Interactive content on Instagram business profiles

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Abstract— **The further growth of popularity and influence of social media have left their mark in the last decade. Social media based on multimedia content exchange getting bigger and bigger users attention. According to the number of active users, Instagram today ranks 5th among global social media and it is the main promotion channel for all types of business. User behaviors research on Instagram shows that interactivity is one of the most significant social and psychological motives. This paper presents various forms of interactivity that are implemented in posts within the most popular Instagram formats - *Stories*, standard *Feed* posts and Instagram *Live* events. Next to that, the exposed interactive contents are analyzed from the aspect of achieving business goals, such as: e-shop sales; product promotion; raising brand awareness; generating potential buyers; collecting followers' feedback and keeping customers.**

Keywords—Instagram, social media, user engagement, e-marketing, e-business

I. INTRODUCTION

The number of global, regional and national social media on the Internet continues to grow. Compared to 2019, in 2020, the growth of users on social media was 13%. It is estimated that 53.2% of the world's population uses social media today [1]. The crisis caused by the pandemic has increased the popularity of social media, messengers and e-shops. Today, a social media user spends an average of 2 hours and 25 minutes a day in various activities [2].

The popularity of social media has certainly been contributed by the easiness of use and functionality of the client application. No additional tools integrated in commercial applications are required to create a multimedia post [3].

Instagram was designed in 2010 as a social medium for sharing photos and videos. With the acquisition in 2012, Instagram became part of the Facebook company. The application is constantly being improved and a new format will soon be added - video with sound. The biggest changes in functionality were made in 2016, when the format *Instagram Story* was introduced [4]. Then, in 2018, Video Live is introduced as a possibility of live broadcast of the events that are interesting for followers. Instagram users today can exchange instant messages, share multimedia files of the appropriate format and size, or communicate using the option for video and audio streaming. Finally, in 2018, a special application for mobile devices was published - IGTV Instagram format, which is intended for sharing quality video content. This content includes 2K video density, up to 60 minutes recording time, and full screen display in landscape orientation [5].

The influence and popularity of Instagram as a global social media is constantly growing. It jumped from the seventh place in 2018 to the fifth place in 2020 in terms of the number of active users [6]. According to statistics from 2021, in Serbia, Instagram has 2 million and 593 thousand active users [7].

Different entities (production, services and organizations that base their business on spreading ideas) have an interest in being well represented on Instagram, because Instagram users are their potential clients. Today, Instagram is an unavoidable channel of promotion for all types of business, using Internet marketing technologies [8]. However, Instagram is constantly changing and updating its functionalities. Therefore, the problem of using Instagram as a digital marketing channel has not been sufficiently studied in existing papers. In particular, there is a lack of papers that shed light on the impact of the use of interactive content on the decisions of potential clients.

The aim of the paper is to analyze various forms of interactivity that are implemented in posts within the most popular Instagram formats - Stories, Feed and Instagram Live. The following procedure analyzes the application of identified interactive content in relation to business objectives: e-shop sales; product promotion; raising brand awareness; generating potential buyers; collecting followers' feedback and keeping customers.

According to Pareto's Principle and Rule 80/20 [9]. users use only 20% of functionalities implemented in digital product for various reasons and most often out of ignorance. The purpose of this paper is to increase the use of interactive functionalities in designing posts for business users on Instagram, in order to achieve the satisfaction of business entities and customers.

II. METHODOLOGY

The research methodology used in the paper includes various scientific methods, such as: content analysis, comparative method and webometric analysis.

Content analysis was applied to two groups of collection: classification and data processing. Please note sections below for more information. First, the Instagram app was analyzed. The focus is on the implementation of interactive content in Feed, Story and Instagram Live formats. Further, the

available professional and scientific literature relevant to the research was analyzed. The comparative method compares the collected data and valorizes their significance in posts for business profiles on Instagram. Webometric analysis [10] includes research and analysis of web articles relevant to the research, websites of institutions and organizations that are stable and enjoy a good reputation for a long time, as well as their business profiles on Instagram.

III. INSTAGRAM FORMATS: FEED, STORIES AND INSTAGRAM LIVE

The most popular formats of the Instagram community are Feed (classic post) Stories and Instagram Live [11].

Feed is the oldest format on Instagram. Standard posts in the form of a photo, video with sound lasting up to 60 seconds, a series of 2-10 photos or a combination of photos with videos (Carousel) are published here. Content from Stories, Instagram Live and Reels formats starts from here.

The Story format enjoys great popularity in the Instagram community. For most users, this is a format that is previewed first before moving on to other content [11]. Posts are sorted in sequence, mixed with sponsored posts, targeted by age, country, or gender of users. The stories are characterized by a short time of exposure to the community that lasts 24 hours. As time goes on, the messages of the story lose all trace. In other words, the message is deleted and disappears after the presentation and cannot be viewed in the gallery (archive of posts) of the user profile. As a result, many post designers sometimes do not devote enough time or intellectual strength to creation. However, this approach is considered wrong, given the growing audience [12]. The weakness of Stories designers is expressed by the use of a large number of segments that make up their publication, which requires a longer time to review the entire publication. Also, the textual content in business publication in the Story format must be as short as possible so that the user has time to read and understand text message.

Instagram Live is intended for events that are streamed to members of the live community. It is used for business purposes when promoting a new product or service. Also, Instagram Live can be used during the company's anniversary celebration or on the occasion of the award ceremony as a form of recognition for the achieved business results [13]. The duration of the event is not specified. Some authors point out that the duration is related to the strength of the Instagram profile, which is measured by the number of active users, the number of posts in all formats, user activities (retention time on the profile), comments and likes, etc [11], [13], [14]. The live event should be announced by posting on the Feed or Stories format 24 hours in advance.

The results of research on the popularity of Instagram format in Serbia [15] (Figure 1) show that Feed (classic post) and Stories are the most popular. Far below, IGTV is positioned in third place. According to the same source, the Stories format is more popular with members of the younger and middle generation, up to 45 years of age. Standard posting continues to enjoy the greatest popularity. Finally, posts in IGTV format (videos in HD quality up to 60 minutes in vertical orientation) have 2% of the Instagram audience [15]. In this sense, business profiles should be edited mostly to design and publish posts intended for regular and targeted Instagram users.
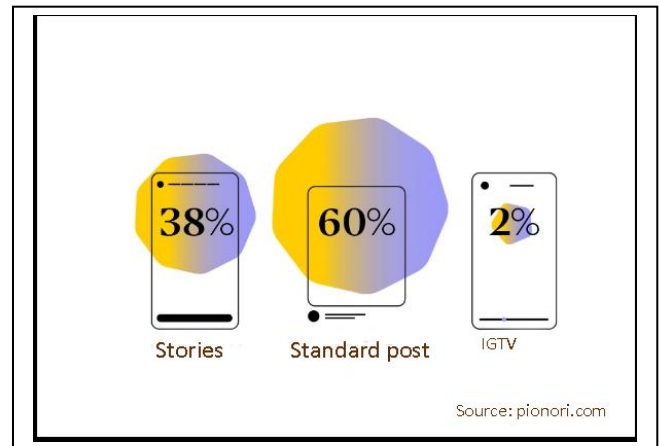

Fig. 1. The results of research on the popularity of Instagram format in Serbia

The age and gender structure of users on Instagram is important for Internet campaign creators. According to publicly available explanations of the survey for the Republic of Serbia (May 2021), men (47%) and women (53%) are almost equally present on Instagram. The largest number of active users belongs to the age group 18-45. There are 23.2% of users in the 18-24 age group; in the group of 25-34 years is 33.9% of users and in the group of 35-45 years is 20.2% of users [7].

IV. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF INTERACTIVE CONTENT ON INSTAGRAM BUSINESS PROFILES

Interaction is any action that a visitor announces by taking action to achieve an imaginary goal. According to the goal, posts on Instagram can be divided into several categories: advertising, adoration, events, information and promotion [16]. By taking action, the visitor is faced with the challenge of buying a product or service or accessing a larger amount of information about a particular thing. For example, a visitor may 1) send an instant email, comment, or request additional information; 2) by establishing a call from a mobile phone or messenger, establish direct contact with the responsible person in the organization; 3) download and install the free app etc. Any activity undertaken by the visitor will be recorded and later available as part of Instagram analytics. Instagram analytics is only available for professional profiles. Creating a professional profile involves a previously created profile on Facebook.

The interactive content available to publishers on business profiles is shown in Table 1. Functionalities were analyzed for the three most popular Instagram profiles: Feed, Stories and Instagram Live.

TABLE I.   TABLE TYPE STYLES COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF INTERACTIVE CONTENT ON INSTAGRAM: FEED, STORIES AND LIVE

Functionality	Analyzed Instagram formats		
	Feed	*Stories*	*Instagram Live*
Like the post	Yes	No	Yes
Comments	Yes	No	Yes
Send the post to a friend	Yes	Yes	Yes

Functionality	Analyzed Instagram formats		
	Feed	*Stories*	*Instagram Live*
Direct message[a]	Yes	Yes	No
Chat within the community	Yes	No	Yes
Exchange multimedia files within the community	Yes	No	No
Talk to a community member via messenger	Yes	No	No
Talk to a community member in video and audio streaming mode	Yes	No	Yes
Video conference (up to 3 participants)	No	No	Yes
Geo location tag	Yes	Yes	No
Mention of IG profile (link)	Yes	Yes	No
View videos in IGTV format	Yes	Yes	No
Hash tag (link)	Yes	Yes	No
Invitation to purchase immediately (via mobile or installed messengers)[a]	Yes	Yes	No
Invitation to buy now (via e-shop)[a]	Yes	Yes	No
Invitation to register Now companions[a]	Yes	Yes	No
Invitation to register users on the site[a]	Yes	Yes	No
Send an instant email[a]	Yes	Yes	No
Download and install the free app[a]	Yes	Yes	No
Knowledge testing	No	Yes	No
Voting	No	Yes	No
Ask a Video Live organizer	No	No	Yes
Post a comment on the live video event	No	No	Yes
Visit our YouTube chanel[a]	Yes	Yes	No
Post tagged Paid partnership	Yes	Yes	No

[a.] The functionalities are only available in sponsored post mode.

Twenty-five interactive functionalities are available to post designers in the Feed, Stories, and Live formats. The functionalities of great importance through which visitors are invited to certain actions, which can bring direct benefits to the owner of the business profile, are available only in sponsored announcements [17]. Such functionalities are, for example: ordering a product or service by phone, messenger, instant e-mail, shopping in an e-shop; download and install the application.

When it comes to the basic format (Feed), 18 functionalities are integrated with interactive content, and 8 functionalities can be applied only in a sponsored publication.

A total of 15 interactive functionalities are used in the Stories format, and 8 functionalities can only be used by sponsored posts. Because of the complete loss of exposure to users, Stories does not integrate the most famous and popular interactive functionalities - likes and comments.

Interactive functionalities with Instagram Live are likes, comments, inclusion in the video event (up to two followers), asking questions to the organizer (not visible to other participants), etc. Eight interactive functionalities are

integrated in this format and there is no possibility of event sponsorship.

It is important for a posts designer to create the content of all parts of the post on a business profile - start, duration and end [18]. Then select the appropriate format and use the necessary functions to fulfill the given goal.

V. CONCLUSION

Today, creators of products, services and ideas resort to various direct and indirect methods and tactics in order to get in touch with potential customers/users and make sales. With the advent and growing influence of the Internet in all segments of social life [1], the possibility of the influence of global, regional and national social media on the decision-making process is created.

The paper discusses interactive content integrated into Instagram, a social medium that is recording a rapid growth in popularity and which now occupies the fifth position among social networks in terms of the number of audiences [7]. Consequently, on the Internet. various tactics can be achieved on Instagram, through standard posts and other Instagram formats, by contacting potential clients with the aim of achieving a business goal.

Unlike the real world (where the product can be seen, tested), in the virtual world it does not exist. The different types of interactivity applied in Instagram formats aim to build trust with a potential client, which can result in the sale of products in e-shops; raising brand awareness; generating potential customers; collecting follower feedback and retaining customers.

The paper presents 25 functionalities applicable to posts that leave Instagram users the opportunity to initiate interaction. Numerous integrated functionalities can be achieved by standard publishing in the classic (Feed) format, through the Stories format or via Instagram Live format.

For a successful digital marketing campaign, Instagram is an indispensable social media. Certainly, the marketing campaign should include other channels of promotion in order for the end result to be satisfactory.

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