



# ЗБІРНИК НАУКОВИХ ПРАЦЬ

III Всеукраїнської науково-практичної конференції  
студентів, аспірантів та молодих науковців  
«СУЧАСНИЙ МАСОВОКОМУНІКАЦІЙНИЙ ПРОСТІР:  
ІСТОРІЯ, РЕАЛІЇ, ПЕРСПЕКТИВИ»



МІНІСТЕРСТВО ОСВІТИ І НАУКИ УКРАЇНИ  
СУМСЬКИЙ ДЕРЖАВНИЙ УНІВЕРСИТЕТ  
ФАКУЛЬТЕТ ІНОЗЕМНОЇ ФІЛОЛОГІЇ ТА СОЦІАЛЬНИХ КОМУНІКАЦІЙ  
КАФЕДРА ЖУРНАЛІСТИКИ ТА ФІЛОЛОГІЇ

# ЗБІРНИК НАУКОВИХ ПРАЦЬ

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3641 **Збірник** наукових праць III Науково-практичної конференції студентів, аспірантів та молодих науковців «Сучасний масовокомунікаційний простір: історія, реалії, перспективи». Суми : Сумський державний університет, 2024. 136 с.

До збірника увійшли наукові дослідження молодих науковців, аспірантів та студентів, учасників III Науково-практичної конференції студентів, аспірантів та молодих науковців. Дослідження пов'язані з комплексною програмою науково-дослідних робіт СумДУ, безпосередньо з науковим напрямом досліджень кафедри журналістики та філології у межах теми «Сучасний масовокомунікаційний простір: історія, реалії, перспективи».

Для викладачів, учителів, науковців, аспірантів, докторантів, студентів та інших зацікавлених осіб.

3641 **Collection** of scientific works of the III Scientific and practical conference of students, postgraduates and young scientists «Contemporary mass communication space: history, realities, prospects». Sumy : Sumy State University, 2024. 136 p.

The collection includes scientific materials of young scientists, postgraduates and students, participants of the III Scientific and practical conference of students, postgraduates and young scientists. The studies are related to the comprehensive program of research works of Sumy State University, directly with the scientific direction of research of the department of journalism and philology within the framework of the topic «Contemporary mass communication space: history, realities, prospects».

For lecturers, teachers, scientists, graduate students, doctoral students, students and other interested persons.

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## GAMIFICATION AS A TOOL FOR AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT OF ONLINE MEDIA

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**Abstract.** *The goals of our research are to study the features of gamification in domestic online media and its impact on the audience. Key findings indicate that gamification is now successfully attracting audiences and increasing engagement with media content, both educational and entertaining. The main conclusions of the study indicate the potential of gamification as an effective tool for drawing and retaining the attention of the audience in the modern media environment.*

**Keywords:** *gamification, online media, games, tests, audience engagement.*

## ГЕЙМІФІКАЦІЯ ЯК ІНСТРУМЕНТ ЗАЛУЧЕННЯ АУДИТОРІЇ ОНЛАЙНОВИХ МЕДІА

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**Анотація.** *Цілі нашого дослідження полягають у вивченні особливостей гейміфікації у вітчизняних онлайн-медіа як інструменту залучення аудиторії. Основні результати свідчать про те, що зараз гейміфікація успішно привертає увагу аудиторії та збільшує взаємодію з медіа-контентом – як освітнім, так і розважальним. Висновки дослідження вказують на потенціал гейміфікації як ефективного інструменту для залучення та утримання уваги аудиторії в сучасному медіасередовищі.*

**Ключові слова:** *гейміфікація, онлайн-медіа, ігри, тести, залучення аудиторії.*

In the age of increasing competition in the media sphere, engaging the audience and keeping its attention is becoming a key task for content producers. Since its inception, gamification, or the application of game elements in non-traditional contexts, is constantly finding new applications, among which the media occupy an important place.

The relevance of the study of gamification in the media is determined by modern trends in consumer habits, which require greater interaction and interest in content. In a world oversaturated with information, the battle for the audience's attention is becoming more and more difficult, and gamification acts as an effective tool to attract and retain the attention of users. The use of gamification in media helps to increase audience engagement, improve information perception and provide competitive advantages in today's media landscape.

Some Ukrainian scientists, in particular I. Bohost, T. Bondarenko, I. Volkova, A. Hlushko, V. Titkov and others, mostly studied the theoretical aspect of this topic, and the practical component still remains understudied. Considering the minimal number of scholarly works that analyze gamification in new media from a practical point of view, there is a need to study gaming practices in modern journalistic content.

Gamification (derived from the English word «game») is the application of approaches and principles characteristic of games in other, non-game areas (such as education, marketing, business, media). The developer of gamified content for the media, F. Maurin, notes that nowadays there is no reason to believe that games in journalism can be used only for entertainment: «If we can make movies or make comics about serious topics, why can't we make a game about them?» [7].

Therefore, in journalism, gaming techniques are used to create viral content that attracts a wide range of audiences. The peculiarity of the use of gamification in the media is the connection to the information drive, the relevance and topicality of ideas [2].

Researchers V. Shoturma and N. Shoturma believe that one of the key advantages of gamification in the media is that it allows journalists to interact with the audience on a more personal level. Game elements make it possible for readers to feel like active participants, not just observers. This creates an emotional connection with the content, thereby increasing the likelihood that they will be engaged and interested in the advertised product or service.

In addition, gamification allows you to create interactive forms of content that are better remembered precisely because they are significantly different from standard text or visual materials. Games can also evoke emotions, prompt action, and positively influence the perception of a brand or product [5, p. 175].

It is also important to note that since the gamified media product is unique and cannot be copied (rewritten), its publication can positively affect the image of the publication and the loyalty of the readership. Also, according to D. Zahorulko gamification has a positive effect on the product's virality (a characteristic that determines the probability that users will independently distribute content in their social networks), and therefore leads to an increase in the publication's popularity and recognition in social networks [4, p. 53].

Researcher I. Bohost drew attention to the variety of possible formats of a gamified information product back in 2010. He singled out the following types of gamified content: «tabloid games», «reporting games», «documentary games», «infographic games», «task games», «editorial games» [6, p. 201].

American researcher M. Foxman offers his approach to the classification of gamified media content. In 2015, he identified and described four main forms of gamification. These are «badges, points, awards», «tests and quizzes», «situational designs and projects», as well as «new games and game worlds» [10]. It should be noted that the first point of this classification, which refers to the site interface, does not apply to our study, since we focus on the information product itself, and not on its visual appearance.

The study of the available gamified information product in Ukrainian media was conducted by scientist T. Bondarenko, who, in her turn, singled out the following forms: tests, video tests, games, immersive games, gamified statistics, as well as contests, castings and gifs (GIF-image) [1, p. 253].

By immersive games, we mean gaming experiences that give the player the feeling of complete immersion in the virtual world. This could mean using Virtual Reality (VR), Augmented Reality (AR), or simply creating a highly detailed simulated world that gives the player a sense of presence and interaction with the environment. Immersive games can provide deeper and more immersive gameplay through the use of technologies that create the impression of reality.

One of the first publications to use gamification in its publications is the Financial Times. It introduced know-how – Topic Tracker. The magazine started giving its audience points for reading articles. But that's not all. The tool analyzes the amount of information perceived by the user. The publication positions the revolutionary development as a method that helps the reader get more pleasure from the process and quickly find the content that will be of interest to him [8].

We can assume that everyone has benefited from the launch of Topic Tracker: it encourages users to open and read as many posts as possible in pursuit of bonuses, and the company thus receives detailed information about the interests of its audience and increases the number of views of materials – not only completely new, but even old ones, because the publication also recommends articles that are most similar in content to the ones read.

However, it is worth emphasizing that gamification in materials should be appropriate and adequate, because some topics are not suitable for being used in game formats. An example of an inaccurately chosen topic for gamification is the BBC project called «Syrian Journey: Choose your own escape route» (01.04.2015). This is a game in which the user learned about the difficulties faced by Syrians fleeing the civil war. According to the idea of the developers, the gamification was supposed to give the user the opportunity to put themselves in the place of a refugee, to point out the number of obstacles on the way to Europe, to show that the chances of survival for men and women are unequal. Instead, the project caused outrage among the British and other media organizations such as the Daily Mail and The Sun. The BBC was criticized for «turning human suffering into child's play» [9].

The material «Syrian Journey: Choose your own escape route» became the reason for discussions about the moral aspects and ethics of using gamification in such matters. It is important to consider that approaches to gamification can strongly influence audience perception and have a potentially significant impact on public dialogue and consciousness. This case also reflects the need for an open dialogue between the media and the public about the limits of acceptability in the context of gamification. Such a dialogue can help raise awareness of the risks and ensure more responsible use of these techniques in the media. In our opinion, this incident has become instructive for Western and Ukrainian media, so today journalists work especially carefully on games on sensitive topics.

According to our observations, tests have become the most popular in Ukrainian online media, as this is the simplest and most efficient type of gamified product. This can be followed by using the keyword test to search on sites (such as «Ukrainska Pravda», «bit.ua», «Texty.org.ua» and others). On the other

hand, as of May 2024, we did not find any immersive projects (the most complex type) in the Ukrainian media space at all. Researcher D. Zahorulko explains this by the complexity and time-consuming nature of their development, as well as the financial aspect – currently Ukrainian media can rarely afford the development of gamified content, which involves the involvement of external specialists (programmers, designers, screenwriters, etc.) [3, p. 65].

Based on empirical experience, we can note that earlier, in 1990–2000, the game component was often present on television (in programs such as «Pidyom», «Loto Zabava»), radio («Guess the melody»), newspapers and magazines (in particular, children's and teenage ones, such as «Klyaksa», «Kuzya», «Oops»), today game formats can also be seen in online media.

By monitoring and searching for keywords “games”, “tests”, “quizzes”, we found that over the past two years (that is, during the full-scale war since 2022 till 2024), Ukrainian publications («Ukrainska Pravda», «bit.ua», «Texty.org.ua», «Rubrika» and «Unian») started actively using gamification techniques.

An extremely common format in the popular publication «Ukrainska Pravda» is a variety of tests – both entertaining («Vidminnyk or “Galorka”. What kind of student are you», 01.09.2023) and educational («What do you know about the Armed Forces of Ukraine», 06.12.2022). Usually, such tests are timed for certain dates, for example, the first of September, the Day of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Independence Day, Constitution Day, etc. Most often, they are designed in a «classic» style: three answers are offered for each question, all of them are displayed on one common page (that is, without a transition, each new question is a new page). Also, some questions are accompanied by pictures or GIFs.

Some Ukrainian publications, such as «bit.ua», create tests as part of an advertising campaign. Thus, the test «Which apartment is perfect for you?» (date of publication not specified) was created with the support of the developer DIM, and the test «Hollywood luxury or a hermit's home – which apartment are you?» (12.09.2022) – supported by OLX Real Estate. Such sponsored tests are of higher quality and vivid: each question is placed on a new page and is accompanied by an illustrative picture. Such materials are of an entertaining nature and are intended to advertise the services of sponsors, and also to increase the reach of the publication through such interactive entertainment.

Also, with the beginning of the full-scale Russian aggression against Ukraine, many games and tests on military and patriotic themes appeared. However, the publication «Texty.org.ua» was the first, even before the beginning of the full-scale invasion of the occupiers, to make such a simulator game. It is called «Recognize Your Own» (February 16, 2022). It is dedicated to the visual differences between the tanks in service with the armed forces of Ukraine and Russia. The text and infographics that accompany the material explain how you can distinguish between the ownership of military equipment, and the game helps to build practical skills of differentiation. The task of the players is to identify the model of the tank based on the photo. After each answer, an explanation is provided in the text block.

After incorrect answers, the player is prompted to return to the infographic to repeat the information. The game uses traditional elements of gamification – a counter of correct and incorrect answers, as well as an analysis of the results. There is also an option that allows you to share your results on social media.

So, gamification in the media is the use of game elements to attract the audience and stimulate their activity. Ukrainian journalists actively use gamification in the form of various tests, contests and interactive surveys. The most common forms of gamification in Ukrainian media are knowledge tests (about the country, history, culture, etc.), personality tests and simulation games.

The main goal of games in online publications is to attract the attention of the audience, increase their interest and interaction with the content. Gamified elements create the illusion of a game, which makes the process of consuming media content more interesting and exciting for users. Gamification in media features the use of game elements such as levels, achievements, and leaderboards to motivate and drive audience engagement.

The study of gamification in the Ukrainian media space opens up perspectives for a deeper understanding of the impact of this strategy on the audience and the development of new strategies to attract and retain their attention. The results of such research can contribute to the creation of such effective personalized approaches to gamification in media content that best meet the needs and interests of different audience groups.

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