

UDC 027.021:070:655.41(477)

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Communication Aspects of Media, Publishing, and Editorial Activities of University Libraries

Objective. The communication aspects of media, publishing, and editorial activities of university libraries were studied based on their official websites and the experience of the Scientific Library of the Drahomanov Ukrainian State University. The objective of this study is to track new trends in the library's media and communication activities. **Methods.** The methods used were observation, description, analysis and comparison of the content of the websites of Ukrainian and foreign libraries, as well as questionnaires and interviews with university stakeholders related to media activities. **Results.** The survey showed that the interaction of libraries with the media in the areas of information, consulting, providing factual and bibliographic references, access to collections and a pool of experts in various fields, and various educational events is in high demand. The means of popularizing and distributing their own media content are also common to libraries and media. **Conclusions.** University libraries should intensify their work with media and publishers on parity and mutually beneficial terms. Since the library in modern conditions produces and offers its own media products to the general public, the mass audience, it should also use the work methods of publishers and editorial offices with different groups of readers.

Keywords: media activities of libraries; publishing activities of libraries; media products of a university library; media communications in a library

Introduction

The topic of expanding the functionality of the university library has been actively discussed in science for several decades. The fact that it has become an intermediary between many players in the information market and has taken its proper place in media production, publishing, and editorial is beyond anyone's doubt. In domestic science, the works of A. Boiaryn (2018), O. Voskoboinikova-Huzieva (2020), T. Dubas (2016), T. Kolesnykova (2019), Y. Zaklinska (2017), A. Ruban (2019), and others are devoted to this issue. Abroad, D. Tracy (2017), D. Bailey (2017), D.-M. Ordway (2023) paid attention to the understanding of the given topic.

As a result of studying the library's potential as a media and publishing actor, such a model of its perception of new realities was formed:

- The media activity of the library is related to the production of its own media product (official website, Internet resources, pages in social networks, blogs, scientific journals, newsletters, information sheets, resources for training and self-education) and communication

strategies (meetings, actions, interaction with media editors and publishers, different types of readers and authors);

- The publishing activity of the library consists of the production of printed and electronic publications (indexes, catalogs, collections, lists of literature, annals, methodological manuals, library guides – as, for example, on the website of the library of Sumy State University (Sumy State University Library, 2023), digitization of documents, creation, and support of mobile resources;

- The library's editorial activity consists of editing scientific journals, lists of literature, design of bibliographies, recommendations on search, use, presentation of pictorial elements taking into account the observance of copyright.

Today, after the challenges of the COVID-19, the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation, in the conditions of constant and rapid development of technologies, new trends are emerging within this model that are worth monitoring and discussing.

Purpose: to identify and describe current trends in the media, publishing, and editorial activities of Ukrainian and European university libraries, to analyze innovations in their media communication experience.

Methods

In order to find out the current trends in the media, publishing, and editorial activities of Ukrainian and European university libraries, methods of observation, description, analysis, and comparison of the content of their official websites were used (in total, 43 sites of the libraries of Ukrainian higher education institutions were analyzed – from the list of "Libraries of universities of Ukraine" on the website of the M. Maksymovych NL of Taras Shevchenko National University, as well as 22 sites of European libraries). The study was conducted on the base of the Scientific Library of Drahomanov Ukrainian State University and considered its experience. Questionnaires and interviews were used as an additional survey method: university stakeholders answered a series of questions related to the interaction between the library of the Higher Education Institution and the media.

Results and Discussion

Traditions and innovations within the interaction of libraries with the media

A significant number of domestic libraries submit a section on interaction with the media, for example: "About us in the media", "Media about us", "Our library in the media", etc. However, they mainly provide peculiar reports on how the activities of the library or university, as well as their detached representatives, were covered in the media. Readers are offered either selections of the publications themselves or bibliographic lists with a description of such publications for specific years. Here, the media is perceived as a mirror that only reflects certain activities of the Institution of higher education.

In this context of interaction with the media, we would like to draw attention to the experience of the library of Vilnius University / Vilniaus universito biblioteka, Lithuania (Vilnius University Library, 2023), which is a good example of the formation of a specific culture of public communication. The section "For the media" contains some materials (logos in different color schemes, photos from the library's halls, photos of employees) that the library allows journalists to post when they mention it. All materials are licensed under Creative Commons. In this way, the library immediately positions itself as a subject of media interaction and arranges it from the standpoint of copyright compliance.

One more remark should be made given the legal innovations: according to the Law of Ukraine "About media" (Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy, 2023), which entered into force on 31.03.2023 (Chapter X of the "Final and Transitional Provisions"), the term "mass communication media" must now be replaced by "media". Therefore, most library website sections must be edited per this legal norm.

More and more often, university libraries, mostly foreign ones, understand interaction with media professionals more globally, and moreover, as a two-way and mutually beneficial process. The importance of this direction of library work is very aptly stated in Denise-Marie Ordway's recent professional publication "8 Ways Journalists Can Access Academic Research for Free" (Ordway, 2023), in which the author clearly demonstrates how beneficial cooperation can be for media workers and librarians. If we consider Ms. Ordway's conclusions and the book collections experience, we get several important vectors of cooperation.

First, it refers to the appeal of media persons to the library for factual or bibliographic references. Journalists could always turn to libraries to clarify specific data when writing their materials. However, in modern conditions, we can talk about the emergence of additional factors to strengthen such interaction, particularly the growing role of fact-checking in modern journalistic publications. Journalists often conduct investigations or in-depth studies of some topics. Therefore, they need expert advice on literature searches, as well as help in verifying factual data.

It is no less important to consider that society's attention to the development of technologies is increasing, and therefore the media's interest in monitoring scientific journals. Hence, the opportunity to provide journalists and editors with access to prepaid publications and scientific databases is considered as promising direction. In addition to scientific journals, popular scientific bulletins, express information sheets, press releases, and blogs, through which libraries present research materials to a broad audience of readers, will be helpful.

It should be remembered that the library acts as a communication center that introduces us to experts in the field of social communications or even more globally – to experts in various fields of science. Libraries often appoint some expert curators (expert coaches) from librarians who lead a particular branch or are fixed in certain specialties or disciplines and can orient readers in masses of literature. In addition, they are related to the university's branch units and have a close relationship with scientists and teachers of specific departments.

Therefore, the library acts as an original liaison between various units of the Institution of higher education and also stores the works of scientists. Unsurprisingly, the shortest path to an expert environment often lies precisely through the library. In some universities, the functions of communication and media cooperation units are partially taken over by the library for these reasons.

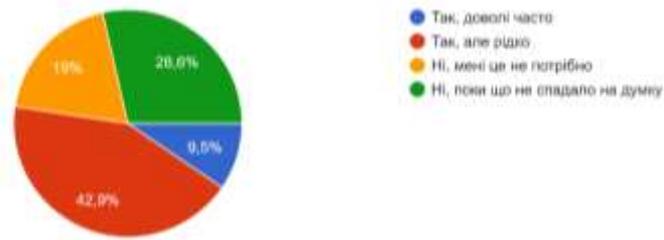
After all, one should remember that today's media stores their electronic archives, so they must understand the basics of library activities. Journalists and publishers conduct research and analytical work and may also need librarians' advice in this context. Science and information activities are sufficiently complex systems requiring training and discussion. Therefore, we must consider the consultative role of libraries, especially in matters of organization of scientific, informational, and analytical, library activities.

In order to find out how relevant the aforementioned vectors of interaction between libraries and the media are, we asked our university stakeholders a series of questions. These are our partners and graduates of the "Journalism" specialty, who currently work as editors, journalists, and copywriters in media and publishing houses. Both questionnaires and personal mini-interviews with respondents were conducted.

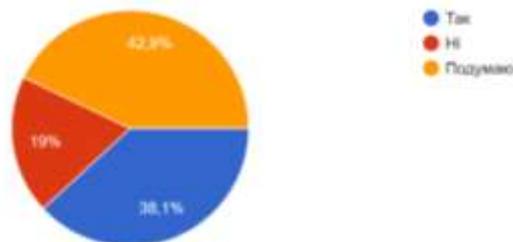
To the question "Have you ever turned to the library for factual or bibliographic information (for example, clarifying some data about certain persons, locations, publications,

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etc.)?" 19% answered unequivocally that they did not apply or need it, and 28.6% admitted that they had no such experience, as it had not occurred to them yet. Another 42.9% applied rarely, and only 9.5% - often. That is, 81% of respondents consider this practice acceptable to them.

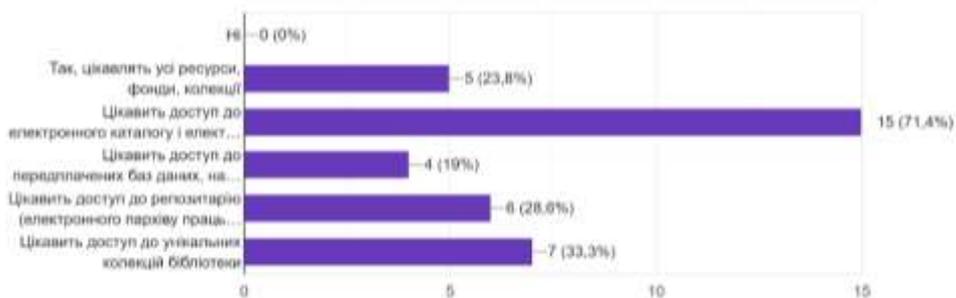


The answers to the following question ("Do you think it is appropriate to turn to the library for factual or bibliographic information in the future?") confirmed the previous result: 19% consistently give a negative result, while the share of those who will "think" about this possibility is as much as 42, 9%. It is quite possible to predict that if these services are properly positioned, the number of people willing to use the help will increase.



The third question was about the resources and services of the library that media people may be interested in: "Are you interested in the library (university library) access to its resources, funds, and collections, and to which ones?" Electronic catalog and electronic library collected the most significant number of votes – 71.4%. The library's unique collections can attract the attention of 33.3% of respondents. A significantly smaller number of respondents preferred scientific journals and databases (19%) and the repository of works of teachers of higher education institutions (28.6%).

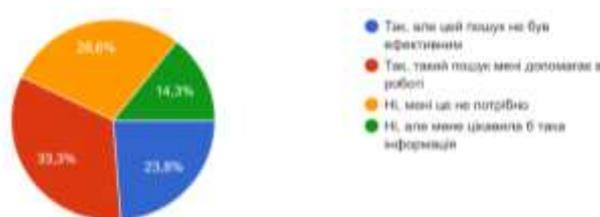
That is, science news is not yet a priority for the media.



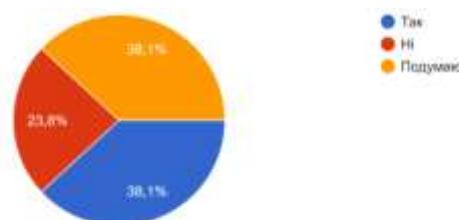
The next question was about finding and working with experts: "Have you ever looked for experts on a specific topic using the resources of libraries (in particular, university libraries)?" As in previous cases, 19% answered in the negative. Instead, 28.6% already had such a practice, and 52.4% agreed to consider such a prospect.



"Have you ever searched for information about science news on the websites of universities or university libraries?" 33.3% of respondents gave a positive answer to this question. They confirmed that they had done so and that such a search helped them in their work. 14.3% admitted that they did not have such a practice, but would be interested in such information. This potential audience is ready to receive information from this source and with whom you can work. Among the 52.4% of negative answers, 23.8% of the following should be highlighted: "Yes, I have searched, but this search was ineffective". Undoubtedly, such a statement can be regarded as a kind of incentive to improve the work of libraries with such content.



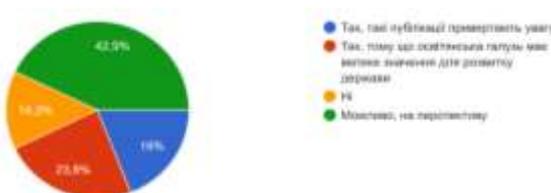
The answers to the question "Would you be interested in librarians' consultations on the current realities of organizing scientific, educational, and library activities?" can be considered a positive result in general. 38.1% of respondents are confident that yes, and another 38.1% have thought about the feasibility of this. So, 76.2% know the prospects for consultative communication between librarians and media professionals.



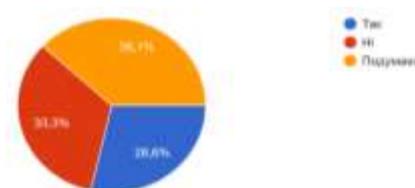
The answers to the next question revealed an interesting fact: even though media and publishers have always used the opportunity to meet with academic communities, only 14.3% of respondents answered in the affirmative to the question "Is your editorial office or publishing house interested in meetings with educators, scholars, students organized at the library?" Another 14.3% said they were not interested. However, 38.1% said they were "interested, but have not yet held such meetings", and 33.3% were willing to consider it. In general, this is again a large percentage of respondents – 71.4% – with whom it is possible to work in the future and create favorable conditions for joint activities with them.



Similarly, the next question – "Are you interested in covering important events of universities?" – highlights a considerable number of media professionals who are interested in the life of universities and university libraries because "yes, such publications attract attention" (19%), and "the education sector is of great importance for the development of the state" (23.8%). However, 57.2% showed their indifference to such topics by choosing either "no" (14.3%) or "maybe in the future" (42.9%).



The mirror question – "Do you see a library (in particular, a university library) as a means of promoting your resources and your media products?" – was answered positively by 66.7% (28.6% – "yes" and 38.1% – "I will think about it"). In fact, we can see that there is a formula for mutually beneficial interaction and enrichment, but a significant percentage of media professionals do not realize its effectiveness.



The respondents also had to ask a rather opportunistic question that is important for libraries: what are the grounds for granting access to closed collections, or subscription resources, or services of library staff to outsiders (not from the academic community)? Both in the survey and in the interviews, the vast majority of respondents (71.9%) found acceptable "non-contractual occasional calls to a hotline ("Virtual Help", "Ask a Librarian") or consultants". As an alternative, 38.1% of respondents consider it quite normal to sign a contract and 28.6% of respondents consider it quite normal to make an appointment at the library. In open-ended questions and during the direct dialog, it was noted that if information obtained from library collections is used in journalistic materials, the publication's authors should indicate this at the beginning or end of the publication.

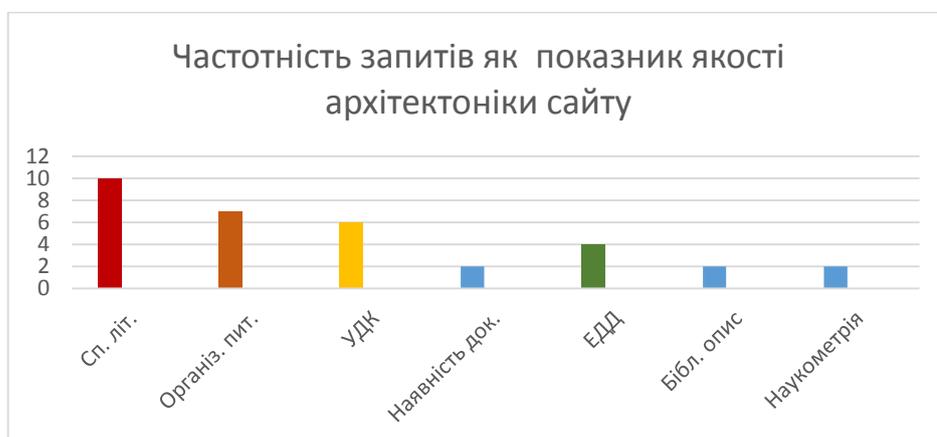
Open-ended questions and interviews with the editors yielded several other productive ideas worth implementing in practice. For example, editors of specialized journals are convinced that it is possible to hold thematic academic webinars, discussions, etc., based on the material of publications in these publications (together with students and teachers). It was also noted that "libraries can be a good location for public events organized by the media". In the current context, the university pays much attention to developing of students' soft skills, youth civic engagement, and patriotic education, so social topics in media discussions could also be helpful.

Another thesis of journalists, editors, and publishers attracts attention in the context of the conclusions in this part of the paper: "If universities and libraries become more open to journalists, it will help in their work". In fact, the surveys and interviews showed that respondents had not previously thought about the possibility of cooperation with university libraries, but primarily assessed the possibilities of such interaction positively. Therefore, the work of libraries to intensify joint activities with the media seems promising.

Current media and communication strategies for working with different groups of recipients

Daniel G. Tracy (2017) in his article "Libraries as Content Producers: How Library Publishing Services Address the Reading Experience" drew attention to one crucial aspect of the interaction between media and librarians. No one doubts how important it is for journalists and publishers to receive feedback from readers to learn about the peculiarities of perceiving certain information or how it is presented. Libraries, which are closest to these readers, could effectively provide this feedback, but do not fully realize this as an advantage.

How effectively libraries, including university libraries, can help media outlets survey readers is still an open question. It is quite possible for readers to agree to take surveys of library partners, participate in focus groups, etc. However, understanding readers' needs, tastes, expectations, and preferences is also essential in situations when feedback is needed to evaluate own media products, such as the information content, accessibility, usability of official website, and the conditions for using it. "Virtual Help" and "Ask a Librarian", which have archives of queries, are beneficial here. Such archives can be public or kept as internal documentation in reference and bibliographic departments. However, they are markers showing which services or resources are most in demand. The analysis of the published archives of the UDC suggests that the most popular service is the preparation of bibliographies by librarians. This is so obvious and unambiguous that, for example, the exceptionally well thought-out and structured VHD (virtual help desk) of the Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi VSPU Library in the sections "Recent References" and "Popular Topics" contains only archives of thematic lists of sources. If we analyze the internal archives of the Drahomanov Ukrainian State University, this trend is only confirmed. Out of 171 requests in 2023, the first place is occupied by the specific of a list of references on a particular topic and the next large block of requests is related to organizational issues (work schedule, registration in the library, access to certain collections, obtaining a library card, signing a roundsheet, etc.) Traditionally, requests for UDC assignments occupy a somehow honorable place in this list. The rest of the requests are occasional, including the availability of a document in the collections, editing of bibliographic lists, clarification of source data, electronic delivery of a document, advice on registration in scientometric databases, acknowledgments, etc.



Taking into account the fact that students and teachers have different qualifications, experience with information, motivation, age, gender, etc., such one-sidedness of the most common requests shows only one thing: users do not fully understand what exactly they can ask, what questions they should address to the librarian. Obviously, the library's VHD would benefit if the reader immediately receives as much information as possible in this section' menu about what opportunities the library's website offers and what services they can use. For example, the project of redesigning the website of the National Library of the Drahomanov Ukrainian State University provides the sections "Order", "Ask About", and "Suggest", each of which contains a list of services and resources that the reader can use and which, accordingly, immediately catch the eye and become the subject of his or her interest. Consider that communication with the reader is a more dynamic process than informing. When looking for information, a person is usually motivated and assumes that this process can take a long time. When they are in a virtual communication environment, they expect "quick tips".

This example shows that the library offers its website, a media product, to the general public and checks its quality based on readers' reactions, just as publishers or media editors do.

As mentioned, libraries ensure that the information presented on their websites is accessible. However, another axiom of media professionals is becoming increasingly obvious to them: they need to consider the peculiarities of different groups of readers. They have different needs, experience, opportunities, motivation, etc. In addition, it should be noted that the university library used to work for a recipient audience, primarily associated only with the university. Now it produces media products (official website, social media pages) that are open and accessible to many readers.

It is already a well-established practice to present the sections "Student" and "Researcher" separately. Recently, the separation of the "Researcher" and "Teacher" sections has become increasingly popular. Undoubtedly, the processes of inclusiveness in education also play a role.

Most libraries have a "Barrier-Free" section on their websites. However, it should be realized that transferring the entire range of library resources and services to the barrier-free track at once and over time is difficult. This is due to the subject of display: a variety of programs for presenting content, a variety of needs.

Today, we see the following options for displaying barrier-free accessibility on a website:

1. Contacts of a librarian whom people with disabilities can contact if necessary;
2. Creation of an alternative website where information is presented taking into account the needs of people with disabilities. For example, in a larger font (or with a choice of fonts) for people with visual impairments, or in sign language videos or podcasts with voiceover. For example, we can mention the project of the library of the Vynnytsia Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi State Pedagogical University (2023) and the website section of the Leibniz Information Center for Technology and Natural Sciences and the University Library (TIB – Leibniz-Informationszentrum Technik und Naturwissenschaften und Universitätsbibliothek) in Hannover (Technische Informationsbibliothek [TIB], 2023);

3. Creation of a multi-vector and structured section on barrier-free accessibility, which consider its various forms. For example, the library of Sumy State University (Sumy State University Library, 2023) in the section "Services and Facilities / Library without Barriers" provides the following list: a) physical (as equipped premises), b) informational (as adapted information to the possibilities of perception), c) social and civic, d) educational, e) economic.

Barrier-free accessibility is increasingly being considered as broadly as possible, including the interests not only of people with disabilities, but also of representatives of certain social groups whose membership or characteristics are tolerated in modern society (gender, race, age, etc.). For example, the Oxford Brookes University Library (2023) not only contains links to various

programs that can help with the perception of the material, but also provides information materials with a detailed justification for the need for a tolerance policy.

In this context, it is worth mentioning the practice of introducing "Easy Language" sections, where information is presented as simply as possible, using elementary vocabulary and syntax, explaining all terms and professionalisms. For example, the above website of the Leibniz Information Center for Science and Technology and the University Library of Hanover has such a feature.

The use of "easy language" in the media, libraries, and bookstores has already been legally supported in the United States and some European countries. There are some examples of its use in Ukraine. For example, in 2020, the PO "Krok" in Kolomyia launched the project "Easy Language for People with Intellectual and Mental Disabilities"; in 2021, "Tales of Transcarpathia. Easy Language» was presented in Uzhhorod. The websites of university libraries also mention resources for people with intellectual disabilities (for example, the library of the School of Social Sciences).

It is worth noting that the groups of recipients for whom easy language is intended are not only 1) people with mental disabilities, but also 2) migrants/international students who are just starting to learn the language and find it easier to perceive information through adapted texts; 3) people who have mental differences due to belonging to different social groups (racial, national, gender, age, etc.); 4) people who do not understand a particular topic; 5) people who are not used to reading complex texts or texts written in a complex language.

"Easy language" is close, but not identical to inclusion, because it is understood by absolutely everyone and the demand for it is driven by many more factors than disability.

In conclusion, we want to mention another trend in communication with readers. Libraries, and media of various types, have long since realized that the era of linear, unidirectional information is over. Modern communication practices involve a two-way process of information exchange, in which the consumer of information can simultaneously become its producer. This is the logic of social networks, which libraries are pretty active in. But not only them. Increasingly, libraries are taking care of sections that cover information support for disciplines: from the most straightforward version generated within the electronic catalog under the "Discipline" classifier to, for example, the "Course Materials" section in the KPI library (with an indication of the teacher and the number of sources) or the massive resource of the Oxford Library "Course Resource Guide", which includes experts, lists of literature, lists of resources of various content and purposes for each discipline. The most important thing is that the library can create such media products only in close cooperation with teachers, who turn from readers and recipients into content makers. Today, the library's task is to make it as easy as possible for teachers to fill their courses with literature, for example, by ordering the addition of sources in the same VHD. Such a project is currently under development at the National Library of the Drahomanov Ukrainian State University.

Conclusions

Since the library has long ceased to be a mere repository of other people's works and is now an active producer of its own media content, aimed not only at the academic community of its institution but also at the general public, it is important to monitor the trends that are constantly emerging in its publishing and media activities. The study has led to a number of conclusions.

Communication between university libraries and the media is gradually being transformed in the following areas:

- The sections "Media about us" and "For the media" should be supplemented with materials that journalists can use in their publications about the library and university without violating copyright, ethical norms and rules of institutions. Following the Law of Ukraine "On Mass Media", the titles of the sections should be edited to replace "mass communication media" with "media";

- It should also be realized that in modern realities the process of interaction with journalists and publishers can be bilateral and mutually beneficial: media professionals need to apply to the library for factual and bibliographic references, access to scientific journals, databases, newsletters and information sheets, organize various events together, find experts for their research using the library's resources, and consult on library, analytical, informational, scientific and educational activities;

- It is necessary to work more actively with the media community, as journalists and publishers are not fully aware of the opportunities and prospects for cooperation with university libraries.

In the context of media communication strategies for working with different groups of readers, libraries can

- cooperate with publishers and media in studying readers' requests, tastes, and preferences;
- take into account the opinions and reactions of library readers regarding the informational content and effectiveness of the library's own media products;

- apply publishing and media techniques for working with different groups of readers, consider the peculiarities of perception, in particular, pay more attention to barrier-free issues, justification of tolerance, and the use of "easy language".

- develop effective mechanisms for involving teachers in the resource provision of their courses as part of projects related to information support for disciplines.

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Комунікаційні аспекти медійної, видавничої, редакторської діяльності університетських бібліотек

Мета. Досліджено комунікаційні аспекти медійної, видавничої та редакційної діяльності університетських бібліотек на основі їхніх офіційних веб-сайтів та досвіду Наукової бібліотеки Українського державного університету імені Михайла Драгоманова. Метою було відстежити нові тенденції в медіа- та комунікаційній діяльності бібліотеки. Використано методи спостереження, опису, аналізу, порівняння контенту сайтів українських та зарубіжних бібліотек, а також анкетування та інтерв'ю зі стейкхолдерами університету, пов'язаними з медійною діяльністю. **Результати.** Опитування показало, що взаємодія бібліотек зі ЗМІ у сферах інформування, консультування, надання фактографічних та бібліографічних довідок, доступу до колекцій та пулу експертів у різних галузях, проведення спільних освітніх заходів користується високим попитом. Бібліотеки та медіа також обмінюються методами популяризації та розповсюдження власного медіаконтенту. **Висновки.** Університетським бібліотекам варто активізувати роботу з медіа та видавництвами на паритетних і взаємовигідних умовах. Оскільки бібліотека в сучасних умовах виробляє і пропонує власну

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медіапродукцію широкому загалу, масовій аудиторії, вона також повинна використовувати методи роботи видавництв і редакцій з різними групами читачів.

Ключові слова: медіадіяльність бібліотек; видавнича діяльність бібліотек; медіапродукція університетської бібліотеки; медіакомунікації в бібліотеці

Received: 12.07.2023

Accepted: 18.11.2023