IMPACT OF MEDIA TECHNOLOGIES ON DIGITAL EDUCATIONAL CONTENT IN MEDIA SECTOR

Abstract The rapid development of media technologies has tremendously influenced all spheres of human life. In media education, they are widely used for both organization of future media industry workers training, and its content. Being progressive, the media sector makes an active use of the technological capacity to enhance the education efficiency and quality. At the same time, those processes create a tough competitive environment. In the context of the distance learning prevailing in the last few years, higher educational establishments face the emergence of numerous alternative educational internet initiatives at the market that may pose a certain threat for the traditional higher education in the future. It is partially driven by reorientation of media industry's economic models, including a fundamental revision of approaches to monetization and the popularity of the non-commercial independent journalism with its growing employment opportunities. They all urge journalists gain new skills and pursue knowledge from other spheres often unrelated to journalism. On top of that, changing communication channels and higher technological literacy level of young people shape the need to adopt content formats to new realities. Seeking to assert their traditional dominance in the media education market, universities should revisit the content of training curricula and more efficiently use technological tools in the educational process. The current study that is based on the survey of future media workers conducted during 2020-2021 (20 months) made it possible to identify the content formats preferred by students and assess the potential and risks of using them in the future. Described practices of using media technologies by universities allow recommend those of them that could be most efficiently integrated in the educational process. For example, the development of communication channels enabling integration of educational courses and clusters into a single interdisciplinary system both at the level of individual educational units and at the university level seems promising. It would make university curricula significantly more adaptable and competitive in the face of new challenges at the media market and streamline limited resources in the existing circumstances.

Keywords: media technologies; media content; communication channels; social networks; digital educational content in media sector; media education.

1. INTRODUCTION

Global media platforms enabling daily access to their content to over 3.8 billion people have an exceptional opportunity to use their potential to make positive societal impact. The
World Economic Forum’s initiative “explores opportunities to come together across the world’s largest platforms to strengthen communities and to address societal challenges in the current context of the pandemic and socioeconomical landscape” [1]. Global transformations also affect the education process, forcing educational institutions to adapt extremely quickly to new conditions by increasingly using digital innovations [2].

Despite the fact that distance learning has existed for a long time, today it has become a priority training format. The quick deployment of internet platforms to support organization of the distance learning [3], ensure the appropriate technical level [4], as well as search for optimal communication tools for their more efficient use in the educational process come into the spotlight in scientific and professional discussions [5]. The content of the educational process and reformatting of training materials taking into account the specifics of the digital environment are equally important. The demand for high-quality media content and wider use of media technologies has increased significantly. Those processes certainly require both time and more advanced technical skills of the academic staff.

More than others, media education is prone to digital transformations and generally reflects global educational trends. Considering this, content formats and use of media technologies were further analysed using the educational cluster of future media workers training as an example.

The problem statements. During the lockdown, many opportunities opened for the educational environment, related to remote attendance of various events. In the media sector only, which we study, over the last two years, a huge number of initiatives appeared, offering both individual educational courses, and full-fledged inexpensive or free certified distance learning curricula. In the situation, when universities lose their key advantages connected with offering a unique digital educational content and investing in higher education is often not justified by the subsequent graduate’s income, those trends may depreciate the university education. Some sceptics have already called the current situation “End of a golden age for universities” [6].

Media have an even greater impact on the educational process, which is recognized by many researchers [7], [8]. Education provided by external media resources today represents an important puzzle that forms a graduate’s holistic portrait as a future representative of the industry with a set of competences, values, and professional and ethical portfolio. Focus on those information sources in the absence of the sufficient high-quality digital educational content at higher educational institutions contributes to strengthened influence of media resources on the formation of the future specialist’s profile, which may fundamentally differ from the one originally defined by the higher educational institution.

It should be especially noted that since external media resources can provide both new knowledge and be a source of disinformation [9], informational impact and manipulations, their use by students in the educational process is associated with a number of external issues, including impossible verification of the obtained information, its reliability, assessment of the professional level of the knowledge offered, and elimination of potential cyber security threats [10].

Obviously, if educational institutions fail to offer upgraded educational curricula (both in terms of access to the digital content and efficient use of media technologies) in time, it may ultimately result in outflow of students in the face of growing competition.

Analysis of recent studies and publications. The need of urgent supplement of educational platforms with training materials will be addressed at the European educational community level in accordance with the Digital Education Action Plan (2021-2027), offered by the European Commission following a broad discussion. Specifically, creation of a European-wide platform to exchange certified online resources and provide access to existing educational platforms is seen as one of the steps to be taken [11]. The Organisation for
Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) calls for cooperation with the companies providing educational technologies and private educational platforms [12]. In this context, UNESCO recommendations as to the use of Open Educational Resources (OER) are also becoming more relevant [13]. Use of the OER can both help fill the resource gap, and improve the overall academic performance, and it has already been proved by successful implementation practices [14]. However, from the OER (OER Commons, Currik, Learning Resource Exchange, OpenStax, Project Gutenberg, Directory of Open Educational Resources (DOER), OERu, Itunes U, etc.) we reviewed, only OER Commons and Itunes U contain materials in Ukrainian, however, topics of journalism and media are not presented at all. At the same time, the use of media technologies in education, which are an important factor of mastering competences [15] and an effective communicative tool for the educational process, should be enhanced.

**The research goal.** The goal of our study is to review and choose appropriate information and communication technologies (ICT) for arranging educational (digital, network, etc.) resources in media sphere, and structure content formats and channels for obtaining the professional information, which students use for learning. The following objectives were set to achieve the goal: review of relevant ICTs; find out and tests, to what extent the identified channels for obtaining information could be integrated in the educational process and the obtained information is consistent with market requirements, and whether this could improve the level of training of future media industry representatives.

### 2. THE THEORETICAL BACKGROUNDS

**Methodology.** Methodologically, our research plan relies on the survey. The survey was developed based on our theoretical concept of motivation for self-education, channels for receiving professional information. The survey is a part of an extensive study we conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic in April 2020 through November 2021. Students of the Institute of Journalism of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv and Philology and Journalism Faculty of Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University were chosen as respondents. The choice was made for the following reasons: since this specialty has always been associated with technologies, in recent years, the ICT played the key role in future media sector representatives training, and media technologies are traditionally widely used. Differential sample comprised first- and fourth-year students (402 respondents in total), and it allowed compare the level of their motivation to improve professional skills. Overall, 378 respondents (valid questionnaires) were surveyed in proportion to the total number of students in the institutions surveyed. During the first phase, our task was to find out whether students need to pursue additional knowledge outside the chosen educational curricula, and whether they pay due attention to self-education by attending courses and master classes offered by other institutions. With the online education in universities, opportunities for self-education significantly expanded. Since nowadays, numerous internet resources are also important training tools, during the second phase of our study, we structured channels for obtaining the educational information, its formats, and found out to what extent external channels could be integrated in the educational process, using training of journalists in the chosen higher education institutions as an example. In order to find out which channels students use to obtain the educational content, a structured google forms questionnaire based on the stratified sampling method was applied. Later, respondents rated the identified channels using 5-point Likert scale.

In this study, we also intended to assess practices of using media resources in distance learning to detect the issues arising in this connection.
3. THE RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Motivation and Studying the Demand for Additional Knowledge

To assess the self-education concept in the media sphere, it is necessary to understand what makes students study journalism. Among key motivations, relevant studies indicate excitement and diversity of the profession [16], its potential for political and social activity; desire to influence the society [17]; social advantage and dynamic work environment [18]. It explains why most of journalism students are active rather than inert people, who intensively handle the information and have a great potential for self-education.

The survey confirmed that more than half students (60%) take external courses and seminars to get more information and master additional skills. Therefore, the most active students continue self-education using external media sources. Future mass media workers enjoy classes and seminars in photograph, SMM, design, blogging, psychology, literature, speaking and script writing, business, marketing, branding, financial literacy, etc. [19]. We cannot neglect the fact that development of the person’s potential plays an important role in making a journalist career, which partly explains the desire to pursue additional knowledge and qualifications.

3.2. Media Education Content Providers

Frequently, both the content and its dissemination sources do not have a clear professional identity. The information targeted to mass consumers can be useful to future professionals too. However, this approach to obtaining the information seems to be time-consuming and in some cases inefficient at minimum. Even the students with an obviously higher motivation to obtain and potential to master the information from additional sources, run the risk of facing the consequences of the information noise described by E. Toffler, against the background of the information overload [20]. We should also remember that the line between professional journalism education and media education of network resource users, where journalists also act as media lecturers, is becoming blurred [21].

The following media educational content providers can be distinguished: higher education institutions, journalism schools, non-government initiatives, summer journalism schools, professional development programmes, etc. However, all of them distribute the information through a quite limited pool of information channels – websites of their companies, projects, and organizations, social networks, and to a much lesser extent – through mass media.

As to the role of media in the educational process, in fact, we observe their institutionalization as independent autonomous closed-cycle systems developing and disseminating the content and training professionals for the industry (meaning courses delivered by the media searching for talent, for example, 1+1 Media Journalism School). According to our previous survey, this type of courses are very popular among students, as they are organized by potential employers and increase students’ chances of finding a job [19, p. 61]. Well-known media economics researcher R. Picard urges to treat such models with caution because, according to him, they are not aimed at education, but pursue commercial goals [22].

3.3. Using Media Technologies in Educational Process

Potential of social networks and messaging apps. Since media technologies are designed not only to expand the student’s opportunities for learning, but also to encourage their

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1 Some survey data were presented at the International Scientific and Practical Conference, Wloclawek, Republic of Poland, November 27–28, 2020.
self-education, communication with students is an important component of this strategy. Today, social networks and instant messengers as information channels are mainly used for communication with groupmates and teaching staff (98.6%, R=373) and exchange of training materials (76.3%, R=288) (Figure 1). However, their potential has not been fully realized in educational practices. They may be a platform for efficient training apps [23], or may be used to create accounts and groups to structure flows of educational information (more than half of respondents already partially use this function (59%, R=223).

![Figure 1. Question for respondents: For what purposes within the educational process do you most often use messaging apps and social networks?](image1)

Both professors and student recognize the importance of incorporating social networks into the educational process [24]. Our study generally supports these claims: the respondents predominantly use Telegram (97.1%, R=367) to share the information and its other functions within the educational process, and at the same time, they almost do not use WhatsApp (82.73%, R=313) and Twitter (79.14%, R=299) at all.

![Figure 2. Question for respondents: How do you find the information about master classes and professional events?](image2)

An important feature noted by respondents is the notification of students about professional events, seminars, and master classes. Universities and individual educational programme providers may act both as organizers of those events, and moderators of flows of professional events, training courses and resources available in the media environment. Organizers’ channels remain the key source of the information about professional events.
(Figure 2); this information can also be shared through universities’ communication channels. The preliminary selection of events by representatives of the educational programme, considering their usefulness, safety, credibility, etc. is an advantage of such approach.

It could be implemented, for example, by using official FB accounts and Telegram channels. They are found useful by (91.4%, R-345) respondents, and (86.3%, R-326) have already joined Telegram channels of their universities or individual educational programmes and structural units (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Question for respondents: Do you find channels and accounts in social networks useful for the educational process?

Launch of Telegram channels and FB accounts announcing resources and events selected by the topic of study, as part of individual educational programmes, represent a positive example in the studied educational institutions. For example, over a few years of their existence as part of individual educational programmes, students admitted that they started attending professional events more often, and their announcements contributed to students’ self-management. Overall, about half of the respondents (41.9%, R-158) find announcements of master classes and professional events posted by those information channels useful (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Question for respondents: What information obtained from channels and accounts in social networks do you find useful?

Over the last few years, similar information channels were launched in many educational institutions. Statistics of user growth rate in Taras Shevchenko National University give reasons to claim that the idea was successful. As of May 2022, the university’s communication structure accounts for dozens of telegram channels and FB and Instagram accounts, some of them with
over 16,000 followers. The content is focused on self-education, career opportunities, etc. It contributed to connection and better communication between individual structural units - faculties and institutes, and therefore, gave impetus to the expansion of educational opportunities lying at the intersection of different disciplines, and more intensive implementation of an interdisciplinary approach. Interdisciplinary courses allow students choose to study special courses taught to students of other faculties and exercise the right to free choice of disciplines, as set forth in art. 62 clause 15 of Law of Ukraine “On Higher Education” passed in 2014 [25]. Precisely due to the fact that distance learning has become a priority format in Ukraine over the past two years, students increasingly often use this opportunity not only at the level of individual disciplines, but also attend selected lectures and master classes offered by other faculties. Such a rational use of the university’s pedagogical potential certainly increases its competitiveness against the background of similar training programmes delivered by other institutions. Moreover, integration of courses in the educational process within the same institution seems promising due to similarities in their structure, evaluation criteria and approaches to designing such programmes, and is especially relevant in the light of the obvious need for more efficient use of resources.

However, it should be borne in mind that the stronger inter-structural communication between faculties and institutes within the same educational institution should be supported by technological tools allowing students take special courses of other faculties without prejudice to the educational process, given the need to complete the educational program, integrate into the curriculum, consider the workload of lecturers, group formation and many other factors.

On top of that, full reliance on resources and off-the-shelf solutions offered by popular messaging apps could be dangerous as it may pose a risk associated with inability to expand or adopt the set of functions, upgrade certain content, or influence the owners’ administrative policies. For example, in recent years, social networks have been often criticized for its imperfect administration and moderation policies [28].

**Use of chat bots.** Since a big part of respondents use mobile phones to prepare to classes (Figure 5), the potential of chat bots is utilized in full. Chat bots are widely used for educational programmes to receive feedback from students, communicate with applicants, and for Q&A communication.

![Gadget use in educational process](image)

*Figure 5. Question for respondents: Which gadgets do you use to prepare for classes?*

Although it is early to speak about introduction of iTeachers [27], it is gradually becoming a reality. Review of volumes of the information provided by online platforms shows that it should be fragmented and delivered in small modules. The same content could be used to create bots with more functionalities for academic subjects. The idea seems to be a simple task to
implement for a journalism curriculum, as students themselves learn and master skills of creating bots in different topics. The ultimate goal could also be to use the bot as an online consultant or mentor, which could assess the level of the student’s ability to learn and adapt to his/her learning pace, which is crucial for applying a differentiated approach in education. The survey shows that more than half of respondents (64.7% R-245) believe that chat bots are useful for educational process; however, one third of them (28.8%, R-109) do not have a clear opinion as to the introduction of those technologies (Figure6-1).

Bot users see their potential for communication with university structural units (faculties, institutes) (32.1%, R-121), to get feedback when preparing for exams/tests (30.4%, R-115), and pass trial tests (24.1%-91) (Figures6-1-2).

![Chat Bot Useful](image)

Figure 6(1-2). Question for respondents: Do you find chat bots useful for the educational process? In your opinion, how can they be used for educational purposes?

### 3.4. Types of Digital Educational Content

The educational content exists in different formats. The survey has identified the content formats that are most preferred by students. Visual presentation of the information using PowerPoint, Prezi, etc. tools appeared to be the most popular. Over half of respondents (58.6% R – 222) consider them “mandatory” or “very necessary”, whereas not more than (15.11%, R-57) believe that it is necessary to listen/watch the content in pod/vodcast format (Figure7).

However, those results may also be connected with a greater prevalence of presentations as the least costly and at the same time, a very informative format. We do not exclude that each type of the content also requires an existing habit of its consumption. In particular, the second survey conducted in control groups revealed a different picture. Over six months, the number of respondents assessing podcasts as “mandatory” and “very necessary”, grew to 32.26%, R-122.

Students demonstrated less interest in interactive multimedia training materials (aids, textbooks, workshops, etc.). Although many professors stopped using traditional printed textbooks (and their pdf. versions) in favour of interactive training materials, the consolidated indicator of the respondents believing that such content is mandatory or very necessary is below 40% (39.57%, R -150). At the same time, half of the surveyed students (50.36%, R -190) demonstrate their readiness to move to full-fledged online courses relevant to their subjects (Figure7). Taras Shevchenko National University consider those demands and enable students take courses on related topics, for example, on Coursera for Campus platform (on partnership basis). Though those courses are not integrated in the approved educational curricula, professors claim that they add points to the students for taking courses on certain subjects [28].
At the same time, some challenges, which could be faced while integrating those clusters in the educational process, should be considered, including the need to integrate the points received for the course in the curriculum, inconsistency between the time allocated for the course and the time allocated in the curriculum, impossibility to perform a differentiated assessment of the knowledge acquired by students.

Graph 7. Question for respondents: Which digital formats of training materials would you prefer for the educational process? (Likert scale was used for the survey with priorities of needs ranging from 1 to 5. The results represent the population of answers “mandatory” and “very necessary”).

Based on the study, we have identified the most popular content formats and how they can be integrated into the educational process, considering the required level of professor’s technological competence (Tab.1).

3.5. The Role of Higher Education Institutions in Structuring Training Information

Rethinking the roles. For long, lecturers were a source of the professional information for students. They shared the best practices and gave recommendations. Today, the roles in the media educational process have changed - students have equal and sometimes greater opportunities to access professional information, considering their young age, the heyday of their cognitive abilities for learning, the information consumption speed, and use of up-to-date communication platforms and gadgets. In the current circumstances, lecturers are rather partners, sometimes, junior partners for students, who have to rethink their new functions to stay afloat and be useful to students.

Higher education institutions should coordinate their goals in the midst of huge flows of sometimes unique and high-quality information. They should not attempt to “re-write” or summarize the disseminated information for students, but instead act as its authoritative moderator and become a funnel for structuring the information to be obtained. Indeed, educational institutions cannot and should not intend to fully control those processes.

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2 Consolidated indicator of parameters 4-5 (on the Likert scale), where respondents defined the need for that type of educational materials as “mandatory” and “very necessary” respectively.
### Table 1

| Format of educational content | Type of educational content | Optimal distribution channel |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Interactive multimedia training materials | Training aids, textbooks, workshops, etc. | Website of the educational institution (programme) | Google-class of the subject | Course student group in a messaging app | Programme resource hub |
| Online courses in subject topics | Text, video and audit content, and tests | Website of the educational institution (programme) | Official accounts of the education institution (programme) | in social networks | Course student group in a messaging app |
| Training materials in pod- / vodcast format | Lectures, video lectures of individual courses or topics (developed by academic staff) | Website of the educational institution (programme) | Google-class of the subject | Course student group in a messaging app | Programme resource hub |
| Training materials in Word/PDF formats | Curriculum, training and methodological materials, textbooks and course supporting materials, including those recommended by academic staff | Website of the educational institution (programme) | Google-class of the subject | Student group in a messaging app |

The required lecturer's level of technological competences:

- Low
- Medium
- High
Compiling lists of recommended “useful” and most importantly proven resources in a constantly changing media environment does not look like the most effective solution either. Use of information resources at the level of institutions and journalism faculties shows that traditionally, departments and other structural units, were the information centres directing professional research and specializations. However, with the competency-based approach, this leading role of departments has changed. Educational programs came to the fore, as a balanced concept formed and developed for the consistent formation of skills and competencies among students in line with their chosen specialization. In these circumstances, educational programmes can play the role of the above-mentioned moderators.

3.6. Educational Content Distribution Channels

Channels for training materials delivery to students can be divided into internal, combined, and external.

As a rule, internal channels encompass in-house platforms designed inside educational institutions, providing all tools facilitating the educational process (module for video lectures, individual subjects with the possibility to give assignments and communicate with students, course libraries, modules for tests, performance evaluation module, etc.). For example, in Taras Shevchenko Kyiv National University, KNU Educational Online is the main platform. Materials associated with a certain course and posted on the relevant platform are the sole professor’s responsibility.

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However, for a controlled educational process, platforms for internal communication should not only be filled with all materials, but also constantly updated.

Google Classroom, Moodle, and Microsoft Teams offering similar functionalities are equally in-demand, and video conferencing platforms Zoom and Google Meet are also widely used. They represent complex systems, where the nature of external links poses certain threats associated primarily with a number of challenges: technological (limited disc space, non-permanent links, etc.), security (due to the need to refer to other users’ google discs); responsibility for posted materials (missing clear mechanisms of checking proficiency, integrity, ethics, safety, etc., of the downloaded content), legal (observance of copyright when posting other authors’ training materials), etc.

It should be also noted that the applications enabling work in teams, joint use of materials, allowing remote work on joint projects (for example, DocumentCloud, Chorus, Coral Project, etc.) are widely used for future journalists training.

External Channels are not connected with educational institutions. The information about them is disseminated on recommendations of student or professional communities or as a result of students’ own searches in internet. They include thematic sites with media analytics and professional content, thematic YouTube and Telegram channels, Facebook accounts, external educational courses and projects on related topics.
4. CONCLUSIONS AND PROSPECTS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The study demonstrates that in general, students are loyal to a diverse educational content they have access to, and they actively use media technologies in the learning process. However, fragmented mosaic media space is the reality, which the universities providing training of media sector workers should build their activities upon. It is here that the greatest amount of information is presented, and at the same time, a new competitive educational battle unfolds. Higher education institutions face the need to rethink the media education in the new conditions, to make it primarily focused on media workers’ digital skills. New channels providing the content used to build those skills and understanding of their possible integration in the training process becomes the key to building and maintaining efficient communication within the educational process.

Although media technologies have already been used to train media industry workers, potential of many of them (for example, chat bots, messaging apps) has not been fully realized. In addition, a strategic approach to building a combined structure of media resources, where educational programmes play an essential role of reputable educational content moderators, would not only enable structuring the content flows at the university level, but also streamlining the use of resources by educational institutions through their mutual complementarity.

At the same time, the development of new-type training materials should be guided by the possibility to use them for various training formats, including offline, online, or combined. In order to draw up interactive training aids, tests, online courses, universities have to upgrade their resource base, provide an adequate technological infrastructure, and enhance ICT skills of their academic staff. However, universities themselves have to choose their development vector basing it on investments in creation of their own autonomous resource base or use of off-the-shelf educational packages offered at the market by technological giants Google, Microsoft Team, etc.

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Text of the article was accepted by Editorial Team 28.07.2022
ВПЛИВ МЕДІАТЕХНОЛОГІЙ НА ЦИФРОВИЙ ОСВІТНІЙ КОНТЕНТ У МЕДІАСЕКТОРІ

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Анотація. Стрімкий розвиток медіатехнологій вплинув на всі сфери життєдіяльності людини. У медіаосвіті вони знайшли застосування як на рівні організації навчального процесу майбутніх представників медіаіндустрії, так і в аспекті його контентного наповнення. Медіасектор як прогресивна галузь активно використовує технологічний потенціал для підвищення ефективності та якості освіти. Одночасно ці процеси формують жорстке конкурентне середовище. В умовах превалювання дистанційної форми навчання в останні кілька років з'явилися нові інтернет-ініціативи, що можуть бути певною загрозою для майбутнього традиційної вищої освіти. Частково це обумовлено переорієнтуванням економічних моделей медіаіндустрії, починаючи від кардинального перегляду підходів до монетизації до популярності некомерційної, незалежної журналістики, де зростають можливості працевлаштування. Крім того, зміна каналів комунікації та підвищення рівня технологічної грамотності серед молоді визначає необхідність адаптації контентних форматів з урахуванням нових реалій. Для того, щоб відстежувати своє традиційне домінування на ринку освітніх послуг у медіасекторі, університетам необхідно переглянути контентне наповнення навчальних програм, а також ефективно використовувати технологічний інструментарій в освітньому процесі. Представлена дослідження, що ґрунтується на опитуванні майбутніх працівників медіаосвіти у період 2020–2021 рр. (20 місяців), дозволила виділити пріоритетні для сучасних студентів контентні формати та оцінити потенціал та ризики їх подальшого використання. Також описана практика застосування в ЗВО медіатехнологій дала можливість рекомендувати ті з них, що можуть бути впроваджені в освітній процес з найбільшим ефектом.

Так, перспективним є розвиток комунікаційних каналів, що дозволяють інтегрувати освітні курси та кластери в єдину міждисциплінарну систему як на рівні окремих структурних підрозділів навчального закладу, так і в загальноуніверситетському масштабі. Це дозволить істотно підвищити адаптивність і конкурентоспроможність програм ЗВО в умовах нових викликів медіаринку, а також сприяти оптимізації обмежених ресурсів.

Ключові слова: медіатехнології; медіаконтент; комунікаційні канали; соціальні мережі; цифровий освітній контент в медіасекторі; медіаосвіта.