passenger to visit those countries where this airline or its commercial partners fly.

As a result of research it is shown that the following tendencies are revealed: 1) reduction of the use of maps in purely advertising purposes; 2) increase in their application as a component of contextual advertising; 3) advancement of new routes and directions which are fulfilled by the air carrier; 4) expansion of the geographical representations of passengers, their cognitive interests as of potential tourists, 5) increase of the level of their knowledge about the airline opportunities to carry out the most comfortable flight. Graphic illustrations in the form of drawings, collages, photos persistently advertise goods. On the whole in-flight magazines "AirBerlin magazine" and "InTime" are informative both from the position of containing cultural, social and historical data in them, and a wide range of advertising materials. In the concept of in-flight magazine "Aeroflot World South" the emphasis is placed on the primary publication of advertising materials in prejudice of cultural and developing information that is paradoxically negatively affects the interest to this magazine from advertisers. The materials of cultural and worldview character published in the magazines indirectly raise the extent of their impact on the potential consumers who prefer useful and interesting information (from the point of view of expansion of social outlook being even of advertising character) to aggressive advertising. Thus acquaintance with advertising which is taking place in the context of cultural findings will give the delayed effect and in general lead to the creation of positive impression about company staff activity of any rank.

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